

Rascals, Harminits & Critters 2:
The Book of Curses



DEAD LANDS

JOHN GOFF



Rascals, Harmits & Critters 2:
The Book of Curses



By: JOHN GOFF



Rascals Varmints & Critter II: The Book o' Curses

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USING THIS BOOK

Unlike most *Deadlands* supplements, *The Book of Curses* is divided into only two sections: **No Man's Land** and the **Marshal's Territory**. That's right—no **Posse Territory**.

Why, you justifiably might be asking. Well, it's because this book is, first and foremost a Marshal's tool.

Sure having a book with a **No Man's Land** and no **Posse Territory** is kind of like selling medium and large size beverages but no small. However, we want to hammer home that what's in the first portion of the book contains secrets a Marshal might not want his players to read right away. Of course, not everything in **No Man's Land** is gospel either; the correspondents are only *human* after all.

So, what we're really saying is, players, check with your Marshal before you go thumbing through here.

The **No Man's Land** in *The Book of Curses* is a collection of reports written for the Explorer's Society by a trio of scientific specialists. The reports cover a variety of topics, each within the correspondent's area of expertise.

Unfortunately, like the Society's first attempt, this work has found its way into the wrong hands as well.

The **Marshal's Territory** provides the real dirt on exactly what the scientists discuss in their reports. A warning to all you cowpokes and heroes out there: they didn't get everything right, so don't take it as Gospel! In the **Marshal's Territory** are the details on over fifty abominations, additional critters, and some big names in the terror business.

A few of the abominations in this book are old favorites that have already appeared in another supplement, like nosferatu or automatons. There are just a few of these critters and we thought they deserved a place in *The Book of Curses* if for no other reason than to make it easier for a Marshal to find their profiles quickly.

There's also another surprise back behind the Marshal's paper curtain, as well, but we don't want to step on Marshal's toes and reveal too much here.

So, if you're ready, check your ammunition, saddle up, and be *very* quiet—we're hunting monsters!

INTRODUCTION

Howdy, pardner! Hope you've got your shootin' irons loaded for bear—or bigger thangs—'cause we're about to go a-huntin' some of the biggest and most dangerous game in the Weird West! Lions, tigers and bear are nothing compared to the abominations lurking in the pages of this book!

Welcome to *Rascals, Varmints, & Critters II: The Book o' Curses*. Like our first abomination compendium, you're going to find all sorts of abominations in here with which to haunt your posses and your nightmares. There are also a couple of famous faces and even a new direction in which to take your *Deadlands* campaign if you're interested.

NO MAN'S

15 October, 1877
Somewhere near Santa Fe

Lt. Ketchum,

I intercepted this bundle of reports here on the New Mexico border a little while ago. A pony express rider was carrying for a tinhorn from Back East. I caught wind of him poking around in older cases, digging up dirt on the critters involved and such.

At first, I figured he was one of them confounded Epitaph muckrakers. But, after I talked to him for a bit, I knew he wasn't a run-of-the-mill pencil pusher. That fellow used more dime words than I could afford on a week's pay.

Turns out, he was sending a group of documents off to a group called "The Explorer's Society." I've come across mention of them once or twice—they've got an office or agent or something up in Denver. From what I hear, they're a bunch of loons, but the Agency took an interest in them about a year or two back, so I figured I ought to look into it more.

Anyhow, this fellow—his name's Thaddeus Washington—claims to know you. Said something about meeting you and some gunslinger named Lynch up in Kansas about two years ago. Since he says you're a friend, I figured you'd like to take a look at this—maybe even send it up to Austin yourself.

Washington's own report didn't seem too dangerous—what I could understand of it anyway. He sounds pretty convinced most critters can be explained "scientifically." The other two, though—both of them written by doctors of some sort—are hitting a little close to the bull's eye, if you know what I mean.

Corporal Seth Cross

NEO-ZOOLOGY

A SHORT STUDY AND SPECULATIVE BESTIARY

BY DR. THADDEUS WASHINGTON

INTRODUCTION

I must admit here at the outset of this report that I am at a bit of a loss where to begin? Should I address the rather curious title of my report or introduce myself? If you'll pardon my vanity, I believe a short resume of my own qualifications should lend some scientific and academic validity to the contents of my report.

My name is Thaddeus Washington. I received my doctorate in zoological studies from Columbia University a little over two years ago. Since that time, I have devoted myself to investigating and chronicling the veritable cornucopia of emerging species that is the American West.

This report represents nearly two years of field research and exploration. Compiling the material within, I've traveled the large portions of both the U.S. and the Confederacy delving into reports of emerging life forms and other anomalies related to the study of zoology. And that brings me to the title of my report.

I chose the term *neo-zoology* to describe my endeavors; loosely translated, it means "the study of new life", which is what I have been doing. While completing my doctorate, I could not help but notice a rash of previously undocumented species reported in journalistic periodicals, particularly the ill-regarded *Tombstone Epitaph*. My colleagues scoffed at the articles and features on these unusual and heretofore unknown creatures, deriding them as the constructs of "yellow journalism" or "tall tales."

I, however, noted some of the zoological anomalies reported in one periodical were also documented in other, unrelated journals. As a scientist, I felt it was my duty to delve further into the study of these emerging species. Unfortunately, I could garner no backing from universities or academic societies on the East Coast.

I'd like to thank the Explorers Society for expressing interest in publishing my findings. Hopefully, through their auspices and my own humble endeavors, these findings will reach the eyes of other, like-minded researchers. From the flood of recent emergence, I believe we have the potential for scientific discovery at hand. I, for one, would hate to see it lost due to narrow vision and out-dated tradition.

METHODOLOGY

Before I get into the main body of my findings, allow me to digress momentarily and discuss the methods I used when compiling data.

Although I confess I was guided largely by word-of-mouth—what my colleagues referred to as "tall tales"—I would have been remiss as a scientist had I based the entirety of my report on oral accounts. Witness statements are notoriously inaccurate when put to scientific test. Instead, I merely used the eyewitness testimony as a guide to begin my research.

Whenever possible, I engaged in direct observation of the subject species. Unfortunately, this was often impossible; I suspect one reason the scientific community refuses to accept these accounts is the lack of verification under controlled circumstances. Such is, if you'll pardon the pun, the nature of the beast when dealing with neo-zoology.

Lacking visual confirmation, I employed reliable field tests to determine the veracity of the eyewitness claims. I used track imprints, hair samples, wound profiles, and other circumstantial evidence to verify the presence and possible habits of the creatures in question. In no case did I rely on mere oral account as a basis for my research. I plan an museum exhibition of my findings—as soon as I can find an institution with the academic vision to sponsor it, of course.

TERRESTRIAL CREATURES

Now that you know something of my methodologies, let us move on to the matter at hand: a survey of the strange (and sometimes dubious) creatures that I have investigated.

My travels have taken me all over the North American continent, from the more developed areas Back East, to the desolate desert reaches of the West. While there are no doubt many reports of strange creatures in more civilized areas, I have found the less populated reaches far more fertile territory for stories of possible neo-zoological specimens.

In this first section I shall deal with the creatures of the high plains, the mountain heights, the shadowed forests—creatures of the land, if you will. We shall start with the savage creature called the carcajou.

CARCAJOU

Originally, the term “carcajou” appeared to refer to the common North American wolverine—a terror in its own right, but certainly not a “new” species to modern zoologists. However, further research revealed that another creature—perhaps a heretofore unknown subspecies of wolverine—has made an appearance in the West.

The carcajou itself evaded all attempts on my part to visually verify its existence. However, I did accumulate sufficient circumstantial evidence to convince me of the creature’s existence when combined with witness statements.

I examined a rancher’s herd of cattle that had been butchered by some unknown predator. Examining the wounds and angles of infliction, I determined that all had been mauled by a quadruped about 3’ in height. Although all the softer organs and muscle had been eaten, from the half-digested remains I found scattered around the site, it was obvious that the predator had regurgitated its stomach contents several times so it could continue gorging.

After making plaster casts of the tracks I found around the corpses, I was able to determine without doubt that the same creature had killed some 30 cows, including a large bull. The tracks also revealed the carcajou to weigh several hundred pounds, of which no doubt much is muscle mass.

The carcajou is also reviled among trappers for its rapine destruction of traplines, often leaving defiled portions of game still in the traps, not unlike its apparent cousin, the wolverine. Furthermore, these trappers were in agreement that the creature tends to lair near game trails, and, while capable of bursts of incredible energy, prefers a less active hunting style.

After compiling eyewitness statements and comparing them to the evidence noted above, I am confident in cataloguing the basic nature of this species. The carcajou does indeed appear to be a new species. Its size-to-mass ratio is currently unmatched in nature and likely has two consequences.

First, the carcajou must have an enormous caloric requirement to maintain its enormous muscle mass; it is, in effect, an eating machine. Second, the volume of food required to feed this animal has, in all probability, resulted in the creature’s insatiable appetite, even when fed to capacity. This also is likely to explain the carcajou’s method of hunting which seems to have evolved to reduce energy expenditure whenever possible.



The carcajou has been blamed for numerous cattle massacres.

CATAMOUNT

At first, I believed the stories about catamounts to be nothing more than exaggerations of a common puma's prowess. However, I was fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of one of these creatures myself and can attest that it is no ordinary *felis concolor*. While in the mountainous forests of Western Montana, my guide at the time, a mountain man named Jethro Wilson, and I heard the sound of a woman screaming nearby.

Fearing the worst, we rushed through the trees to an empty clearing. Upon arrival, I noticed an odd track on the ground and stooped to examine it. That innocuous motion saved my life, for at that moment, a great cat swiped at me from a branch overhead, its forepaw missing my cranium by mere inches!

Jethro brought his rifle to bear and fired at the animal, but, to my amazement, as he was a proficient marksman, missed. I did manage to get a good look at the beast as it fled, however, and also thoroughly examined its perch as well.

The animal itself appeared to be a large cat, not entirely unlike an Asian tiger, but with characteristics of a puma as well. It was an efficient climber and seemed to exhibit a certain flexibility in its paw structure not evidenced in other great cats.

Upon studying its perch, I was able to ascertain that it had not only used its hind claws to brace itself when it lunged from me, but, from the blood spattered about the limb, it was also prone to drag its prey into the tree with it. This practice is unheard of among other large predators, at least to my knowledge.

Finally, it exhibited another unique characteristic: a near-perfect voice mimicry. The creature lured us to the site with a human voice—there was no woman, we checked thoroughly for tracks or other evidence of such—a disturbing thought as it indicates the creature considers *homo sapiens* to be a lower rung on the food chain.

CEMETERY WOLF

This creature appellation derives from a common belief that the animal—wolf-like in appearance—derives its sustenance from the dead flesh of humans. It traces its roots to an older creature of legend with similar habits, the *loup garou de cimenteries*.

I was unable to authenticate the existence of this creature through personal observation, but I did compile a sizeable amount of secondary evidence. There is also no shortage of sightings of these creatures, most often by soldiers after a large-scale engagement.

Much of my research was conducted on human corpses—again, usually those of soldiers of one military or another.

The wounds I examined were primarily bite marks, with what appeared to be incidental clawing on the bodies. The creature bite marks are indicative of a canine muzzle, but with oddly protruding teeth, while the claws are broader than those of known canine species. Also, the lack of trace hairs around the bite marks seems to indicate a hairless muzzle.

Witness accounts seem to reinforce the common concept of the animal. Those who have seen it report it is a primarily nocturnal wolf- or dog-like creature that hunts in packs and seems



The track of the elusive cemetery wolf!

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drawn to recent battlefields, likely by the overwhelming scent of blood and decaying flesh.

From my studies, I've concluded the cemetery wolf is likely a canine scavenger, perhaps similar in habit to the African hyena. The cemetery wolf seems to exemplify many of Darwin's concepts put forth in his *Origin of the Species*, albeit much more rapidly than even he suggests.

It appears to have adapted to its role readily, evolving protruding teeth to better reach the soft organs, stout claws for unearthing shallow burials, and even a hairless muzzle. This last feature is no doubt similar to that of the vulture's bare head, which prevents gore from adhering to the animal's head while it gorges on entrails.

PIASA

If it does in deed exist, this next creature is not, strictly speaking, terrestrial. It is a creature of the air rather than of *terra firma*. The first reference to the piasa, or piasa bird, is from the diaries of a Spanish Jesuit missionary dating back to the 16th century. The priest, Father Marquette, noted and sketched petroglyphs carved into the rocks upriver from present day St. Louis, MO. Unfortunately, the petroglyphs no longer exist—but rumors of the piasa bird persist.

Despite a month of search, I was unable to catch a glimpse of this creature. I did interview several individuals who professed seeing the animal and had the opportunity to examine a cow that had fallen victim to the aerial predator. Both the animal carcass and the actual site of the attack proved quite revealing.

The creature fed at the site of the kill and left several bits of revelation. First, the animal cracked the skull of the cow and fed only on the brain. Second, no feathers of any kind were left at the site, despite evidence of a monumental struggle. Third, the attack occurred after nightfall.

Eyewitness information is sketchy at best, as the creature appears to be nocturnal. Most depict the piasa as "a large, bird-like creature." This is in direct contrast to the oral tradition which holds that the animal "had a body like a puma, antlers like those of a stag, the broad wings of an eagle." Some tellings of the myth include a long, snake-like tail as well.

My personal observations of the attack lead me to dismiss the legendary description out of hand. Without going into the obvious skeletal and muscular impossibilities presented by a winged quadruped, the creature as portrayed in myth was not capable of causing the wounds I noted. The attack evidence from such a patchwork creature would have been remarkable indeed!

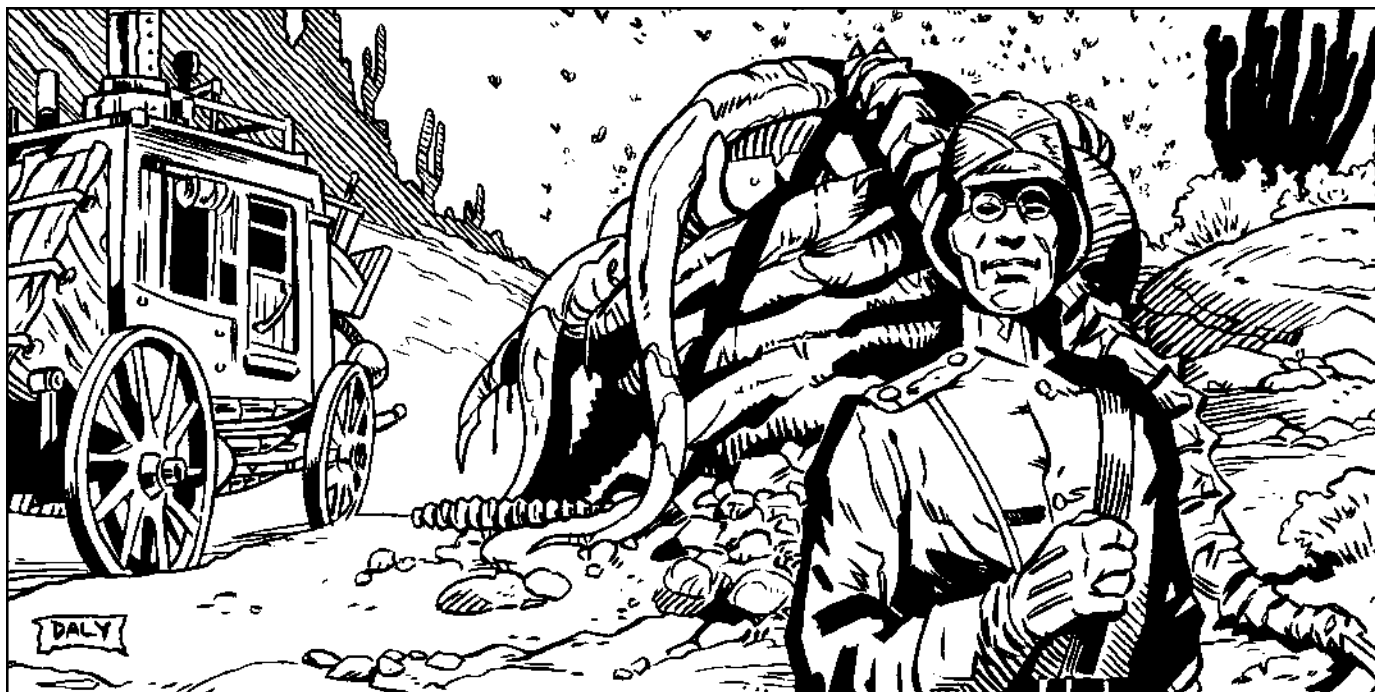
Instead, I believe the piasa is actually an ancient reptile previously thought extinct—or more precisely a modern pterodactyl! The bony snout of this ancient creature is more than sufficient to produce the skull fractures I noted and the piasa's reported size is within the potential growth range for the reptile.

The absence of feathers at the attack sites further reinforces my conclusion as to the nature of the piasa. A mammalian aerial predator is also a possibility, but the cow carcass lacked the signature canine and incisor tooth imprints associated with most warm-blooded predators.

The only concern with my theory is the piasa's preference for nocturnal hunts. While this does explain its ability to remain virtually unknown, it means the animal must have some method for regulating its internal body temperature—a feat beyond modern reptiles as science understands them.



Artist's rendition of what the piasa may actually look like!



The author poses with a Mojave rattler specimen gathered on the Deseret Salt Flats.

MOJAVE RATTLERS

I won't delay my dissertation on rattlers by presenting evidence. Other, equally reputable authorities have documented these creatures in no less than three areas on this continent. I myself have been involved in extensive observation of rattlers on the salt flats west of Salt Lake City. That they exist is not in question. It only remains for the academic community recognize them as the emergent species that they undoubtedly are.

Perhaps species is an inappropriate classification. According to reports, there may exist as many as three separate species of the rattler, making the creature a separate genus rather than an anomalous branch of itself.

These species (or sub-species) appear to be confined to certain geographic regions. The Mojave variety of rattler seems to be the most aggressive of the group. Those in the salt flats west of the Rockies are faster burrowers than those of the other regions, but also somewhat smaller. The branch found on the high plains of Montana and the former Dakotas seem to be slower moving and apt to employ elaborate ambush practices. There also seems to be coloration variances between the various regions as well.

However, as yet, I have been unable to determine the class of the creature, much yet the finer points of genus or species. Although rattlers lack obvious body hair and their reproductive habits are unknown, their size alone requires them to be warm-blooded—thus implying Aves or Mammalia as the class. Neither is a perfect match, suggesting the rattler may be an as yet undiscovered class of animal!

The real question is how a life form as large and potentially disruptive as the rattler escaped notice by Westerners until the last decade or so. These creatures sometimes exceed 80 yards in length, a dimension unheard of in modern terrestrial creatures! Yet, the earliest report of their existence was filed less than 15 years ago.

Currently, I theorize the rattlers natural ecological zone is in deep subterranean areas. The earthquake that resulted in the devastation of the former territory of California may have been responsible for forcing the animals to shallow surface regions by destroying their former habitats. While that geologic event did not occur until 1868—after the first confirmed rattler reports—shifting in the substrata had no doubt been underway for some time to precipitate a tremor of that magnitude.

No other explanation currently available to through the scientific analysis of the facts is logically acceptable.

PRAIRIE TICKS

Prairie ticks are a new emergent species whose existence is not in question. Several hundred cattle are lost each year to these arachnid parasites. Several reputable stockmen have documented the creature's habits, and I have verified these reports through field study of my own.

For those unfamiliar with this particular species, the prairie tick is an arthropod of startling size, nearly 4" across. Unlike the smaller and more common wood tick, the prairie tick does not attach to the skin of its host. Instead, it forces itself into the host's digestive tract through the mouth and attaches to the stomach. This process is as dangerous as it is disconcerting, as it makes the creature remarkably difficult to dislodge once it has begun feeding. Short of surgery, only a strong purgative such as castor oil is able to oust the parasite at this stage.

However, even surgery is preferable to allowing the process to run its course. A full feeding almost invariably results in the host's death as the tick is too bloated to pass through the esophagus. Instead, the tick burrows through the abdominal wall of the host.

After extensive field study, I have determined that these parasites seem to operate cooperative colonies, not unlike some social insects. This is an unusual development, not only for arachnids, but for parasitic creatures in general.

On several occasions I observed engorged ticks returning to an underground nest. Furthermore, the arachnids seem sensitive to surface movement near the nest, possibly through seismic micro-tremors, and swarm out of numerous entry holes in an attempt to overwhelm a host. Again, this sort of overt aggression is unusual in a parasite, as is the coordinated behavior practiced by the collective in overtaking a host.

Having examined several prairie tick specimens, I found only vestigial reproductive organs. This indicates the potentiality of a central "queen" tick, serviced by the sexless "drones." Such a creature would likely be fed by the returning, engorged drones and is likely to remain underground in a centralized area.

Furthermore, the individual drones, like some hive insects, may be capable of developing reproductive organs themselves in absence of queen. This allows the original hive to "spawn" other tick colonies. Of greater concern is the possibility that drones carried from their hive by a mobile host may be able to spontaneously evolve and begin a new hive themselves.

TERRANTULAS

The prairie ticks aren't the only arachnid I've encountered during my travels that has developed a form of cooperative behavior. A sub-species of tarantula common to the southwestern Confederate states also appears to "swarm" when hunting. The spider, identified by a unique set of markings resembling, oddly enough, a human skull, has been given the rather colorful sobriquet "terrantula." This, I assume, is a play on the words "terror" and "tarantula" typical of frontiersmen of late.

The terrantula seems to have two growth stages: one similar to that of the common tarantula, and a second, much larger size. Not only does the arachnid's mass change remarkably between these two stages, but its behavior patterns vary notably as well.

I must assume the first growth period is a hatchling phase. The spider is roughly the size of



Never underestimate the danger posed by small creatures.

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a grown man's palm during this stage. Only the unique pattern on its abdomen visibly distinguishes it from a common tarantula.

Hatchling terrantulas remain in a "swarm" during this period. As a group, the arthropods are capable of overcoming prey much larger than themselves; in one instance, I observed a swarm overwhelming an injured calf. Lacking the intelligence of a higher order predator, the hatchling swarms are likely to attempt even larger prey, so researchers are advised to maintain a safe distance during field observations.

These hunting swarms often number several hundred or more. Presumably, this equates to a single egg deposit by a second-stage female. Although these amounts may seem incredible for a solitary female, the size difference between hatchling and mature terrantulas is, well, rather startling.

Second-stage arachnids of this species reach the size of a small dog. It is possible the creatures attain even larger mass, however, I was unable to confirm such as fact. Nonetheless, it is important to note the percentage of variance between the two stages is on the order of more than ten thousand percent!

At this stage, these larger adults become territorial and use methods similar to that of trap-door spiders to capture prey. Additionally, the population density of mature-stage terrantulas is much lower than that of the hatchlings. From the lack of both hunting swarms and lower density, I must postulate that at some point the hatchlings engage in a cannibalistic struggle for dominance.

Also, a final caution: The potency of the terrantula's venom also seems to increase with size. However, this may be due to the simple fact that mature-stage spiders inject a great deal *more* of the poison than the hatchlings. No doubt the mature arachnid's fangs are much better suited to penetration of the skin than are those of the hatchlings, regardless of number.

BENEATH THE WAVES

In the course of my field research, I was able to take a tour of the Great Maze in addition to lengthy riverine journeys along both the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. I am grateful for these experiences, as I feel current zoological study is somewhat limited to terrestrial environments.

I do understand the technological—and, indeed, *biological*—hurdles faced by any researcher attempting to study marine life in its natural habitat. However, I did not want to overlook the importance of at least chronicling potential emergent species in both fresh and saltwater environments.

For obvious reasons, my endeavors in observation of these aquatic lifeforms were greatly limited. The majority of those I did encounter dwelt primarily in the topmost levels of the oceanic biosphere or even along the coastal shallows.

BLOB

On the surface, it may seem this appellation is somewhat lacking in descriptive range, it is, nonetheless, quite appropriate for the life form in question. A blob is nearly that: an amorphous mass of protoplasm. My examination of this creature was sadly short and lacked access to the equipment necessary to fully classify it, but I shall endeavor to present my findings in a coherent and succinct fashion.

A local guide, Bernard Sullerot, exposed me to this emergent species during a brief visit to the swamps of southern Louisiana. Without his finely-honed senses for the subtleties of the environment, I would never have detected the creature due to its near-transparent nature.

The blob floated about 6" below the surface of a stagnant marsh. The murkiness of the water made it nearly impossible to spot, but Mr. Sullerot quickly noted its presence. Carefully steering his pirogue, he used a long branch to disturb the water and draw the blob's notice. The creature attached itself to the branch and he brought it close to the small watercraft for my examination.

The blob, as I noted previously, was translucent and had the lumpy consistency of fish roe. It was difficult to determine the creature's exact dimensions, as it had contracted into a mass focused on the terminus of Mr. Sullerot's branch. He did, however, elaborate and explain it was likely 3' in

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A view of the majestic (and quite possibly deadly) Devil Rays of the Great Maze.

diameter and 3" thick when suspended in the water—and was only a “young ‘un,” if I remember his words correctly.

Furthermore, it seemed to exude a highly caustic secretion that quickly dissolved the stick Mr. Sullerot was using to hold it aloft. My studies were cut short when he tossed the stick further into the marsh; the creature was quickly advancing up the branch toward his hand.

The creature’s consistency leads me to believe it is a colony of single-celled amoebas. It responds to only the most basic stimuli and appears to be concerned only with feeding. From further conversation with Mr. Sullerot, I gather that blobs are rather difficult to dispatch, as their very amorphous nature makes them resistant to most natural and technological defensive systems.

DEVIL RAYS

I’d booked passage from Shan Fan to Lost Angels and, just prior to sunset, I sighted a small school of large manta-ray following the ship. At least I believed them to be manta rays, but one of the sailors on the vessel informed me the creatures were “devil rays.” He further noted I would do well to confine my activities to below the deck for the remainder of the evening.

Not being foolhardy, I did so, but I also sought a further dialogue with the gentleman. Our discussion of the devil ray and its habits proved quite revealing.

Apparently, the devil ray is a sub-species of the ray genus, but a rather voracious predator. According to the sailor, who never gave me reason to mistrust his veracity, devil ray schools occasionally follow ships through the Maze hoping to snatch a meal or two during the course of the journey.

When I asked for further details, he added that like other members of the genus, the devil ray was capable of reaching sufficient speed to actually break the surface of the water and become airborne. However, unlike its more mundane cousins, the devil ray was able to glide for dozens of yards above the water!

The creatures use this ability to swoop across ships lying low to the water and snatch unsuspecting passengers. Apparently, the devil ray envelops the victim in its “wings” and relies on its momentum to carry it—and its prey—the remaining distance into the water.

I never had the opportunity to witness this behavior, and while the thought of a gliding aquatic predator seems somewhat preposterous, so does the Mojave rattler. I would further note that the crew of the vessel on deck after dark secured themselves to the ship with rope.



The revolting fate of a hellfish's victim.

HELLFISH

I had the misfortune of witnessing a hellfish firsthand during a feeding. The creature appears to be a Portuguese man o' war grown to tremendous size. I'm uncertain of the exact dimensions as I did not have the opportunity to examine a carcass and the specimen I encountered did not seem amenable to field measurements. Given the size of its bladder—over 3' across—I'd estimate its tendrils may extend well over a hundred feet.

The hellfish I observed was in the waters near Lost Angels, not far from the Rock Island prison. It seems a detainee at that establishment had managed to effect an escape and somehow avoid the sharks for which the waters around Rock Island are notorious. Unfortunately, he ran afoul of a hellfish.

The creature mimics the behavior of the man o' war in many respects. It uses poison lashes along its tendrils to paralyze its prey—in this case the convict—for easier consumption. The hellfish deviates from the standard feeding procedure in that it actually draws its prey into the above-water bladder where it is then slowly digested.

After seeing the slowly disintegrating remains of the escapee trapped in the transparent gas

bladder, I couldn't help but wonder if he would not have been wiser to have simply served his term and returned to society a reformed and productive member.

MUDSUCKERS

These fresh-water creatures are usually found in slow-moving rivers, ponds, or marshes. I caught only a brief glimpse of one during my expeditions; it strongly resembles an extraordinarily large, oily black salamander over 5' in length.

Mudsuckers, according to interviews I conducted, are bottom dwelling aquatic creatures. They prefer darker waters or shadowed areas of clear water, such as those found under tree roots or overhangs.

My witnesses recounted only a few instances of a known mudsucker attack on a human, mainly swimmers or wading fishermen. In these cases, if the victim is not rescued immediately, seldom are any remains recovered. This leads me to believe there is potential for a higher rate of incidence than testimony indicates. Mudsuckers could well be responsible for a number of unexplained disappearances along or near calm or stagnant waters.

As none of the witnesses could recall viewing the remains of a mudsucker attack, I am, therefore, unable to answer even the most basic questions about the creature's diet or feeding habits. It does bear note that salamanders as a whole are normally herbivorous, or at their most predatory, insectivorous, which casts some doubt on my tentative classification of the mudsucker as a member of this group.

NIBBLERS

In several areas, I encountered stories of small, carnivorous fish usually referred to by the indigenous population as "nibblers," "skin pinchers," or "gnawers." For the sake of brevity, I have chosen to apply the first cultural appellation to these creatures.

NEO-ZOOLOGY: A SHORT STUDY AND SPECULATIVE BESTIARY

After examining the remains—or rather, the lack thereof—from a horse and rider that entered a ford containing a school of nibblers, I've come to the conclusion that nibblers may not be a true emergent life form. Rather, they appear to be a transplanted species of piranha, a predatory fish found in South America. Nibblers exhibit the same feeding patterns and schooling behavior as their southern counterparts.

I am currently at a loss to explain how a freshwater fish like the piranha could so quickly adapt itself to a saltwater environment. However, accounts of nibbler attacks place the fish not only in freshwater rivers, but also along coastal areas as well. Even more perplexing, I've discovered evidence of at least one attack in the Great Maze that is likely a nibbler feeding as well. The implication is that the fish is not only capable of thriving in saltwater, but of traveling great distances as well.

SAND VIPERS

To date, these coastal-fringe animals have escaped my best efforts to observe them. Witness accounts indicate the creatures favor shallow water, between 6" and 4' in depth. However, to date, no observer has actually sighted one of these animals. Therefore, the application of the term "viper" in the creature's name is purely assumptive based on the animal's apparently venomous bite.

A sand viper injects its prey with a paralytic poison to immobilize it. The viper's poison does not have any lasting debilitating effects other than a temporary loss of muscular control. Although most human victims die as a result of the sand viper's attack, this is likely due to drowning than the venom's potency.

From direct examination of viper victims, it appears the creature uses a stinger rather than fangs to administer its venom, adding strength to my doubts about the animal's true nature. Beyond that statement, I can make no further comment on the creature's nature. Due to the period of time the bodies had been in the water prior to my study, their decomposition was rather severe..

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

While conducting my research, I had the opportunity to examine evidence of a number of new species. However, I heard tales of far more undiscovered creatures than I ever managed to fully exploit. Most of these were likely either amalgams of several existing species whose characteristics had become confused by retelling and time.

Another possibility is that some were actually the tall tales my peers suggested. However, I wish to note that this does not invalidate my research as a whole. Those which I could not authenticate to satisfactory levels through the methods mentioned above, I left relegated to the realm of oral legend.

A small few do bear mention here, for reasons of popular notoriety if no other. In these cases, I was not able to document the creature's existence, yet I feel I should note these for the sake of completion, lest another fear I omitted the species altogether.

AMPHISBANEA

This creature is said to be a two-headed snake. In my travels, I attended no small number of carnivals and freak shows in the hopes of locating an otherwise unknown species and had seen more than a few two-headed snakes. The amphisbanea, however, is claimed to have a head at both ends, not two sprouting from one neck.

A general store owner in Colorado was kind enough to show me an incomplete "skeleton" of an amphisbanea for a mere dime. However, upon examination, I determined it to most likely be a fraud. It appears the owner had simply taken two snake skulls and a portion of a snake body and tacked them to a board.

Ignoring the problems posed by a creature possessing a linear digestive tract and a head at both ends, the skulls were not even of the same snake species. One was most likely a common king snake while the other appeared to belong to a pit viper. I pointed this out to the store owner, yet was unable to recover my dime.

I have yet to see even circumstantial proof of the existence of this creature.

DUST DEVIL

Although the swirling (and reputedly malevolent) masses of sand and dirt know as dust devils are common enough among the oral traditions of the Southwest, I was unable to accumulate convincing data for their existence. I found no shortage of frontiersmen willing to point to a swirling vortex in the distance and proclaim it a "dust devil," but it's my considered opinion these were meteorological and not neo-zoological phenomena.

HOOP SNAKE

According to popular myth, hoop snakes are vipers capable of biting the end of their tails and rolling downhill. Supposedly this ability allows them to overtake prey too fleet-footed for their normal mode of travel. This poses interesting musculature questions, such as how the snake is able to lift itself into a perpendicular posture to enable the "rolling" in the first place.

A trapper in the Rockies even presented me with a specimen he'd killed himself. Closer examination revealed the snake was not, in fact, a viper. Rather it had more in common with a common black snake; so much, actually, that I was inclined to classify it as such lacking further evidence. When I asked for proof of its "rolling" ability, however, the individual in question became quite agitated.

The timely arrival of a representative of the local law enforcement agency prevented the trapper from expressing his dissatisfaction with my doubt through more physical means.

JACKALOPE

The jackalope is probably one of the most famous of all Western legends. I found no shortage of "lucky jackalope's feet" for sale out West and even a stuffed "jackalope" carcass or two. However, I remain unconvinced of the creature's existence and its somewhat singular ability to affect the laws of probability.

I found no physical or circumstantial evidence of the creature's existence during my travels. Apparently, a jackalope foot is no different in taxonomy than that of a normal hare, lending itself rather readily to forgery.

As to the preserved bodies, I must confess I find the presence of small horns on the jackalope a cause for suspicion. The species lacks the mass or muscle to make such an effective defensive weapon, so there is little likelihood that such would have ever evolved. To put it plainly, any charlatan with a spare set of antlers and some glue lying around is capable of transforming a common desert hare into the "creature of legend."

It's my opinion that, pending further evidence, the jackalope must be considered a hoax with which to make light of immigrants from the East Coast.



The hoop snake, a creature of rather dubious reality.

KRAKENS

These legendary tentacled, ship-wrecking creatures have been a part of the mythology of the sea for centuries, so it's questionable that they belong in a report on neo-zoology.

NEO-ZOOLOGY: A SHORT STUDY AND SPECULATIVE BESTIARY

However, I should mention that I have found accounts of these creatures all along the western coast of the continent—especially in the Great Maze. The occasional reports of “leviathans” in the Mississippi and Missouri rivers also seem remarkably similar in nature as well. I never observed either the species itself or evidence of its passing, but the widespread nature of the sightings leads me to believe more investigation may be warranted.

Of course, mounting an expedition in search of a creature with a reputation for destroying watercraft and consuming sailors may be a bit problematic.

MAZE DRAGONS

Not once during my tour of the Maze did I catch sight of the famed Maze dragons. Nonetheless, given the widespread belief in the species' existence by locals, I am fairly convinced that such animals do exist. There is reputed to be a tame specimen of the creature in the region nearby Lost Angels, but the recent actions of the Reverend Ezekiah Grimme precluded me visiting there.

It's likely that these are actually the cause of the “sea serpents” alluded to by sailors from the Vikings through present day. However, as I lack any scientific basis for this assumption, I wish to make note that this is solely my opinion.

SIRENS

The melodic song of the siren has been a part of sea lore since at least Homer's *Odyssey*. Ergo, it's not terribly surprising that tales of these aquatic *femme fatales* would again resurface as other new life forms are discovered. I cannot in good conscience accept the tales of “mermaids” enticing sailors to their doom. The problems with an organism of this nature are many and varied.

First, such a creature would require gills to be able to live underwater. Yet, it's legendary voice also implies it possesses lungs similar to those of an oxygen-breather. No higher species, save, perhaps an African lungfish, exhibits both traits.

Furthermore, what cause would such an organism have to evolve a voice in the first place? Human voices do not carry well in a watery environment, nor are traditional lungs the best-suited organs for such aquatic communicative purposes. And to suggest the mermaid so closely resembles a human woman as to be irresistible visually is nothing short of ridiculous!

I would suggest as a possible counter-explanation that poor visibility has led witnesses have mistaken existing creatures, such as sea lions or seals for humanoid figures.

SNIPES

Although I spent many a night at the bottom of a hill while helpful guides and local woodsmen beat the bushes for these elusive birds, I never succeeded in catching one. According to oral accounts, the small, flightless avians nestle at the top of hills at night and, when startled, bolt quickly down hill. On several occasions, I thought I had captured one in a “snipe bag,” only to find it was a rock, perhaps dislodged by the bird in its rush downhill.

Normally, I would discount the existence of these creatures lacking sufficient evidence. However, the fact that the snipe is reported among many widely-separated communities across the West has convinced me to leave it as a possible emerging species.

IN CLOSING

My studies have convinced me that there are previously undiscovered or emerging species at large in the world. I have seen physical evidence of these creatures and, in many cases, visually verified their existence myself.

However, the question remains, what has precipitated their sudden appearance or, at least, prevented discovery until recent years? I suspect the answer holds more importance than simple zoological trivia. I hope in coming years to discern more on this topic.

The Unquiet Dead: A Short Treatise

By Frederick
Sutherland, M.D

Introduction

One of the greatest mysteries set before medical science in recent years is the phenomenon of spontaneous resurrection. By that I mean the reanimation of human bodies previously determined to be void of life. "Modern science "scoffs at such notions, of course. Certain authorities and numerous agencies (on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line) argue vociferously that such occurrences are nothing more than cases of either premature burials, misdiagnosis, or even a form of mass hysteria.

I can assure you this is not the case. All is not quiet in the graveyards and on the battlefields of 1877. The dead are rising.

A Little Background

Before I get too involved in my discussion, perhaps a word or two of introduction is in order. Well, maybe a bit more than a word or two, as my involvement in the study of resurrections—or the "undead" as certain journalistic outlets have labeled them—is a tale that may be of interest to some. And, even if it's not, this is my treatise and I'll include it since it's of interest to me.

My name is Frederick Sutherland—Dr. Frederick Sutherland, more precisely. I've been a practitioner of the Hippocratic sciences for nearly three decades now, and in that time I've seen things I'd never have imagined as a young, wet-behind-the-ears medical student. Back then, everything was neatly packaged in a textbook and every peg had a hole that matched it perfectly.

Let me assure you—if you've not already learned it by now— that in life, that's seldom the case.

Gettysburg

My first experience with the 'undead"—yes, I know it's not a "scientific" term, but it does get the job done—happened nearly 15 years ago near a sleepy little town in Pennsylvania named Gettysburg. Maybe you've heard of—if not, I suspect you should get out more.

I won't go into the details of the battle—this isn't a history lecture after all—but I will tell you a little about the field hospital I was assigned to. The color of uniform I was wearing isn't important now, although I confess at the time it seemed to be the most important thing in the world. Like many, I was filled with self-righteous patriotic fervor and itching to do my part. A few years and a few hundred thousand deaths tend to take the sparkle off idealism.

If you've never had the opportunity to visit a field hospital after a major battle, spare yourself the nightmares and don't. The repugnance of the average slaughterhouse pales in comparison to the type of brutal butchery that takes place behind those canvas walls. Cut, stitch, and cauterize—that pretty much sums up a battlefield surgeon's repertoire. Don't take that as condemnation—after all, I wielded a bone saw with the worst of them. When you've got 2,000 casualties and ten operating tables, bedside manner is one of the first fatalities.

As you've guessed, we lost a lot of fine young men that day, men that should have been home tending their farms and their pretty young wives. It still turns my stomach to think of it. But senseless slaughter wasn't the worst of what happened.

The worst came when some of those young troops, after hours of lying in shallow trench graves, stood back up with a terrible, unholy hunger. The authorities deny to this day it ever happened. They say that it was a case of battle fatigue playing on men's nerves combined with rushed medical treatment leading to soldiers being dumped into graves before they were truly dead.

I was there. The dead did clamber out of the ground. Rigor mortis caused their muscles to crack as they walked. I saw several of them stabbed, clubbed, and shot before they crossed the Styx a second time. The government can say what it wants, but I know what I saw.

Besides, when's the last time a figment of a man's imagination cracked open his friend's skull and devoured the brains?

Pursuit of the Truth

The events of that horrible day have stayed with me in my dreams, and likely will until I breath my last. And while I cannot concretely prove this, I believe that what I experienced at Gettysburg was the very beginning of it all. Nothing of the like had been reported before that day.

In any case, a few more years of the war were scarring enough for this soul, and I retired my commission. I headed west eventually settling in Texas, and set up a practice in a respectable town. During that time, I continued to see evidence that what was once an immutable law of the universe—that death was inevitable and final—had apparently been repealed. Yet, oddly, no one in a position of authority, governmental or academic, would admit to what I had seen with my very own eyes.

After years of frustration, I decided to investigate this anomaly myself. As a respected doctor (although I expect that status will likely change upon publication of this work), I've had ample opportunity to study both the dead and the undead.

What follows is a summation of my findings in these matters.



The horrors of Gettysburg are still fresh in my mind after all these years. The dead walked there. I saw it.

The Dead Walk

One thing I discovered as I dug into the world of the undead is that there is more than a single type of revenant. The resurrected soldiers at Gettysburg are but the tip of a much larger iceberg. However, those "walking dead" seem to be far and away the most common form of reanimant—or at least as far as my experience goes they are. So, I shall start with them.

Dead or Not

In order to do this topic justice, I'd better lay the groundwork. All of my observations are based on bodies I'm *certain* were dead prior to their resurrection. I want to be absolutely clear about that—there is no chance these were comatose or catatonic patients who suddenly woke up.

As the only doctor worth his salt for about a days ride in any direction, I'm usually the person called on for grave injuries or illness. I'm also the person most likely to make the determination of whether a man's still among the living or if he's in need of reservations with the local undertaker.

Let me assure you that after thirty-some odd years of doing it, I've got a pretty good eye for who's dead and who's not. You'd trust a man who's been handling cattle for that long to tell you if an animal was a bull or a cow, so you can trust me when I say a body's passed on. I'm not saying some folks aren't put into the ground early—I'm sure it happens—but not on my watch.

As far as the claims of mass hysteria or hallucinations go, please see my comments on Gettysburg. I don't doubt that the human mind is capable of some incredible flights of fancy, but daydreams don't kill folks. These undead leave evidence of their passing, usually in the form of victims.

By the way, I have no scientific answer for why the undead are driven to commit acts of violence and downright evil. I've got my suspicions which I'll get to later, but no real answers.

In short, I've seen the dead walk and I've seen physical proof of their deeds after the fact. Down here in cattle country, there's a saying: If it looks like a cow pie, smells like a cow pie, and tastes like a cow pie, then it's probably a cow pie. There's a lot of wisdom in that adage.

What Makes the Dead Walk

That is a question that I don't yet have the answer to. I've managed to compile a fair deal of information, but I still can't give a logical reason for resurrections. Deep in my gut, I think the light of science fails when you try to shine it into too dark a corner. It just isn't bright enough to dispel all the shadows hiding there. So, rather than focus on what I can't tell you, let me give you what I can.



The undead I have encountered were remarkably resilient.

Cardiopulmonary System

The dead don't bleed. You can shoot, stick, cut, or saw them and you're not going to get anything but an ooze of dark, half-coagulated blood. Believe me, I've tried it all. I discovered this fact early on in my studies and have never found one of these undead that contradicts it.

That tidbit of information led me to further revelations, most of which are nothing more than obvious extrapolations. After all, if the blood's not flowing, it's a safe bet the heart's not beating. And if the heart's not beating, the lungs probably aren't working either.

It took some digging—literally—to prove those two theories, though. First, listening to the chest of a walking dead (strapped to an examination table, of course) with a stethoscope, I did detect a fluttery palpitation. Not a heartbeat exactly, more like something was squirming against the rib cage. It was a little unsettling, I'll tell you and it took me a minute to steady my hand enough to open the thing's chest.

You know what I found? Nothing, squat, nada. To this day, I don't know what makes that noise, but it's not the heart. That organ is as still as a stone.

The lungs may or may not move in a walking dead. Either way, it doesn't make any difference—the thing doesn't breathe. The only reason you'll ever find a chest rising on one of the undead is if you've got a sly one that's hiding its true nature—and don't kid yourself, most of these things are as sneaky as a rattler with no tail and meaner, to boot.

Nervous System

The walking dead have some working nerves, that's certain. The sense of sight, hearing, and touch are definitely present in the things and at least as effective as they were in life. The abominations exhibit no handicaps when reacting to their environment—or hunting down prey. By "prey" I do mean living humans.

I can't determine if taste and smell also continue to function after death, but I've found no reason to believe otherwise. These abominations do have a certain hunger for human brains, and, as horrifying as that is, it does seem to indicate the ability to differentiate tastes—at least to a minimal degree.

Muscular control is also maintained at least at the level possessed during life. While undead freshly revived are usually hampered by the stiffness of rigor mortis, continued exercise rapidly breaks this down and the revenant is soon moving freely.

However, the pain receptors in a walking dead seem to be reduced in effectiveness. The abomination is aware of injury, but apparently suffers little or even no pain from a wound, no matter how severe. This, combined with the lack of blood loss, makes the undead extraordinarily resilient and immune to physical shock.

Digestive Systems

Undead appear to have very restricted diets. Their digestive tracts appear to process only meat—raw, cooked, or rotten, it doesn't matter. This selective digestion, while not unheard of in nature, is nonetheless interesting given that the former living body was able to digest these other foods.

Any other substance, whether it be solid or liquid, vegetable or mineral, merely passes unchanged through their systems. Trust me on this; there's no need to go into details of my research in this area.

They are likewise immune to all known drugs, regardless of the pharmaceutical's purpose.

Oddly, the walking dead do not seem to *require* sustenance. Healing functions are impaired without access to meat, but lacking physical damage, this form of undead is totally self-sustaining—without cannibalization of its own body.

I have no explanation for this.

Miscellaneous Observations

There are other, secondary effects of the organ system failures I've noted above.

For instance, many undead seem to manifest a greater voluntary muscle strength than their living counterparts. While the increase doesn't exceed established human capability, it is noticeable when one of these things whallops you. I suspect this is a result of a combination of reduced sensitivity to pain and the absence of any psychological restraint against using extremes of force, similar to some violent lunatics.

As noted earlier, the walking dead do not require food or water to sustain themselves. Meat is needed only to heal physical injury. Even this form of food passes through the system undigested within the course of a day if not used for healing purposes. Nonetheless, most undead of this variety are driven by an uncontrollable urge to devour human flesh.

Also, the undead seem capable of healing their injuries much more quickly than a living being—to the point of being able to re-attach or regenerate severed limbs!. As with much of the finer points of resurrection, I have no ready answer to this question.

Finally, the reproductive system in a revenant suffers complete failure. This isn't surprising, given the lack of a functioning circulatory system, and most walking dead do not seem to be driven by any urge to reproduce—only to eat.

Mental Capacity

The vast majority of revenants I've studied retain only the barest vestiges of their former personalities. They appear to have unrestricted access to all memories, but lack any emotional ties to the world of the living. Nor is the reasoning power in any way hindered by the undead state. Often the revenants display a cunning *beyond* that of their former personality—although intellectual pursuits are not usually of interest to the re-animated.

You've probably noticed I did not use absolutes in the above paragraph. That's because in a very few cases, a strong-willed individual is able to maintain her personality following resurrection. But even these folks seem to fight baser urges from time to time, and occasionally even lose control completely, becoming as animalistic as the more common variety.

Killing the Dead

With no functioning circulatory system, muted or even absent pain sensors, and no need for food, water, or even air, the walking dead are nearly unstoppable. The preferred course of action would be to ignore them and hope they go away, but their inexplicable malevolent nature forgoes that solution.

These undead do have a weak point—the brain. It seems the entire motivation for the abomination lies in the very seat of the soul. Destroy the brain and you de-animate the walking dead. As a corollary, corpses with fatal head wounds *never* rise as undead of this sort.

I don't know any medical reason that can explain how the brain itself is capable of animating a corpse without sustenance, but that certainly appears to be the case.

For that reason, I recommend any medical professional—Hell, anyone—faced with an obviously dead body to take a fairly simple step to insure resurrection does not occur. An ice-pick or similar object, inserted at the base of the skull just above the first vertebrae scrambles the brain more than adequately to make certain the body does not rise again. Nor does this procedure mar the body in such a fashion as to disturb loved ones at a memorial viewing.

At any rate, that's how I handle the situation.

Vampires

Another form of the living dead that has come to my attention over the years is the vampire. Originally, I scoffed at reports of blood-drinking ghosts or monsters as nothing more than superstition and fear combined with one of the many epidemics that rage across the North American continent. Or perhaps it was nothing more than an infestation of prairie ticks that had yet to be discovered.

Then, I realized I was committing exactly the same sort of stiff-necked rationalization that I accused other institutions of practicing with respect to the walking dead.

After years of examining both reports and victims of vampire attacks, I've come to the conclusion that these creatures do exist.

The Nature of Vampirism

Like the walking dead, vampires are driven by an overpowering hunger. However, vampires lust not for flesh, but blood—most often that of living humans. I initially questioned whether or not vampires shared the status of undead with the walking dead—in spite of legends, I am something of a scientist, mind you—but I found that these creatures are also revenants from the grave.

I arrived at my conclusions while studying the creatures' apparent infectious nature.

Infection

Over the course of my research, I've discovered that a victim of a vampire attack, if killed, often returns from death as a vampire himself. The key factor is the cause of death. The victim must have died as a result of the vampire's bite—or perhaps the associated blood drain.

This would imply, on the surface at least, that vampirism is a form of contagion, perhaps passed on by blood-to-blood, or maybe saliva-to-blood, contact. Yet, after further experimentation, this is not the case. Apparently, vampirism is only contracted if the victim *dies* from the bite.

And, before the questions arise, I am certain the victims I examined were dead—allow me to refer you to the appropriate passages above. So, without a doubt, vampirism is a form of undeath.

Vampiric Biology

Unfortunately, I was never able to study a "living" vampire. While part of this is due to the sheer ferocity of these creatures, the real stumbling block lies in a rather peculiar aspect of their body chemistry.

You see, vampires burn like a tumbleweed soaked in lamp oil under the light of the sun. I cannot provide an adequate medical reason for this, but it does occur in every single case I encountered. Within moments of exposure, the creature began to smolder and



The nosferatu, a feral creature of the night.

then burst into flame. As you can imagine, this does complicate a thorough examination, especially in west Texas.

However, what little research I did accomplish leads me to believe the vampire shares many traits with the walking dead: reduced pain sensitivity, no cardiopulmonary activity, and minimal digestive action.

Additionally, many vampires exhibit marked increase in physical strength, speed, and resilience, far exceeding human norms. Nor are they even as susceptible to corporeal damage as a walking dead. On more than one instance, I saw a vampire shrug off an attack that would have gutted a living human.

Weaknesses

The brain does not appear to be the motivating force in vampires. Instead, it seems to reside in either the non-functioning heart or perhaps the spine. I've arrived at this conclusion based on observation of slain vampires.

Only one method seems to work consistently—total decapitation. I believe this is due to complete severance of the spine.

Another temporary tactic employed to some success is impaling the creature's heart. I suggest this works not due to damage to the non-functioning circulatory organ itself, but because such a "stake" is liable to sever the spine as well. Interestingly, the stake is effective only as long as it remains imbedded in the creature, implying the vampire is capable of near instantaneous nerve regeneration.

Other substances, such as garlic and roses seem to repel certain vampires—there do appear to be more than one "breed"—but these are *not* reliable in all circumstances.

The International Vampire

Adding even more weight to argument for the existence of vampires is the remarkable cross-cultural nature of the vampire legends. It seems no matter where in the world one looks, legends of blood-drinking creatures of the night abound. Most of the legends brought to North America have their origin in the Slavic regions of Europe, but the mythologies of India, China and the islands of the Orient all have their legends as well. Stories of the hopping vampires (or *gyonshee*) and the extremely odd



Mysterious places often seem inhabited by unseen presences. Spirits haunt the desolate places.

penanggalan (reputedly just a floating head and entrails that attacks lone travellers) are familiar to any who have shared the camp fires of Chinese rail workers.

While my study of vampires has mostly encompassed the "European" variety, if one is to accept the existence of them, one must also accept at least the possible existence of the others. Not a very comforting thought.

Ghosts

Before I sum up and present my conclusions, I'd like to take a moment and address the subject of apparitions. Stories of these spectral haunts abound throughout the country and, in light of my research into corporeal undead, I am no longer inclined to dismiss them as balderdash.

I have not had the opportunity to thoroughly examine a ghostly haunting or even witness a manifestation, so be aware that my ramblings are nothing more than supposition based on tall tales and legends.

I suggest that perhaps a ghost is merely a "psychic echo"—a fading remnant of a person's soul, not unlike a shout bouncing from a distant canyon wall. Of course there is no basis for this in current medical thought, but the soul, or personality, if you're of a less metaphysical bent, is evident in a person's every day activities. I see no reason not to believe it may leave a lasting impression on its surroundings for a while after it has departed. A fingerprint may last for years depending on the medium and a keen-nosed hound can track a person by smell weeks after their passing. If these physical elements remain, why not the spiritual as well?

If you accept my hypothesis—and, remember, it is nothing *but* a hypothesis—the psychic imprint is therefore also likely to be keyed to some item or place in the material world. An "anchor," for the echo, if you will. By discerning the anchor of such a spirit, it might be possible to gain some insight into the nature of it.

That is, of course, only my personal opinion on the nature of ghosts. With that and a nickel, you may be able to purchase a cup of coffee.

Conclusions

Earlier in this manuscript, I hinted at my opinion on the nature of the undead. To be perfectly honest, I'm reticent to reveal my true thoughts on the subject for fear of being thought a senile old crackpot and thus damage the credibility of my other findings. But I've delayed the inevitable long enough. I fought to find a publisher for this piece for the very reason I felt I *needed* to reveal what I suspected, so here goes.

I firmly believe that the human soul—or will, or mind, or what have you—is incapable of enacting resurrection on its own. Without another catalyst, death *is* permanent for humans. I believe that *something* else inhabits the body after death, using it for its own purposes. You can call this other force what you will—demon, spirit, or ghost—but it is an evil entity bent on using the body for foul ends.

I base this belief on the obvious and malevolent change in personality following revivification as much as I do the physically inexplicable nature of the undead. The few with enough force of will to balk the possessing entity seem to fight a constant battle for dominance over their own, dead shell. I fully realize that this would seem to indicate the influence of forces outside the realm of scientific experience—and that thought has caused me no little concern, let me assure you.

I take from this assumption one spark of hope. In a world such undiluted evil exists, good of equal or greater power must also exist, for without it, humanity would have long fallen victim to its unseen foes.

At least that's what lets me put out the lamp and sleep at night.

Sometimes.

19th September, 1877
Stockton Hospital for the Insane
Stockton, California

Dear Sirs,

I realize the following essay is in all probability a somewhat esoteric missive for an organization called the "Explorers Society". Yet, I feel my theories have value, and if by their publication even a few minds are enlightened, I have performed at least a minor service to humanity.

*My name is Dr. Alfred Jensen, and I am (or was) what others in the medical profession refer to as an **alienist**. That means, in layman's terms, I specialize in hysteria, insanity, and other disorders of the mind. I was, until recently, a member of the staff of the Stockton Hospital for the Insane in what was once the state of California.*

The Explorers Society is, in all honesty, my last resort for publication of my brief report. The American Journal of Insanity most recently denied it, ostensibly because it "preaches hysteria rather than prescribes an effective treatment or preventive."

That summation is essentially correct. I do not propose any astounding panacea for mental disorders in my missive. The reason for its absence is simple: Many of the so-called lunatics I have attended are, in fact, not truly insane. I believe these tortured souls fear the dark not out of delusional fantasies, but rather because there is something in the dark. I believe that mankind's deepest fears are reality. Or rather are becoming reality. In other words, I believe the childhood terrors like the "Thing Under the Bed" may really exist if the collective subconscious wills it so.

Early Society

Primitive societies often depict a startling similarity in fears. By the term fears I am not referring to amorphous concerns, such as drought or even a powerful storm. I mean rather the form of fear—the monster that puts a face to the deepest horrors of mankind.

A couple of startling examples of coinciding supernatural creatures can be found among the Indians of our own continent. The wendigo, a cannibal winter spirit, is found across several tribal and language barriers, with its name nearly identical from tribe to tribe. Regardless of the exact pronunciation (windeego, windigo, widigo, to name but a few), the creature is always a flesh-eating monster that sways others to its evil practices.

Another example is found in the uktena (also unktehi), a large, water serpent. It is referenced by not only the northern tribes of the Great Plains, but also in the mythology of southeastern groups. These are two groups that had no contact. The name is, once again, nearly identical in pronunciation and the creature's outlandish description, which includes antlers and multicolored bands on its neck, also correspond.

Before you declare this "simple coincidence" let me address a few further examples.

European legends are well documented among anthropologists. Among them, we find references to black dogs that cross language, cultural, and even geographic boundaries. These ill-omened creatures exist in England (gabriel hounds), Germany (barghests), and former Saxon lands (gabbe brecht). In every case, the beast's appearance marked a coming catastrophe.

The “little people” of popular myth are one of the most widespread beliefs, next to perhaps that of dragons. These small, malicious beings are found in nearly every culture. The names may vary: trolls, the canotina of the Lakota, tommyknockers, etc. But the general nature of the being is always the same.

Each of these examples embodies a powerful fear held by a variety of cultures. In every case, the monster named is a corporeal expression of an incorporeal concept. The wendigo represents the inherent evil in man, the uktena the awesome force of a river in flood, the gabriel hound apprehension, and the little people capricious misfortune.

The fact that so many cultures have placed the same form to these fears cannot be merely coincidental. I put forth the hypothesis that the strength of these fears somehow gives rise to the very entities that personify them.

Perhaps there is some merit to the preaching of fire-and-brimstone ministers and their warnings of fiery demons. The very strength of a congregation’s belief may give rise to such a monster!



Modern Society

It may be easy to scoff at the creatures of primitive myth as superstition. My own superiors have on several occasions done just that. Many times my work has been decried as “questionable” or even “pure fantasy,” but one needs only look at the world around us to see evidence of my theory being realized nearly daily.

Many workers today fear the advances of technology. One of the most prevalent fears in the collective conscious is that the wonders of steam-power will soon make the average workman a useless appendix to society. Strangely enough, Dr. Darius Hellstromme’s automatons seem to do just that!

What are these tireless machines if not the embodiment of common fears of mechanical replacement? Is it coincidental that no one can learn the secret of their construction? That they conveniently destroy the secret of their mechanical sentience when they cease to function? I think not. Rather, I believe this is just further proof that they are creations of fear. As such, they are proof against scientific analysis. At least as we understand it today, that is.

How long is it before we see new manifestations of horror brought on by further advances in so-called science?

The War continues unabated after more than a decade and a half, with inventors producing more and more horrific creations every year. Although I can’t imagine anything more frightening than the poison gases employed during the Sixth Battle of Bull Run, I’m sure the collective subconscious will find something.

One area of academic pursuit that seems to have prospered from continued warfare is that of medicine. However, those very battlefield doctors that are forced to improvise new techniques to save lives produce hundreds of hideously scarred or limbless veterans who repulse and even terrify their former loved ones. Even the fabled Dr. Frankenstein himself would stand in awe over the work of some of these surgeons.

I have little doubt the Hippocratic arts are soon to spawn some terror any day now, thanks to the agitated minds of humanity.

Loss of Identity

A far more subtle fear plaguing the collective subconscious is the loss of the self. As society grows daily and urbanization spreads, the common person finds herself submerged in a faceless mass of humanity. This loss of identity may not be merely the hysteria of a strained mind.

Patients complaining of loved ones or friends who aren't themselves, literally, are becoming more and more common. Even more disturbing is the feeling some patients have expressed that someone is trying to replace them! The frequency of such symptoms leads me to the conclusion that these events are actually occurring and are another manifestation of the collective subconscious,

My Request

As you can see, my theory is not the "ravings of a madman" or "a fanatic's delusion" as my former superiors claim. Obviously, I am not only completely possessed of my senses and sane, but one of the few with the clarity of vision to realize the danger society faces! The fools do not realize the danger that lurks under their very noses! The people must be warned!



Unfortunately, I am no longer in a capacity by which I can hope to bring this threat to the attention of the general public. I have been remanded to the care of my own hospital "until such time as I do not pose a threat to society through my incompetence."

I do not expect such a day to ever arrive.

This represents my last attempt for I used the last of my influence (and wealth) to bribe an orderly to deliver this essay for me. I only hope you see fit to publish it. The shadows in the corner of my cell are quite dark at night. Things move there. I have seen them. I am beginning to fear the consequences of my own terror. They are coming for me.

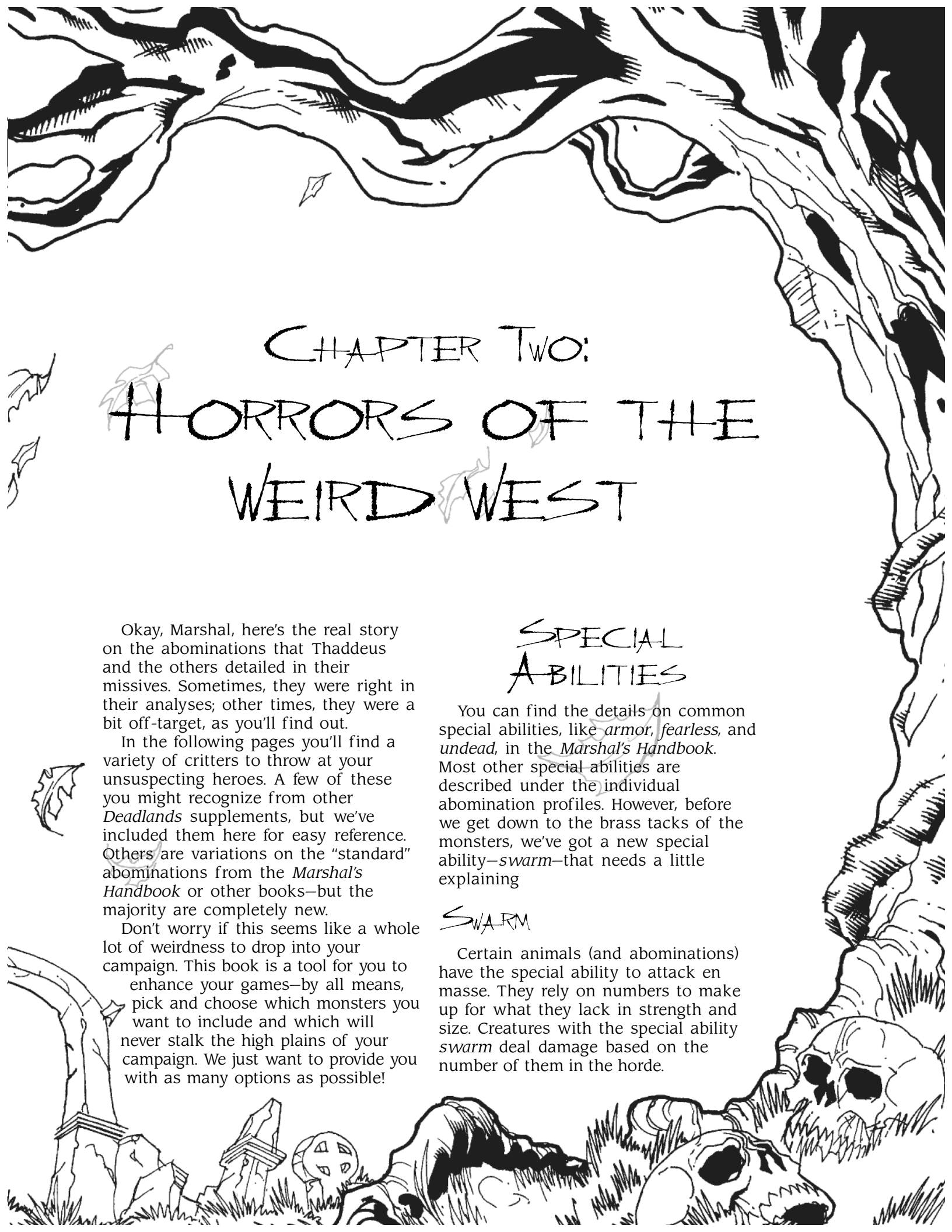
God have mercy on my soul.

-Dr. Alfred Jenson

THE MARSHAL'S HANDBOOK







CHAPTER TWO: HORRORS OF THE WEIRD WEST

Okay, Marshal, here's the real story on the abominations that Thaddeus and the others detailed in their missives. Sometimes, they were right in their analyses; other times, they were a bit off-target, as you'll find out.

In the following pages you'll find a variety of critters to throw at your unsuspecting heroes. A few of these you might recognize from other *Deadlands* supplements, but we've included them here for easy reference. Others are variations on the "standard" abominations from the *Marshal's Handbook* or other books—but the majority are completely new.

Don't worry if this seems like a whole lot of weirdness to drop into your campaign. This book is a tool for you to enhance your games—by all means, pick and choose which monsters you want to include and which will never stalk the high plains of your campaign. We just want to provide you with as many options as possible!

SPECIAL ABILITIES

You can find the details on common special abilities, like *armor*, *fearless*, and *undead*, in the *Marshal's Handbook*. Most other special abilities are described under the individual abomination profiles. However, before we get down to the brass tacks of the monsters, we've got a new special ability—*swarm*—that needs a little explaining

SWARM

Certain animals (and abominations) have the special ability to attack en masse. They rely on numbers to make up for what they lack in strength and size. Creatures with the special ability *swarm* deal damage based on the number of them in the horde.



Draw one set of action cards for the whole swarm and make one *fightin' brawlin'* roll for each person being attacked this way. Don't count the defensive bonus for any weapons or *fightin'* skill, nor can an opponent take an active defense against the swarm. Standard tactics are of no use against a mass of tiny opponents!

The description tells the number of creatures required to *swarm* an opponent and the amount of damage done by the critters on a successful attack. Less than that amount does no damage to a victim. For every multiple of the required number, add another die of damage. Also, the more attackers, the more likely they are to actually hit their victim, so add a +1 to the swarm's *fightin'* roll for every multiple of the swarm number after

the first. For example, rats do 1d6 damage for every 5 in the horde, so 25 rats get a +4 to their *fightin'* roll and do 5d6 damage.

Remember, those numbers are animals per cowpoke, not total animals.

As you've probably guessed, this makes critter hordes nothing to sneeze at! Although a hero can probably knock out one or two of the swarm on every action, he's usually got to take out 10 or more to drop the swarm a notch. Your posse is probably going to show rats and the like a little more respect from now on, Marshal!

NEO-ZOOLOGY

Thaddeus Washington's paper concerning "neo-zoology" is certainly a provocative document, and was sure to cause quite a furor among the Explorers Society membership—if it hadn't been intercepted by the Texas Rangers, that is. But just how accurate is it?

Well, it hits pretty often, but Thaddeus' reliance on pure science keeps him from completely understanding the nature of his "emergent species." After all, the influence of otherworldly beings of pure evil is hardly regarded as scientific fact!

With that in mind, let's take a look at the real story on the critters the scientist has encountered.

CARCAJOU

Thaddeus nailed the carcajou pretty dead on. The carcajou is the wolverine's *meaner* (and Reckoner-inspired) cousin. The monster has the same ferocity as the smaller animal, but a great deal more strength—and razor-sharp claws and teeth to back it up!

All this fury comes at a price—the carcajou is constantly hungry. In order to conserve its energy, the monster hides under rocky overhangs or fallen logs near game trails and water holes. It lunges at its prey in a whirlwind of fang and fur, making short work of any animal up to—and including—a full-grown bear. On the rare occasion the creature bags more food than it can consume, it regurgitates what its already eaten and gorges again.

The carcajou also strips trap lines—and trappers, if they're unlucky. On rare occasions, carcajous have wiped out small herds of cattle that wandered near a lair.

PROFILE: CARCAJOU

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:4d12+2, Q:3d12+6, S:4d10, V:2d12+2

Climbin' 1d12+2, dodge 3d12+2, fightin': brawlin' 5d12+2, sneak 2d12+2

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d6, M:3d10, Sm:1d8, Sp:2d12

Overawe 4d10, trackin' 2d8

Pace: 14

Size: 4 (see below)

Wind: –

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Armor: -2 (light). Thick fur.

Damage: Claws (STR+1d6, AP 2), bite (STR+1d4). The carcajou can make two claw attacks and one bite on each of its Action Cards. The monster can split these attacks among up to three opponents within 10' of each other.

Dense Body: The carcajou, although barely 3' high at the shoulder, weighs nearly 400 lbs. As a result, it takes damage as if it were Size 8 instead of 4.

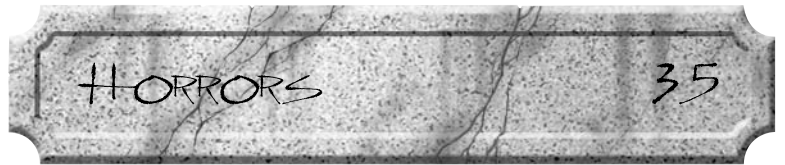
Fearless

Rage: The carcajou ignores up to 2 levels of wound penalties.

Description: A carcajou is a 3' tall, nightmarish version of a wolverine. Its mouth has two rows of triangular, serrated teeth and its paws are tipped by 3" claws capable of scoring stone. The monster's fur is a dark brown, with lighter coloring around its muzzle. Its eyes are large and have oddly human-like irises and pupils.

CATAMOUNTS

Catamounts are exactly as Thaddeus described them, with one potentially deadly difference—they're far more intelligent than he believes. These abominations are as intelligent as the average cowpoke and a fair amount more cunning. It's well within their abilities to locate a trap, move it to a



different location, and use it to capture the original trapper.

The monster also uses its uncanny voice to mimic human cries for help or screams. Its favorite method of ambush is to hide on an overhanging branch and lure a victim underneath. Once in position, the catamount digs its rear claws into the limb and swings down with its body to snatch the victim back up into the tree, where it quickly guts him and feasts. Often the catamount leaves the remains in the branches, further confusing any hunters.

Catamounts are solitary predators.

PROFILE: CATAMOUNT

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d12, Q:2d12+2, S:4d12, V:2d10

Climbin' 5d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d10, sneak 6d10, swimmin' 1d10

Mental: C:3d10, K:2d6, M:2d10, Sm:3d6, Sp:3d8

Bluff 3d6, guts 3d8, overawe 4d10, search 4d10, trackin' 3d10

Pace: 18

Size: 9

Wind: 18

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Caterwaul: After dark, the abomination's yowl has a spine-chilling effect on folks up to a mile away. Any within earshot must make an Onerous (7) *guts* roll. It takes the catamount one Action Card to yowl this way.

Chameleon Coat: The catamount can subtly change the patterns and color of its fur to match its background, giving the monster a +4 on any *sneak* roll to avoid being spotted.

Damage: Claw (STR+1d6), bite (STR+1d4). When hanging from a tree as described above, the catamount can make two claw attacks and one bite.

Leaping: A catamount can spring up to 30' on any of its Action Cards. If it attacks at the end of this leap, it

can attack with two claws and a bite at a +2 to its *fightin'* roll.

Mimicry: The catamount can change its yowl to sound like a woman's cry for help or even a frightened scream.

Night Vision: As long as there is any light, a catamount can see as if it were daylight. It cannot see in total darkness, but its other senses (smell, hearing) compensate somewhat, so that it only receives a -4 on Trait and Aptitude rolls.

Prehensile Paws: A catamount's paws are very flexible, allowing it to carry objects a short distance. Its rear paws are also very dexterous and it can hang from a branch using only its hind legs.

Description: The catamount is a 10' long great cat—a good deal larger than a mountain lion. Its coat is usually a mottled brown and tan, but this changes according to its background. Although its paws are markedly more hand-like than those of other cats, the true indicator that

the creature is more than a mere animal is in the malicious intelligence that shines in its eyes.

CEMETERY WOLVES

These coyote-like creatures are not, as Thaddeus has suggested, a form of hyena. They exhibit near-human intelligence and dexterous forepaws, and are much more dangerous customers than the African canines they slightly resemble.

This monster is most often encountered around battlefields or shallow mass graves. Although it feasts on corpses, the cemetery wolf also preys on those too wounded to defend against it. Many screams that echo through the night after a battle are due to packs of these monsters moving among the still living casualties left on the field. Occasionally, it may dig in established cemeteries, which invariably leads to suggestions of ghouls among those who know of such things.

The creature is adapted to its carrion-eater role, much like a vulture. Its muzzle is bare of fur, so that gore doesn't get trapped there as it burrows into a corpse to snatch at prize bits. Its paws have long, hardened claws to allow it to dig up shallow graves quickly. Finally, its mouth is filled with several canine teeth that jut outward from its nearly lipless mouth for ripping dead flesh quickly.

These monsters usually hunt in packs of 10-20. They are *extremely* cunning and able to communicate with each other through their high pitched barks and howls.

Cemetery wolves are found across the Weird West. However, they're most concentrated along areas of frequent battles between the U.S. and the Confederacy.

PROFILE: CEMETERY WOLF

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:4d8, Q:3d6, S:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 2d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8, sneak 4d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d6, M:2d4, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d4

Search 4d10, trackin' 6d10



Pace: 8

Size: 5

Wind: 10

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Damage: Claws (STR+1d6), bite (STR+1d4)

Night Vision: These creatures are nocturnal hunters. As long as there is any illumination, they can see as if it were full daylight.

Prehensile Claws: The monster's forepaws can be perform simple hand-like actions. For example, it can open coffins, turn doorknobs, or even undo clothing. It cannot, however, manipulate hand weapons or deal a good poker hand.

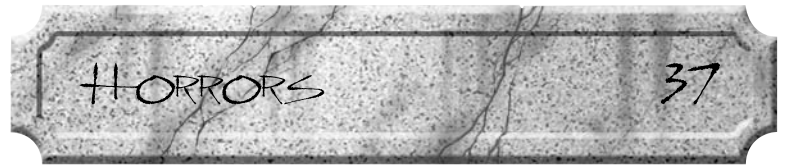
Description: This monster looks something like an overgrown coyote with a hairless nose, protruding teeth, and odd forepaws. The front legs are more heavily muscled than the back, giving the creature a strange hump to its spine. Its fur is dark brown with a black stripe along its back and a random spotted pattern on its sides. The monsters communicate through a series of yips and barks that sound almost like maniacal laughter or screaming.

PIASA

The piasa does exist, reborn courtesy of the Reckoners. While the original piasa may very well have been a form of dinosaur as Thaddeus suggests, the recent incarnation is closer in nature to a cross between a bat and a woodpecker—with a little lizard thrown in for spice.

Piasas hunt at night, diving onto their prey from the dark sky and pinning them to the ground with their enormous wing membranes. Once its victim is so trapped, the abomination uses its hard beak to puncture the skull, allowing it to lap out brain matter—the monster's only food. The piasa hunts any creature up to Size 10, but favors cows, horses, and, of course, humans.

Piasas are normally solitary hunters, but nested pairs are fiercely loyal and fight to the death to protect each other.



The abomination is found along the central Mississippi and Missouri rivers. It favors hilly and rocky terrain that allows it to swoop onto its prey from above. As yet, it hasn't spread further west than the Rockies, north of the Great Lakes or east of western Tennessee and Kentucky.

PROFILE: PIASA

Corporeal: D:1d6, N:3d10, Q:3d12, S:2d12+4, V:3d8

Climbin' 1d10, dodge 2d10, fightin' brawlin' 4d10, sneak 3d10 (7d10 from the air)

Mental: C:3d10, K:1d4, M:3d4, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d6

Search 4d10

Pace: 8 (ground)/24 (flying)

Size: 10

Wind: 14

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: -4 (light). Thick hide.

Damage: Claws (STR+1d6) or beak (STR+2d8). The piasa can make two claw attacks if it is flying.

Envelop: If the piasa gets a raise on its *fightin'* roll, it has enveloped its opponent (up to Size 10) in its "wings". It does its beak damage automatically to its victim's head on each of its subsequent Action Cards. The victim can break free by winning an opposed test of *Strength*.

Night Vision: The piasa can see in all but total darkness as if it were daylight.

Weakness-Light: In any light brighter than a torch, the piasa suffers -2 to all Traits and Aptitude rolls.

Description: The piasa stands 7' tall at the shoulder and has a nearly 35' wingspan. The monster's wings are modified hands, like a bat's. Its feet end in long, gray talons and its otherwise bat-like face has a narrow, piercing beak. Its hide is black as the deepest night.

PRAIRIE TICKS & QUEENS

Thaddeus is pretty much on the money with his analysis of the prairie tick as well. (We told you he did pretty well, overall.)

Prairie tick queens evolve from “drone” prairie ticks. This usually occurs in two instances—if the tick is carried far from its nest before its host succumbs, or the nest grows too large and some members are forced out. This migration/evolution process makes prairie ticks very prolific.

The queen is a fat and lazy creature, seldom leaving the nest’s egg chamber. She remains underground and feeds from her bloated drones. She give birth to all of the tick on the nest, and her children protect her fiercely. All members of a nest converge to protect the queen should she be threatened.

Prairie tick warrens are usually labyrinths of small, 2’ diameter tunnels that may stretch as far as a quarter mile in any direction. Rooting prairie ticks out of the ground is therefore very difficult. The queen’s egg chamber is much larger than other chambers—often more than 20’ in diameter—and usually located near the center of the warrens.

Within an egg chamber are as many as 40 eggs and 20 or more prairie tick hatchlings, depending on how successful the drones have been in securing blood. A queen’s reproductive cycle depends entirely on the amount of blood she receives.

The hatchlings often ride on the queen’s body, massed on her thorax and distended abdomen. When threatened, the queen directs the tiny arachnids—each the size of a good-sized tarantula—to swarm the nearest warm body. After all, she can always spawn more should the “babies” be killed!

A hatchling can crawl down a victim’s mouth and feed, just like a full-grown tick, but each hatchling only

drains 1 Wind per hour. An individual hatchling can only drain 25 Wind before it is sated, so a number of the buggers have to get down a cowpoke’s craw to bleed him dry.

Once full, the hatchling is driven by the same compulsion to return to the nest to feed the queen. However, hatchlings lack the strength to burst out of host like a full-grown tick. Instead, they must crawl back up the throat (or in the other direction, if you’re feeling *really* sadistic, Marshal). This is an extremely painful process that takes 2d4 rounds and does 1d6 damage to the host’s guts every round until the swollen bug gets free.

Castor oil treatment, as described in the *Marshal’s Handbook*, is just as effective against hatchlings.

PROFILE:

PRAIRIE TICK QUEEN

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:4d10, Q:3d8, S:2d10, V:4d12

Fightin’: brawlin’ 4d10

Mental: C:3d8, K:1d6, M:2d10, Sm:1d6, Sp:1d8

Pace: 6

Size: 4

Wind: –

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Damage: Hooks (STR+1d4). With a raise on her *fightin’*: *brawlin’* attack, the queen also bites her victim, draining blood for (STR) brawling damage.

Hive Mind: The queen can communicate with all prairie ticks in the nest out to a range of 100 yards. This allows her to coordinate the nest’s defensive efforts and ambushes of nearby prey.

Description: The queen resembles a dog-sized prairie tick, with an elongated and swollen abdomen. An ovipositor extends from the lower rear portion of her abdomen. Her mouth parts are larger and are able to penetrate skin, unlike those of drone ticks. A small horde of hatchlings often cling to her body as she moves around the egg chamber depositing her pasty, grub-like eggs.

PROFILE: TICK HATCHLINGS

Corporeal: D:1d8, N:2d12, Q:2d10, S:1d4-2, V:2d6

Fightin': brawlin' 1d12, sneak 2d12

Mental: C:1d6, K:1d4, M:2d4, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4

Pace: 10

Size: 1

Wind: -

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: -2

Swarm: Prairie tick Hatchlings use the *swarm* rules (see page 31) when attacking. Every 6 hatchlings do 1d6 damage. Every raise on the swarm's *fightin'* roll means one of the little buggers has scuttled down the target's throat, unless the hero took precautions against this sort of thing.

Description: Hatchlings are miniature prairie ticks about the size of a lady's palm when their legs are fully extended. They are a paler shade of red, almost pinkish in hue.

TERRANTULAS

Thaddeus' assessment of these voracious little arachnids is fairly correct. They do prey on anything they can get their mandibles over. When small, the monsters do use swarm tactics to overwhelm larger prey. And, as he suspected, they do prey upon each other.

What Thaddeus didn't know was that there is no upper limit to these monsters' growth. Left unchecked, the strongest in the group can reach the size of a horse—or even much larger! Below are three different versions of this abomination—small, large, and gargantuan.

PROFILE: SMALL TERRANTULA

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:2d10, Q:2d8, S:1d4-2, V:1d4

Climbin' 2d10, fightin': brawlin' 1d10

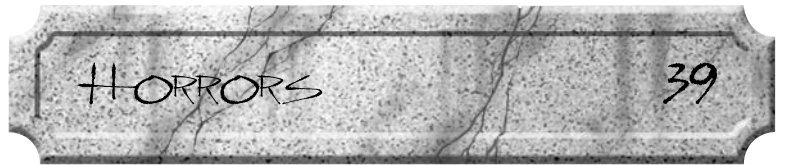
Mental: C:1d4, K:1d4, M:1d4, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4

Pace: 10

Size: 1

Wind: 8

Terror: 5 (when swarming, none otherwise)



Special Abilities:

Poison: Fair (5) TN. Success indicates the victim shakes off the effects; failure means he's paralyzed for 1d6 hours. A small terrantula's poison is only effective when administered by a swarm; a single bite is painful, but nothing more. Only make the *Vigor* check if a swarm damages the hero.

Swarm: A terrantula swarm does 1d4 for every 20 in the spider horde.

Description: Terrantulas resemble normal tarantulas in all respects except for a skull-shaped marking on the backs of their abdomens. They travel in hordes of up to 500, literally obscuring the ground with their rustling numbers.



PROFILE: LARGE TERRANTULA

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:2d12, Q:2d10, S:3d8, V:3d6

Climbin' 2d12, fightin' brawlin' 4d12, sneak 4d12

Mental: C:1d6, K:1d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d4, Sp:2d6

Pace: 10

Size: 6

Wind: 12

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Ambush: Terrantulas of this size dig trapdoor-covered holes near trails, allowing them to surprise prey easily. An Incredible (11) *Cognition* roll spots the trapdoors.

Damage: Bite (STR+Poison)

Poison: Hard (9) TN. On a success, the hero takes an additional 1d6 to the location. If she fails the roll, she takes 2d6 to the affected location *and* guts for a number of rounds equal to the amount by which she missed the TN.

Spring: Large terrantulas can spring up to 20', gaining a +2 bonus to their first *fightin'* attack.

Description: These monsters are about 4' tall and 8' across from the tip of one leg to that of the opposite. Other than that, they look exactly like smaller terrantulas. These spiders hunt in groups of 5-10, although a few are solitary.

PROFILE: GARGANTUAN
TERRANTULA

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:3d12+2, Q:2d12+4, S:5d12+8, V:3d12

Fightin' brawlin' 5d12+2

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d6, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d10

Pace: 24

Size: 19

Wind: 22

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Ambush: As above.

Damage: Bite (STR+poison)

Poison: Incredible (11) TN. On a success, the hero takes 4d6 to the guts. Failure means death in 1d6 rounds, during which time the hero lies in a twitching mass on the ground. An Incredible (11) *medicine* roll prevents death, but the hero is still incapacitated for a number of days equal to the amount by which he missed the roll.

Description: A terrantula of this size is about 20' tall and 40' across; this is about as big as the monsters realistically get. It otherwise looks exactly like smaller terrantulas. Any monster that reaches this size hunts alone. It is too large to move more than a short distance unnoticed, so it spends most of its time in its spider-hole.



BENEATH THE WAVES

So much for Thaddeus' dry land explorations. Lets move on to wetter environs now, shall we?

You might be thinking these creatures are out of place in a western roleplaying game. Not so. Just because most *Deadlands* campaigns are played in a Western setting that doesn't mean your heroes won't find themselves in a boat at one time or another. The Great Maze, the Mississippi, the Missouri, and even the Great Lakes or Gulf Coast are possible spots for a posse to encounter some of the following horrors.

One look at these monsters should let a knowledgeable hero know they're undoubtedly creatures of the Reckoning. However, since most folks in the Weird West could write one, maybe two sentences with what they know about marine life, a fast-talking Ranger might be able to bluff his way through an explanation about their origins.

We've stuck with those abominations likely to be found in coastal areas or in inland waters. If your campaign takes the heroes to the high seas, you're on your own, Marshal, but hopefully these monsters will give you some ideas.

In addition to the abominations presented in this section, there are a few others scattered throughout the book. Bloats (page 45), were-sharks (page 88), and marine animals (pages 89) are all found in or near water.

GIANTS OF THE DEEP

Before we get to the creatures Thaddeus described, let's talk about some *slightly* more mundane critters. Sometimes the only thing you have to do to make a creature truly terrifying is make it BIG. That's the case with these next few monsters.

Of course, *regular* crocodiles, octopi and sharks are bad enough already.

Although primarily saltwater animals, giant crocs can survive just fine in fresh water. These critters can survive even freezing temperatures and can swim very long distances. They might be

encountered along any coastal area in the Weird West. Crocodiles can produce a loud bellowing roar, unlike 'gators.

Giant octopi are only encountered on the west coast, especially in the oceanward fringes of the Great Maze and along the western coast of Mexico. They tend to lair up in caves and menace the local fisherman.

Giant sharks can be found wherever you want them to be found. After all, who's going to tell a 36' foot shark where to swim?

PROFILE: GIANT SALTWATER CROCODILE

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:3d8, Q:4d8, S:4d12+4, V:3d12

Fightin': brawlin' 3d8, sneak 2d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d8

Overawe 4d8 (roar)

Pace: 8 (on land)/14 (swimming)

Size: 14

Wind: 20

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Damage: Bite (STR+2d10). Once a croc gets a chunk of a victim, it can lock its jaws, doing (STR) damage on each of its Action Cards. The victim can break free by winning an opposed test of *Strength*, however the croc gets an additional +2 to that roll.

Death Roll: After it has locked its jaws, the croc can try to "death roll" its victim. This is an opposed test of its *Strength* vs. the victim's *fightin': brawlin'*. If it succeeds, the difference is read as Wind loss to the victim and the victim also takes (STR) damage from the jaws as well. The croc can make no other attack while performing a death roll.

Tail: Opposed STR roll. If the gator wins, the target is knocked off her feet and stunned. The victim must make a Fair (5) *Vigor* roll to recover.

This attack can only be used against victims to the critter's rear.

Description: A REALLY big crocodile, up to 30' long in fact, with jaws that can crush small water craft into matchsticks..

PROFILE: GIANT OCTOPUS

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:4d10, Q:3d12, S:2d12+4, V:4d12+6

Fightin': brawlin' 4d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d4, M:1d8, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d6

Pace: 12

Size: 19

Wind: 24

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Damage: Tentacle (STR), brawling damage. A giant octopus can attack up to eight different opponents on each Action Card. Only opponents Size 10 or greater can be attacked by more than one tentacle at once. The octopus can also bite with its central beak (STR+2d6), but it usually only does so once a victim is incapacitated.

Ink Jet: If seriously threatened, the octopus can spray a cloud of inky fluid into the water to cover its escape. This covers an area nearly 50 yards in diameter and completely obscures all vision. This takes an Action Card to perform.

Squeeze: If the octopus gets a raise on its *fightin'* attack, it wraps around its victim and automatically does STR brawling damage on each of its subsequent Action Cards. The victim can break free by winning an opposed test of *Strength* or maiming the tentacle.

Swimming: Pace 12. The octopus can also expel a jet of water, giving it a Pace 30 for 1d4 rounds.

Description: Giant octopuses have large, bulbous heads about 10' in diameter and eight, tentacles each up to 20' or more in length. They are most often a mottled brown or gray

in color, but are capable of limited chameleon-like color changes.

PROFILE: GIANT SHARK

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:2d8, Q:4d8, S:5d12+6, V:4d12+4

Fightin': brawlin' 4d8, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:3d6, K:1d6, M:1d10, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d6

Trackin': 5d6 (scent of blood only)

Pace: 24 (swimming)

Size: 17 (up to 40' long)

Wind: 24

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Damage: Bite (STR+2d12)

Sharkskin Hide: Any cowpoke who brushes bare skin against a giant shark's rough hide takes 1d4 Wind.

Description: A really big shark (35'+ long) with a really big mouth (6'+ across) filled with a lot of really big teeth (6'+ long).

BLOB

These formless glops of acidic protoplasm live in both fresh and saltwater. Because of their relatively fragile bodies, blobs favor marshes, ponds, lagoons, and other calm waters.

Hunting for a blob consists of drifting around its pool hoping to drift into a meal. Only rarely do these creatures actively seek out prey. Normally, blobs float just below the surface in as a large, fairly flat mass about 20' across and 2' thick. However, if prey contacts them—"prey" being anything organic, even a wooden boat hull—the monster contracts quickly around it.

Blobs are virtually invisible, making them very difficult to detect beneath the surface of the water. Their acidic bodies quickly eat through just about anything, up to and including thick boat timbers.

PROFILE: BLOB

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:3d6, Q:3d10, S:2d6, V:4d6

Fightin': brawlin' 5d6, sneak 6d6

Mental: C:2d4, K:1d4, M:2d4, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4

Search: 1d4

Pace: 1



Size: 6 (see below)

Wind: –

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Damage: Pseudopod (2d10). The blob's only attack is to smack at an opponent with an acid-covered pseudopod. If the blob hits, the acid continues to burn at the beginning of subsequent rounds unless washed off with alcohol. It reduces its damage by a die type each round until no further damage is caused. The acid also destroys one level of armor for each round it burns in that location.

Envelop: If a blob gets a raise on a *fightin'* roll, it envelops its prey (up to its Size). The prey then takes 1d10 to each of its hit locations at the beginning of every round thereafter. The acid also eats through one level of armor per round of envelopment. The only way to escape is to kill the blob.

Growth: For every 6 levels of Size the creature devours, it grows one level of Size itself. This additional mass remains for 1 week per level added.

Immunity–Normal Damage:

Normal weapons and attacks pass through the monster without causing lasting damage. Magic and fire affect it fully.

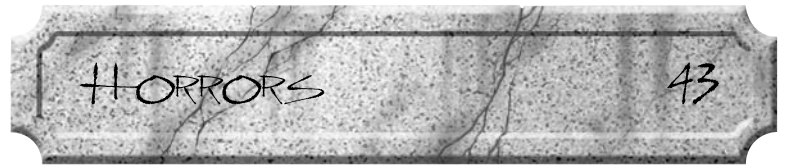
Swimming: Pace 6

Weakness–Fire: Fire does 3d6 damage to a blob. The creature recoils from flame, but isn't really smart enough to run away; instead it tries to find a way around the fire.

Description: The blob is virtually shapeless, although it often assumes a large pancake shape, both underwater and on land. It is virtually invisible in water, somewhat resembling a mass of fish eggs floating just beneath the surface. Occasionally, the gory remains of its victims may be seen within its form.

DEVIL RAY

The tall tales are true—these large rays can fly for short distances. They also have a predilection for human



flesh (what doesn't, anymore?).

Devil rays can leave the water and soar for up to 75' at heights of nearly 20'. This is more than enough to let them swoop across the decks of smaller vessels and snatch unsuspecting crew from the deck. Devil rays are nocturnal, and their dark coloration makes them nearly invisible after nightfall.

A devil ray envelops its prey in its large wing like fins and gnaws away at exposed flesh and easily accessible organs. This technique prevents a devil ray from flying once it's snatched a meal. The creature lacks the jaw strength to effectively gnaw through bone, so the brain, eyes, lungs, and heart are left with the skeleton for more determined scavengers.

Devil rays are found only in saltwater and travel in schools of 10-20. A large group of them are capable of stripping a small vessel's crew without a trace, leaving a ghost ship.

PROFILE: DEVIL RAY

Corporeal: D:1d6, N:3d10, Q:2d6, S:3d10, V:3d6

Dodge 2d10, *fightin'*: brawlin' 4d10, sneak 4d10

Mental: C:1d6, K:1d4, M:1d6, Sm:2d4, Sp:2d4

Pace: 24 (swimming)

Size: 11

Wind: 10

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR+1d6). The devil ray also has a tail spike (STR+1d4), but this can only be used against opponents to its rear.

Envelop: If the devil ray gets a raise on its *fightin'* roll, it has enveloped its opponent (up to Size 8) in its "wings". It does its bite damage automatically on each of its subsequent Action Cards. The victim can break free by winning an opposed test of her *Strength* or *Nimbleness* against the abomination's *Strength*.

Gliding: Pace 24. The devil ray must move its full swimming Pace in a fairly straight line for one round in order to glide. The devil ray can only glide for a single round at a time.

Swoop: If the devil ray makes a gliding attack on its victim, on a successful *fightin'* roll, it does (STR) brawling damage in addition to its bite.

Description: Devil rays are 15' wide manta rays with a bony tail spike. The creatures have pitch-black skin, small black eyes on their leading edge, and a mouth on their underside. Two small, knobby projections jut from above their eyes, giving the impression of horns.

HELLFISH

This abomination is a huge jellyfish, similar to a Portuguese man o' war. The hellfish, however, is far larger, with tentacles that often extend up to 100', and has more control over them than a



simple jellyfish. A hellfish can actually manipulate its tentacles to a limited degree above water.

One of the most horrifying sights a sea-going hero can see is a hellfish that has recently caught a human victim. The body is pulled into the monster's semi-transparent upper body where it slowly dissolves in the creature's digestive fluids. Unfortunately, the details of the process are all too evident to an outside observer; add a -2 modifier to any *guts* rolls for sighting a hellfish feeding in this manner.

Hellfish are also much smarter than a normal man o' war—although that's probably not saying a lot. These monsters are found only in saltwater.

PROFILE: HELLFISH

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:1d8, Q:2d8, S:2d6, V:2d6

Fightin': brawlin' 3d10

Mental: C:1d4, K:2d4, M:2d4, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d4

Face: 6 (swimming only)

Size: 6

Wind: —

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Damage: Tentacle lash

(STR+1d4+poison). The hellfish can only make one tentacle attack per Action card, but it can strike at opponents up to 100' away. Weapons provide no defensive bonus versus this lash.

Immunity—Normal Damage:

Because of the hellfish's odd biology, no normal attack can cause more than a single wound at a time, regardless of the damage it inflicts.

Poison: Hard (9) TN. Success means

the victim takes 2d6 Wind and suffers a -2 to all Trait and Aptitude checks for 1d6 days. Failure results in death in 1d6 minutes! Short of a magical cure, there is no known antidote for a hellfish's poison.

Weakness—Heat: All heat-based

attacks do an extra 2d6 damage and *can* cause the hellfish multiple wounds.

Description: These creatures look like reddish man o' wars nearly 5' tall.

They have a bulbous, nearly transparent upper body with a crested ridge, and translucent tentacles over 100' long that dangle beneath them in the water. Dead fish and other sealife are often trapped in these tentacles waiting to be pulled into the upper body for digestion.

MUDSUCKERS

These dark brown or black bottom dwellers are sometimes mistaken for gargantuan salamanders or hellbenders. Actually, mudsuckers are 6' or larger leeches that lurk underneath outcrops, submerged trees, or buried in bottom mud.

Mudsuckers grab large fish, dogs, small deer, and even humans that come too close to the waters they frequent. Although the initial attack does cause some damage to the victim, the mudsucker most often drags the body to an underwater lair. This chamber serves as the monster's larder and, while damp and muddy, is filled with air—often connected to the surface through a tiny tunnel or snorkel.

The creature slowly feeds on its captives, continually restocking its supply as others die from blood loss.

Mudsuckers are only found in freshwater. They prefer swamps and marshes, but may lair in a slow moving river or pond. They are fairly territorial creatures, but a mated pair may share a hunting area.

PROFILE: MUDSUCKERS

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:2d8, Q:3d6, S:3d10, V:4d8

Fightin': brawlin' 4d8, sneak 5d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d4, M:2d4, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d4

Pace: 2 (on land)

Size: 7

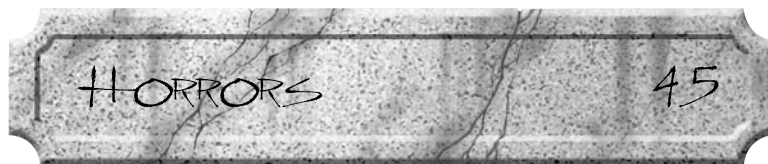
Wind: 12

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR+1d6+poison).

Once the mudsucker bites a victim, it holds on and does 1d6 Wind each round. It continues to drain blood until the victim breaks free by winning an opposed *Strength* roll, or it drains 30 Wind.



Poison: Onerous (7) TN. A victim failing the *Vigor* roll is paralyzed for 1d6 minutes.

Swimming: Pace 10

Description: A mudsucker looks like a 6' long, 3' wide slug without the antennae. A closer look reveals faint striations on its body and a circular, fang-filled mouth. The creature's eyes are on its underside, just above its mouth.

NIBBLERS

Nibblers are indeed a form of piranha, as Thaddeus suspects. Due to the influence of the Reckoning, these ferocious little biters can live in either fresh or salt water, and freely travel between the two.

They normally travel in schools of 300 or more, and waters infested with them may contain literally thousands of the creatures. Any creature entering such waters is likely to survive only a few moments before being stripped bare! In sufficient numbers, these tiny abominations are even capable of gnawing through boat hulls, to get to the "tasty filling" inside.

PROFILE: NIBBLERS

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:2d8, Q:2d10, S:1d4-2, V:2d4

Fightin': brawlin' 2d6

Mental: C:1d6, K:1d4, M:1d4, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4

Pace: 18 (swimming)

Size: 1

Wind: 8

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Swarm: Every group of 10 nibblers in a feeding school does 1d6 damage.

Description: These fish resemble their larger, South American cousins, the piranha. They are about 3" to 4" in length and fairly narrow. Their scales are a blood red color and their mouths have large, jutting, lower jaws filled with needle-like fangs.

SAND VIPER

The sand viper is really a large, saltwater mollusk that buries itself in sand just offshore. It has a 3' long, spear-like appendage that it uses to inject a powerful paralytic toxin into a victim. Once paralyzed, the sand viper uses the same organ to drain the victim's vital fluids, leaving a nearly completely desiccated corpse.

Sand vipers are usually found in large colonies of 20 or more. Once an area becomes alerted to the colony's

presence, it moves to another site elsewhere along the coast.

Sand viper victims may be mistaken for those of vampires or other, blood-drinking abominations. Due to the nature of the sand viper's attack, witnesses may not even be able to tell what killed a victim.

PROFILE: SAND VIPER

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:2d6, Q:2d10, S:4d6, V:3d6

Fightin': brawlin' 3d6, sneak 4d6

Mental: C:1d8, K:1d4, M:1d4, Sm:2d4, Sp:1d4

Pace: 2

Size: 4

Wind: 10

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Burrowing: Sand viper can move through sand at their normal Pace of 2.

Damage: Sting (STR+1d6+Poison)

Drain Fluids: A sand viper can drain 1d6 Wind per Action Card from a paralyzed victim.

Poison: Hard (9) TN. Failure means the victim is paralyzed for a number of minutes equal to the amount by which she missed the roll.

Swimming: Pace 6

Description: A sand viper looks like a 3' long greenish-black conch. A long, spike projects from the narrow end of the shell when it's attacking, and small tentacles emerge from the crown to pull the abomination through the sand.



MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Thaddeus was made the most mistakes in this section. The scientific temperament doesn't exactly deal well with folklore, one might suspect.

The dust devil, jackalope, and Maze dragon are all detailed in the *Marshal's Handbook*. See below for the real story behind sirens and feel free to use the giant octopus in this book (page 43) or the river leviathan from the first

Rascals, Varmints, & Critters for the kraken. As to the rest, they're nothing but tall tales told to take advantage of Thaddeus' obvious enthusiasm.

SIRENS

There is a far more terrifying explanation behind the sirens than Thaddeus suspects. Witnesses have seen only a small part of an actual siren. In reality, it is an enormous, carnivorous fish that has a unique "lure" that it uses to attract humans to it. Similar to an angler fish, the siren dangles its lure—in this case another "human"—near its mouth to draw its prey close enough to capture.

The lure itself is a human corpse that the abomination controls by way of a long appendage inserted into the base of the skull. The siren's attachment prevents the corpse from decaying and allows it some simple muscular control. This appendage, a 4" thick tendril, is usually only visible from behind the lure. The creature can't produce intelligible sounds through the corpse's vocal cords and is limited to screams, wordless shouts or tonal songs.

The monsters use their lures to ambush unsuspecting swimmers, draw boats into dangerous waters, or even coax a lone longshoreman near the edge of a pier.

Sirens are only found in saltwater bodies and are becoming more common in the Great Maze.

PROFILE: SIRENS

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d8, Q:4d8, S:4d10, V:2d10

Fightin': brawlin' 3d8, sneak 4d8

Mental: C:3d10, K:1d8, M:2d6, Sm:1d8, Sp:2d6

Performin': lure 4d6

Pace: 20 (swimming)

Size: 17

Wind: 16

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR+2d8).

Lure: In addition to bait, the siren can use the lure for limited combat. Treat the lure as a walkin' dead with *focus-appendage*, but

no Aptitudes other than those possessed by the siren. The lure has no Mental Traits, instead using the siren's values for these as well. Sirens seldom use lures for this purpose, for fear of damaging a valuable tool.

Description: The siren is a large, dull green fish, nearly 25' long, with a wide body and oversized, fang-filled mouth. The lure normally dangles about 5' in front of the monster's mouth, but the appendage can extend up to 15' when in use.

THE UNQUIET DEAD

Next in our bestiary we come to deal with the writings of Dr. Sutherland and his monograph on the undead. The good doctor assesses the mechanics of undeath pretty well. But as with Thaddeus, his lack of occult knowledge works against him.

In any case, his paper in no way hints about the particulars of the reanimants in the following pages. These are the types of undead that can literally reach out and touch their victims. Fortunately, for posses of monster-hunting cowpokes, they're also the kind of undead you can plug with your trusty six-shooter.

Well, most of the time, anyway.

Zombies are a staple for most *Deadlands* campaigns, and why not? Everybody likes zombies after all.

However, after a while, your posse might get a little tired of the same old walkin' dead. With that in mind, we've thrown together a funeral wagon full of different sorts of zombies to keep them jumping.

In the interests of fairness to other sorts of reanimated corpses, we've also included a few non-zombie undead in here as well, like skeletons and mummies. After all, what's a little dead flesh between friends— more or *less*?

BLOATS

A cowpoke isn't even safe from the walkin' dead out on the water. Bloats are waterlogged walkin' dead, perfect for menacing those heroes with a nautical bent.

To become a bloat, a zombie has to have been submerged at the time it was reanimated and remained submerged for at least a few months. As a result, these abominations are usually only encountered near large bodies of water, such as the Great Maze or a major river.

Over time, the water reacts with the corpse's tissues, turning most of it into a waxy substance that has a nearly overpowering stench to it. The flesh becomes pale and distended, hence the name 'bloat'.

The gooey nature of the bloat's body makes it resistant to punctures and piercing weapons, allowing them to pass through with little damage. Other weapons or types of damage affect it normally. Alcohol of any sort affects the creature's flesh like acid, however.



PROFILE: BLOATS

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:2d8, S:3d8, Q:2d10, V:2d8

Fightin': brawlin' 4d6, swimmin' 4d6

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:1d6, Sp:1d4

Pace: 8

Size: 7

Wind: 12

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR); a bloat's hands are too swollen to use as claws, although it may use them to batter an opponent for brawlin' damage.

Fearless

Immunity: Most guns and piercing weapons only do half damage; shotguns do full damage. Alcohol does 2d10 to any location hit by the liquid. The damage continues at the beginning of each round, but is reduced by a die type each time. Once the damage is reduced to less than 2d4, it ends.

Stench: Any human within 10 feet of a bloat must make an Onerous (7) *Vigor* check to avoid being sickened by the odor. Those who fail lose 1d6 Wind and are at -2 to all rolls for the encounter. Characters only have to make this roll once per encounter.

Undead: Focus-Head.

Weapons: A bloat's fingers are usually too swollen to manipulate a trigger, but they may have other simpler weapons if available.

Description: The corpse is grossly swollen and distended. Its flesh is of a consistency similar to soap-sludge and has a glistening, pale white sheen. The eyes appear as tiny black marbles in its bloated face.

DESICCATED DEAD

Usually manitous try to pick corpses that are fairly fresh. They pack a better punch and tend to hold up a little better in a fight. However, evil spirits from another dimension can't always be choosers, so sometimes they have to make due with bodies that have been out in the sun a while.

Desiccated dead are created from bodies that have dried up and decomposed to the point there is little left to them but a leathery skin over a skeleton. Cowpokes who've been bleaching in the desert and bodies from Indian above ground burial sites all fall into this category when reanimated by a manitou.

These walkin' dead are a little flimsier than the standard variety. Their dried-out bodies are also more susceptible to fire damage. One well-placed torch can start up a zombie barbecue quite easily.

However, there are some advantages to these lightweight zombies. The skin-and-bones bodies are quicker and more nimble than the usual dead, which may give zombie hunters a nasty surprise. And, although their original owners may not have been familiar with modern weaponry, the new residents of the corpses are quite capable of using firearms.

Feel free to use this type of walkin' dead for mummies from Southwestern or Mexican Indian tombs. The desiccated dead are also representative lesser mummies from Egyptian tombs, Marshal-servants buried with the head honcho. If you've found a way to use those in an adventure, desiccated dead can be handy. See page 53 for a more powerful form of mummy to throw at your heroes.

PROFILE:
DESICCATED DEAD

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d10, Q:3d10, S:3d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 1d10, dodge 2d10, fightin' brawlin' 3d10, shootin': rifle, pistol, shotgun 2d6, sneak 3d10, swimmin' 1d10

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:1d6, Sp:1d4

Pace: 10

Size: 5

Wind: 10

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bony claws (STR+1d4), bite (STR).

Fearless

Gear: Some desiccated dead may carry weapons, either those they

were buried with or those taken from their victims. If one of these zombies has a primitive weapon (perhaps a spear it was buried with), assume it has the appropriate *fightin'* concentration to use it as well.

Undead: Focus-Head.

Weakness-Fire: Desiccated dead are flammable; any fire-attack that does even one wound level to them causes them to catch fire and burn for an additional 1d6 damage per round in the affected locations. However, the firebug hero now has to fight a *flaming* zombie, at least until it crumbles to ashes; the creature does an additional 1d6 damage on successful hand-to-hand attacks—which may set the victim on fire as well!

Description: The skin of these zombies is dried and brown, stretched tightly over their skeletons. Tiny, blackened eyes sit loosely in their sockets and their lips have drawn back revealing a mouth often bereft of teeth.

FERAL
WALKIN' DEAD

Feral walkin' dead are created by a weak or watered-down version of Baron LaCroix's reanimation fluid. These are similar to the abominations spawned in Nagodoches, Texas, after one of LaCroix's trains derailed nearby.

Feral dead are faster than the more commonly encountered walkin' dead. Their hunger for human brains is nearly all-consuming and, once aroused, becomes the zombies' sole concern.

Although not as intelligent as other forms of walkin' dead, feral dead are frightfully cunning in laying ambushes. However, unlike regular walkin' dead, feral dead are unable to use firearms or other weapons.

PROFILE: FERAL DEAD

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d8, Q:3d10, S:2d10, V:2d8

Fightin': brawlin' 4d8, sneak 5d8, swimmin' 2d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4

Pace: 14

Size: 6

Wind: 12

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR), claws (STR+1d4)

Bushwhack: These zombies are cunning, hiding in places where they're least expected—like a barrel full of rainwater. Regardless of their victims' preparations, the TN for the *Cognition* roll to avoid surprise by one of these monsters is at -4.

Hunger: Once one of these zombies downs a victim, it must make an Onerous (7) *Smarts* roll to keep from stopping whatever else it was doing and chowing down on the unfortunate sap.

Undead. Focus—Head.

Description: Feral walkin' dead appear much the same as the more garden-variety walkin' dead. Their bodies may exhibit more decomposition or damage than those of their more intelligent cousins.

FROZEN DEAD

Sometimes the temperature in the northern plains or high mountain passes drops low enough to freeze a body solid. When a manitou decides to wreak a little havoc with a corpse that's been out in freezing weather like that, the end result is a walkin' dead with ice in its veins—literally.

The frozen dead are reanimated corpses—bodies frozen solid by incredible cold. They're only created when the air temperature is below -30° Fahrenheit. While their chilled bodies are a little slower and clumsier than

those of room-temperature zombies, they make up for that in other ways.

Note that it's not necessary for the original body to have actually frozen to death to make one of these icy revenants. Any sort of corpse can become a frozen dead under the right circumstances. That's enough to make a fellow think twice about storing departed loved ones in the tool shed until spring!

On last thing; the high water content of the frozen dead keeps them from sinking more than a few inches below the surface of water. They don't swim as such. It's more of a controlled float. A common tactic for these abominations is to float along a half-frozen river like so many undead icebergs and snatch unsuspecting victims from the river banks.

PROFILE: FROZEN DEAD

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d6, Q:2d6, S:3d10, V:2d10

Climbin' 1d6, dodge 2d6, fightin': brawlin' 3d6, shootin': pistol, rifle, shotgun 2d6, sneak 3d6

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:1d6, Sp:1d4

Overawe 5d6

Pace: 6

Size: 6

Wind: 14

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: Light armor -4. The zombie's frozen flesh is hard and resilient.

Damage: Icy claw (STR+1d6) or bite (STR). Note that a frozen dead can use only *one* of these attacks on an action—not both.

Fearless

Gear: Like regular walkin' dead, frozen dead may carry weapons they've taken from their victims: firearms, clubs, axes, and so forth.

Immunity—Fire: Frozen dead take half damage from fire and fire-based attacks due to their iced-up bodies.

Undead: Focus—Head.

Description: Frozen dead have a pale or even bluish cast to their flesh. Although their eyes move freely, the zombie's faces are locked into a single expression—that of their death

mask. A palpable air of cold follows the frozen dead, and icicles, sometimes "blood-cicles," may hang from their bodies.

ORPHANED HEADS

Occasionally, a manitou gets a stubborn streak and refuses to let go of a ruined walkin' dead. As long as the original head remains intact, the spirit continues to keep house in it—even when it's nothing but a severed head.

Manitous can tap a great deal of energy from the Hunting Grounds—more than enough, in fact, to graft a head to another body. All the spirit needs is a corpse, preferably one without a head, but the manitou is more than willing to make exceptions.

When attached to a body, an orphaned head has a profile identical to that of a veteran walkin' dead (see the *Marshal's Handbook*), but substitute the head's Mental Traits and Aptitudes. Simultaneously, it also can animate and control any corpse to which it had previously been grafted. If you hadn't guessed, Marshal, these other corpses are now headless, but that doesn't seem to cause them much difficulty in getting around.

Orphaned heads concentrate their efforts on obtaining more corpses to which to graft themselves—thus also increasing the number of headless corpses they control. A community plagued by an orphaned head usually finds a number of severed heads left over from the abomination's activities. A head that's had a good deal of time to operate can amass a large number of headless "drones" and become a rather formidable opponent.

An orphaned head with no body is in dire straits. It's relatively easy pickings for any cowpoke that happens upon it in the open.

Orphaned heads don't have the easiest time of it when it comes to getting around. Most of the time, the head is forced to roll along the ground—a dizzying experience for anything other than the undead. However, this rough and tumble method of travel doesn't cause the head any harm and they can build up a good deal of speed on a downhill.



The abominations do have *extraordinarily* long tongues, though—3' long or more! They can use these to open door knobs, drag themselves stealthily along the floor, or even strangle a victim. This tongue is what gives the orphaned head a *Deftness* Trait by the way.

Strangulation is the head's best method for obtaining its first body. It creeps up on a sleeping or unconscious victim, strangles them, and then begins the gory process of gnawing through the neck to make room for itself.

PROFILE: ORPHANED HEAD

Corporeal: D:1d6, N:2d6, Q:3d10, S:2d10, V:2d8

Climbin' 2d6, dodge 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, sneak 3d6

Mental: C:2d10, K:2d6, M:2d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d10

Overawe 5d8, ridicule 3d8, search 3d10

Pace: 6 (rolling)/2 (tongue drag-sneak)

Size: 2

Wind: 18

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR). Unless the orphaned head is on a platform or its opponent is prone, its bite is limited to the legs.

Fearless

Strangle: If the head gets a raise on a *fightin': brawlin'* roll, its tongue has wrapped around the victim's throat. On each of its Action Cards, the victim must roll an opposed test of her *Vigor* vs. the head's *Strength*. If she fails, she takes the difference as Wind. On each of her Action Cards, she can try to break free by winning an opposed test of *Strength*. The orphaned head can only use this against a prone victim (or if it has another way of placing itself at its victim's head level).

Toughness: The head, although Size 2, takes wounds as though it were Size 6.

Undead: Focus—head (duh!).

Description: A severed head that has the bad manners to still be moving around. Once grafted, the head looks much like any walkin' dead, although its own skin and that of its new body may be mismatched. While an orphaned head can ad does graft to a body of the opposite sex, it usually only does so for long enough to gain control of it.

PROFILE:
HEADLESS DEAD

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d8, Q:2d10, S:3d8, V:2d8

Shootin': pistol, rifle, shotgun 2d6, climbin' 1d8, dodge 2d8, fightin': axe, brawlin', knife 3d8, sneak 3d8, swimmin' 1d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d10

Search 3d10

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: 18

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Fearless

Gear: Headless dead carry weapons they've scrounged from their victims or own homes. Firearms are common, but due to the head's lust for more bodies, each one also carries an axe, knife, or other bladed weapon—for obvious reasons.

Unnatural Senses: Although they have no sensory organs, they are still able to detect and react to their environment as if they did. However, they are immune to all sensory-based attacks (*bedazzle, voice o' the damned, illusions, etc.*).

Undead: Focus—the orphaned head. As long as the orphaned head remains functional, the headless dead cannot be permanently put down.

Description: A walkin' dead without anything north of the shoulders. Usually, the dead's noggin was removed by an edged weapon, but a rare few are chewed loose by the head itself.

COLONY 'GLOMS

Colony 'gloms share many characteristics with normal 'gloms. They are a mass of corpses joined into a single entity and can add other dead bodies to their mass to grow more powerful. These bodies must have been dead for at least 10 minutes to undergo the grafting process, but 'gloms are patient when it comes to "recruitment."

While regular 'gloms are inhabited by a single, very powerful manitou, colony 'gloms are host to a horde of lesser, but closely allied, manitous—a group sometimes called a "Legion." This allows the colony 'glom to separate into individual zombies and rejoin later into a large mass, or to simply sprout off a walkin' dead scout to enter places the larger abomination can't squeeze into. This dual nature makes can give the most experienced trackers conniption fits! If it spawns an "offspring" walkin' dead, the independent zombie resembles a normal walkin' dead in all respects.



The dispersed nature of the colony 'glom's animating manitous makes them difficult to put down. Every zombie in the mass must be "killed" by destroying its brain. If not, the Legion soon begins "recruiting" other fresh bodies into its mass. Obviously, this can cause problems if the colony spawned an offspring before its demise.

Note that a colony 'glom cannot reproduce itself—a spawned zombie cannot start a new colony unless the original core is destroyed. Mercifully for the heroes of the Weird West, the cohesiveness of the manitou Legion usually prevents that from occurring.

Like regular 'gloms, colony 'gloms are usually only found in areas where a large number of fresh corpses are available and the Fear Level is fairly high. A bad train wreck could spawn one if it occurred in an area with a Fear Level 5 or greater.

Fortunately, these monsters are very rare indeed in the Weird West. The conditions necessary for their creation just aren't that common.

PROFILE: COLONY 'GLOMS

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d6, Q:3d8, S:2d8*, V:2d8*

Fightin': brawlin' 6d6, shootin': pistol, rifle, shotgun 3d6

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d6, M:1d4, Sm:1d6, Sp:1d4

Overawe 5d4

Pace: 6

Size: 9+ (see below)

Wind: 24+ (see below)

Terror: 9+ (see below)

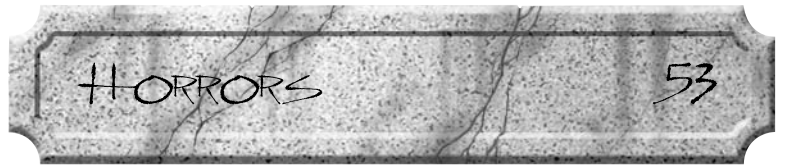
Special Abilities:

Damage Resistance: The stats above assume the colony 'glom has at least two bodies; 'gloms with less than two are treated as normal walkin' dead. For every body past the original two, increase the Size of the abomination by +3.

Fearless

Gear: 'Gloms can wield guns or other weapons if available.

Increased Abilities: For every body in the 'glom above the original two, increase the monster's *Strength* and *Vigor* by a one step, to a maximum of d12+8. The creature



also gains +10 Wind for every body past the original two added.

Increased Terror Score: As 'gloms increase in mass they become more frightening as well. 'Gloms with two to five component bodies have a Terror 9, while those of six or more have Terror 11.

Multiple Attacks: A 'glom can make one *fightin'* or *shootin'* attack each action for every two bodies in its mass.

Offspring: Component bodies of a colony 'glom can slough off and function as normal walkin' dead in all respect. However, while the body is detached, the 'glom's Size, Terror score, Traits, Wind and number of attacks are reduced appropriately.

Undead: Focus—Head. Unlike a normal 'glom, each corpse in a colony 'glom is controlled by its own manitou; each body's head must suffer a Maiming wound to kill it. As each component body is killed, it sloughs off and the 'glom's size and abilities are reduced as noted above. However, only when the last head is destroyed is the monster down for good. As long as one core body remains, it can regrow itself by adding more corpses.

Description: A colony 'glom looks much like a regular 'glom: a mass of bodies, some horribly disfigured, melded together. Arms, legs and other parts protrude from the mass at random.

SKELETONS

On very rare occasions, manitous may choose to reanimate bodies so old that nothing remains of them except bones. Evil black magicians also sometimes create these abominations as special servants.

Skeletons are a little less "aware" of their surroundings than other undead. The life has been gone from the bodies

for so long, it hinders the animating force to a degree. On the other hand, skeletons are remarkably resistant to modern firearms—bullets pass harmlessly through their framework most of the time.

PROFILE: SKELETONS

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:2d8, Q:2d10, S:3d6, V:4d6

Climbin' 3d8, fightin': brawlin', hand weapon 2d8, sneak 2d8

Mental: C:1d8, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4

Overawe 4d6

Pace: 8

Size: 5

Wind: 12

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Claw (STR+1d4), bite (STR)

Fearless

Gear: Skeletons may employ hand-to-hand weapons like swords, knives or spears—assume the abominations have the appropriate *fightin'* concentration to use the weapon. For some reason, skeletons don't use firearms.

Immunity: Bullets and other piercing weapons (spears, etc.). The nature of the skeleton's body causes these weapons to pass harmless through most of its hit locations. However, hits to the noggin do normal damage. Skeletons never suffer bonus damage for hits to the noggin or gizzards regardless of the weapon used.

Undead: Focus—Head.

Description: Skeletons are, well, skeletons. Their eye sockets are unnaturally dark, but beyond that—and the fact that they're walking around—there's little to distinguish them from normal skeletons. Occasionally, they may have tatters of ancient clothing still clinging to their bones.

MUMMIES

Many cultures treated their dead with great respect and prepared their bodies so that they would better serve their owners in the afterworld. Unfortunately, upon the Reckoners' escape, some of these began to serve again in the world of the living.

Although mummification can result from climatic conditions, reanimation of those corpses only produces desiccated dead. Also, lesser mummies—those of servants and the like—are treated as desiccated dead as well. Only a rare few powerful individuals arise as true mummies.

AZTEC MUMMIES

The Aztec culture relied on two methods to prepare their dead for the afterworld. The first, cremation, left little to later reanimate and plague ancestors. However, during certain periods of their history, the Aztecs practiced a form of mummification, particularly for those who were considered specially blessed or important.

Occasionally, one of these mummies—usually that of a mighty king or priest—returns to the world of the living. These revenants usually inhabit ruins or other areas tied to their past, and surround themselves with items appropriate to their history. Abominations of this sort often attract their own cult of human followers as well.

Aztec culture placed a great value on the sacrifice of human hearts to their gods. Mummies rely on the power of those sacrifices to continue their existence among the living. Every twenty days, an Aztec mummy must remove the heart from a living victim—which, of course, kills the victim. It then places the organ in its own chest cavity. The still beating heart then preserves the mummy's undead state for another twenty days. At the end of the period, the sacrifice must be repeated.

Some mummies of this sort possess a small jade stone that protects them from nearly all forms of attack. These mummies carry the stone underneath their tongues.

Unlike Egyptian mummies, those of the Aztec variety tend to be fairly nimble and quick.

PROFILE: AZTEC MUMMY

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d8, Q:3d8, S:3d12, V:4d10

Fightin': brawlin', macahuitl 4d8, sneak 3d6

Mental: C:2d8, K:3d6, M:3d8, Sm:3d6, Sp:3d10

Academia: occult, Aztec culture and lore 3d6, faith 4d10, overawe 4d8

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: 20

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Black Magic: Aztec mummies have access to the following black magic spells: *animal mastery 1, pact 5, stun 3*, and *zombie 3*.

Damage: Macahuitl, an obsidian-bladed sword (STR+2d8)

Fearless

Immunity: As long as a mummy has its jade stone, it is immune to all wounds and Wind from damage-causing attacks, including those on its focus.

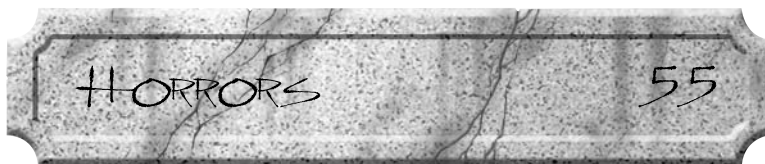
Undead: Focus—heart.

Description: The appearance of an Aztec mummy varies according to the freshness of their hearts. With a new heart, the mummy is similar to a Harrowed—only detectable as undead with effort. As the heart weakens, the mummy's skin begins to dry and tighten until, on the last day, it becomes little more than a dried-up bag of walking bones.

EGYPTIAN MUMMIES

This undead horror only arises from the embalmed corpse of an ancient Egyptian high priest or sorcerer. Such persons were usually buried in well-appointed tombs—tombs that are just now beginning to draw the interest of archaeologists and fortune hunters. After such a long rest, few Egyptian mummies take kindly to being disturbed.

These undead are normally buried with great riches and other, lesser mummies for servants in the afterworld. A mummy hunts down any



who desecrate—or worse, rob!—its tomb. Often the abomination is aided by its former servants; these take the form of desiccated dead zombies (see page 46).

Mummies are have had centuries to perfect their patience and always carefully plot their revenge. The mastery of black magic (particularly



illusion) allows them options not available to most undead.

A posse's not too likely to run across one of these things roaming the desert outside Tombstone, so an Egyptian mummy should be a truly rare encounter. However, enough individuals and organizations have an active interest in the occult (or just ancient treasures) that somebody's sure to draw the ire of one at some point.

PROFILE: EGYPTIAN MUMMY

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:1d6, Q:2d6, S:2d12+4, V:3d12+2

Fightin': brawlin', wrasslin' 4d6, sneak 3d6

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d6, M:3d10, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d12

Academia: occult, history (Egypt) 4d6, faith 4d12, overawe 5d10

Pace: 4

Size: 6

Wind: 26

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Black Magic: *Curse* 2 (wasting disease), *illusion* 4 (only to change appearance to a normal person), *stormcall* 2 (driving sandstorm)

Choke: An Egyptian mummy can use its enormous strength to throttle an opponent. It must get a raise on a *fightin': brawlin'* attack. If successful, the mummy makes an Opposed *Strength* roll against his victim's *Vigor*. The victim loses Wind equal to the difference if she loses. When she reaches 0 Wind, the mummy begins to inflict STR damage directly to her noggin!

Damage: A mummy uses its enormous *Strength* to club its opponents. Treat as brawling damage.

Fearless

Immunity: An Egyptian mummy takes only half damage from all attacks. Should a posse succeed in doing enough damage to actually kill the creature, it rises again the

next night to pursue its victim.

Even burning the corpse to ashes won't prevent its return.

Undead: Focus—burial scroll. If a mummy's burial scroll is destroyed, the monster crumbles to dust. For that reason, this scroll is *always* well hidden and protected.

Description: In their natural form, Egyptian mummies look very much like desiccated corpses wrapped in ancient cloth bandages. Their skin is tightly drawn across their features and tanned by the passage of centuries. However, a mummy usually relies on its *illusion* spell to appear as a normal Arabic person.

UNDEAD ANIMALS

As undead go, reanimated animals are fairly rare in the Weird West. On the surface, this may seem odd, but bringing unlife to a dead body represents something of an investment on the part of a manitou and there are several reasons why an animal corpse just isn't the best choice.

First, there are plenty of human bodies just waiting to rent out some space. With the Civil War still grinding on, there's seldom a shortage of prime walkin' dead candidates. Why settle for a poodle—granted a creepy, decomposing poodle, but a poodle nonetheless—when you can get a perfectly good dead man?

Second, the main reason manitous inhabit walkin' dead in the first place is to increase fear in the populace. An undead mountain lion is frightening for certain, but not *that* much more frightening than a live one. A visit from a dear relative who lacks the common decency to stay in her grave is another matter altogether.

Finally, human zombies are able to perform a wide variety of tasks. An undead wolf might be unsettling, but you really don't need any special protection from it. A doorknob is pretty much proof against it.

Sure, a simple walkin' dead isn't the same kind of commitment that a Harrowed represents; a manitou's immortality isn't at risk with a regular zombie. But when all's said and done, it's really just not worth a manitou's time to reanimate an animal.



But...

Okay, now that we've gone to all the trouble to tell you why animal zombies *don't* happen that often, we do have to grudgingly admit there are times when they *do*. In these instances, the corpse is almost never spontaneously animated; nearly always an outside influence does so.

What kind of twisted creature brings good ol' Spot back from the pet cemetery to hound his beloved master? Some abominations may reanimate animal corpse, particularly ones closely associated with the wilderness or nature. Occasionally a human cultist may do so as well, just to unnerve an interloper or snoop. This sort of tactic is perfect for Appalachian witches (see *Back East: The South*).

MAKING ANIMAL ZOMBIES

As a rule of thumb, it's safe to assume a cultist or abomination that has both the *animal mastery* and *zombie* spells can create animal zombies. The type of animal is limited to the kinds he could affect with *animal mastery*. A black magician can animate twice as many animal zombies with the *zombie* spell as he could human corpses.

There are just too many kinds of animals for us to list all the possible

types of zombies available. Instead, we've provided a template for you to apply to the basic animal's profile to show the effects of undeath on the creature.

USING THE TEMPLATE

Increase or reduce the animal's appropriate Trait die type by the steps shown on the template. If a reduction takes the die type below a d4, reduce the coordination of the Trait instead. The critter's die type cannot drop below 1d4, regardless of the modifications.

The animal zombie knows only the Aptitudes listed, at the level listed, regardless of its living abilities.

Finally, all animal zombies gain the listed Special Abilities on the template. Those they may have had in life are a little trickier. Certain ones, like poison, are lost, but others, like burrowing or swimming aren't. Marshal, it's pretty much your call whether an undead crow has lost too many feathers to fly or not.

TEMPLATE: UNDEAD ANIMALS

Corporeal: D:+0, N:+1 die type, Q:+1 die type, S:+1 die type, V:+2 die types
Dodge 2, fightin' brawlin' 3, sneak 3

Mental: C:+1 die type, K:-1 die type, M:-1 die type, Sm:-1 die type, Sp:-2 die types

Pace: As original animal

Size: As original animal

Wind: As original animal

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Damage: As original animal, plus bite (STR) if it did not already possess this attack.

Fearless

Undead: Focus–Head.

Description: Undead animals look like dead critters that don't have the good sense to lay down.

VAMPIRES

No list of undead would be complete without a few of everyone's favorite bloodsucking freaks. Below, you'll find ravenous nosferatu, disgusting penanggalen, creepy little ustrel and a couple of other varieties to allow you to choose the style of *chupasangre* best suited to your campaign.

Of course, we're not saying you've got to choose just one either. Nothing is

more disappointing than finding out what worked on the last vampire *doesn't* work on the one that's trying to gnaw off your head this time!

Vampires of all sorts are a form of undead pestilence. After all, vampirism itself is a contagious, fatal disease that spreads even after death!

However, a vampire's food supply is hard to sustain in the sparsely populated West. The smarter bloodsuckers take this into account when planning their lairs and hunting trips. Others, like nosferatu and wampyr, are likely to exhaust the local population quickly—or draw the attention of the Rangers or Agency.

HARROWED AND VAMPIRISM

The Harrowed are immune to the effects of a vampire's contagion. To be honest, the bloodsuckers usually ignore these graveyard rejects unless they attack them first. No self-respecting vampire wants to get a mouthful of that sludge that passes for a Harrowed's blood anyway.

The Harrowed (and any other undead) can't contract any form of vampirism. Plain and simple, they're already dead and can't double-dip on the unlife pool. Any Harrowed somehow killed by a vampire's bite is just dead.

NOSFERATU

Possibly the most voracious of any variety of bloodsucker, the nosferatu are certainly the least attractive. Only a bald, albino weasel could love one of these monsters—and then only if it was nearly blind.

Driven solely by their bloodlust, these abominations seldom think beyond their next meal. Although possessed of an animal cunning at times, the most common tactic for the monsters is an overwhelming ambush. Any time spent planning beyond that cuts into valuable feeding time.

Nosferatu can speak in a lisping, sibilant voice, but most use their mouths only for feasting on their victims.



This variety of vampire is probably the most commonly encountered in the Weird West, thanks to Baron LaCroix's "Night Trains." Originally found only in a few isolated areas of the American Southwest, trainloads of these monsters were released onto the network of railroads in the Disputed Territories.

Although efforts by the Texas Rangers and Agency have been fairly successful in eliminating the resultant nests, smaller packs still exist scattered throughout both countries.

PROFILE: NOSTERATU

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d10, Q:4d12, S:3d12+2, V:2d10

Dodge 2d10, climbin' 4d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d10, sneak 5d10

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d4, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4

Overawe 4d8

Pace: 10

Size: 6

Wind: 14

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Claws (STR+1d4), bite (STR; once a nosferatu successfully bites a victim, it holds on and does STR damage every round to the same location. The only way to break free is to win an opposed test of *Strength*. On the up side, the nosferatu has to use its hands to hold its victim and can't claw them).

Immunity: Physical damage. Nosferatu don't suffer wounds from weapons or even damage-causing spells and hexes. However, even though they don't suffer actual wounds, it is possible for heroes to stun them—unlike most undead.

Infection: Any person slain by a nosferatu's bite rises as a nosferatu in 1d6 hours.

Undead: Focus—Head/Neck. The only way to permanently put down a nosferatu is to decapitate it or expose it to sunlight.

Weakness—Sunlight: Nosferatu take 3d6 damage per round from the light of the sun. This is massive damage.



Weakness—Wooden Stakes: A wooden stake through the heart totally paralyzes a nosferatu until the stake is removed.

Description: Nosferatu are bald and emaciated humanoids. Their eyes are solid black, with only a tiny spark of red visible in the center. Coarse, brown claws tip their fingers and toes, while chisel-like incisors protrude from their mouths.

NOSTERATU ANCIENT ONES

"Ancient Ones" are those few nosferatu who were powerful enough to survive the defeat of the manitous during the Great Spirit War. Not surprisingly, only a few Ancient Ones lasted through that long dry spell, hiding in caves or ruins for centuries.

Only a few Ancient Ones remain. One hides in deep caverns near Devil's Canyon in Deseret, leading an enormous brood of weaker nosferatu. A small group of Ancient Ones escaped Baron LaCroix's raid on their lair in New Mexico back in 1876; they lurk somewhere in the Sangre de Christo Mountains to the north.

PROFILE: ANCIENT ONES

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:3d12, Q:4d12, S:3d12+6, V:2d12

Dodge 3d12, climbin' 4d12, fightin': brawlin' 4d12, sneak 7d12

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d8, M:1d10, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d6

Leadership 3d10, overawe 4d10

Pace: 12

Size: 8

Wind: 18

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Damage: Claws (STR+1d4), bite (STR; once an Ancient one successfully bites a victim, it holds on and does STR damage every round to the

same location. The only way to break free is to win an opposed test of *Strength*. On the up side, the creature has to use its hands to hold its victim and can't claw them).

Immunity: As nosferatu, above.

Infection: As nosferatu, above.

Odor: Ancient Ones smell so bad that all in a 3-yard radius of the creature must make a Fair (5) *guts* check or lose their first Action Card of that round. Nosferatu are immune to this effect.

Undead: Focus—Head/Neck. As nosferatu, above.

Weakness—Sunlight: As nosferatu, above.

Weakness—Wooden Stakes: As nosferatu, above.

Description: Ancient Ones look like particularly fat and bloated members of their kind and seldom wear more than a simple loincloth. The creatures move with frightening speed and agility, and exude a sickening charnel odor.

PENANGGALAN

A penanggalan is a particularly dangerous and revolting breed of vampire that has its origins in the jungles of Southeast Asia. This abomination actually separates its head and vital organs (lungs, heart, liver, intestines, etc.) from the rest of its body and flies through the night skies in search of fresh blood.

The profile below details the abomination in its hunting (head and entrails) form. In that form, the monster is virtually unkillable. The best a posse can hope to do is chase the monster away. However, when encountered during the daytime, it has no special abilities whatsoever. Smart heroes track these monsters back to their bodies and dispose of them during the daytime.

Any hero catching sight of the penanggalan pulling its head free of its body must make an immediate *guts* roll against an Target Number of 13!

Obviously, the creature prefers to hunt in isolated areas; not many folks are going to overlook a flying head dragging a pile of guts!

While the head is separated, the penanggalan must keep its body immersed in vinegar to preserve it from decay. The penanggalan must return to the body by daybreak. Once whole, it can move about freely in daytime, but its hunting form is destroyed immediately by sunlight. The creature's body can be destroyed normally, but note that this does not immediately kill the penanggalan. (But it does tick the thing off mightily!). A penanggalan can sense when its body is being disturbed, no matter the distance between head and body.



Almost all penanggalan are female. Kephn, the male form of this monster, are much rarer than the penanggalen.

Since this disgusting form of bloodsucker is normally found in the jungles of the South Pacific, you're probably wondering why we're telling you about it. Well, a few have made it to ports on the North American continent thanks to trading vessels, particularly those of the warlord Kang. Since penanggalen can move about freely in daylight, those few have traveled far and wide across the West.

Besides, they're just too cool to ignore.

PROFILE: PENANGGALLEN

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d8, Q:4d8, S:4d8, V:4d12

Dodge 4d8, fightin': brawlin' 5d8, sneak 7d8

Mental: C:3d10, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d8

Overawe 4d6, search 2d10

Pace: 16 (flying, unfed)/6 (flying, after feeding)

Size: 4

Wind: 20

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR+Id4); this is treated as brawling damage. Once the monster has successfully bitten a victim, it automatically does this damage on each later action as it drains the person's blood. Anyone brought to 0 or lower Wind by this attack is killed by the blood loss. The victim can dislodge the sucker by winning an opposed test of *Strength*.

Immunity: A penanggalen is very tough in its hunting form. Although it's really only Size 4, it takes damage as though it were Size 6. Also, all damage is halved before determining wounds. Even if hero succeeds in dealing a Maiming wound it, it isn't destroyed. Instead it flees to its body.

Diseased Entrails: Anyone contacting the foul bile on the monster's dangling entrails must make a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll. Failure means the cowpoke's contacted it and loses a die type in his *Vigor*. He must make the roll again every

day until he succeeds or his *Vigor* die drops below a d4. If he succeeds, he regains one die type a week until he reaches his original score. Anyone who drops below d4 in *Vigor* due to this disease dies a slow, wasting death.

Undead: Focus—special (see **Weaknesses**, below).

Weakness—Thorns: A penanggalen takes no special damage from thorns, but will not cross even the smallest branch of thorns. Should its dangling entrails become entangled in the prickly bush, it is trapped until daylight—and death under the sun's rays.

Weakness—Sunlight: A penanggalen in hunting form takes 3d6 damage each round it's exposed to direct sunlight. This is massive damage.

Description: A nasty-looking head with intestines and such still attached floating a few feet above the ground—do you really need any more description?

USTREL

These foul little monsters do exist in the Weird West, mainly because it's not nearly as hard to make one as legends suggest. Ustrels rise from the corpses of very young children (two years or younger) that have died due to abandonment or neglect. Unfortunately, this sad even happens more often than decent folk would like to believe.

Ustrel normally feed on cattle or other livestock, and their depredations are often mistaken for prairie ticks or some sort of disease. These abominations are voracious eaters, often causing the death of seven or eight steers in a single night.

Luckily for ranchers, ustrels are usually solitary in nature. Only rare instances occur that cause more than one to form in the same area at the same time—say, an unusually cruel orphanage or the like.

Once the livestock have been totally drained, an ustrel seldom moves on to feed on the human populace. Most vampires of this sort simply become dormant, awaiting the replenishment of the local herds.

PROFILE: USTREL

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d8, Q:3d10, S:4d6, V:3d8

Climbin' 2d8, dodge 2d8, fightin' brawlin' 3d8, sneak 5d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d4, M:2d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d6

Pace: 8

Size: 3

Wind: 14

Terror: 7 (once visible)

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR); this is treated as brawling damage. If the ustrel successfully bites a victim, it automatically does this damage on each later action as it drains blood. The victim can dislodge the sucker by winning an opposed test of *Strength*.

Invisibility: Ustrels are normally invisible. If a cowpoke somehow detects one, he can attack it a -6 modifier to all rolls.

Numbing Saliva: Thanks to a side effect of the ustrel's spit, most victims don't even know they've been bitten. The victim must make a Hard (9) *Cognition* roll to even notice the wound as its being drained.

Undead: Focus-Heart.

Weakness-Fire: Exposure to a source of fire equal to a small bonfire or greater renders the monster visible.

Description: A pale, human child or infant. Its eyes are vertically slit, like a cat's, and its hands and feet have long, curved nails for hanging onto host animals. Four large canine teeth protrude from its mouth; it has no other teeth.

WAMPYR

A wampyr is typical of the type of vampire found in the folklore of the Balkan region of Eastern Europe. This foul creature is also known as a vyrkolakas, upir, vampir and a host of other names.

Wampyrs are actually little more than undead plague carriers, spreading the disease of their form of vampirism among their former loved ones. Unlike some other vampires, wampyrs aren't terribly strong and the decay of death is obvious on their bodies. Those unfamiliar with this sort of bloodsucker often mistake it for a simple walkin' dead.

Possessed of a crude, animal cunning, these vampires prefer to prey on weaker individuals, and usually attack by ambush. Another common tactic is for the monsters to return to the homes of their former families and feast on their bereaved kin. Due to the highly infectious nature of the wampyr's bite, this sort of vampirism often spreads very quickly through a community.

Corpses infected by wampyr retain some of their color, do not stiffen and often have spots of blood around their lips and fingernails. A recently fed wampyr may have a pool of blood in its coffin—these monsters are notorious gluttons. Others may have gnawed on their own appendages while trapped in their coffins.

Exposing a resting wampyr's corpse to sunlight does not harm it. On the other hand, if it's caught by the sun's rays before it reaches its coffin, it begins to burn rapidly.

PROFILE: WAMPYR

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d6, Q:3d8, S:2d8, V:4d10

Climbin' 2d6, fightin' brawlin' 3d6, sneak 5d6

Mental: C:3d6, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4

Performin' 2d6, persuasion 2d6, search 3d6

Pace: 6

Size: 6

Wind: 14

Terror: 7

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MARSHAL

Special Abilities:

Damage: In addition to normal brawling damage, a wampyr can bite its victim for (STR) brawling damage.

Infection: Anyone who has lost Wind to a wampyr's bite must make a *Vigor* roll against a Foolproof (3) TN, +1 for every point of Wind lost to the bite. Failure indicates the victim has contracted the wampyr's disease and loses a die type in *Vigor*. The victim must roll against the same TN each night until either she makes the roll (in which case she's cured) or her *Vigor* die type drops below d4. Once that happens, she dies and rises as a wampyr herself in 1d4 days. Lost *Vigor* die types return at a rate of one level per day until fully recovered.

Immunity: A wampyr suffers only half damage from all physical attacks.

Undead: Focus—Heart.

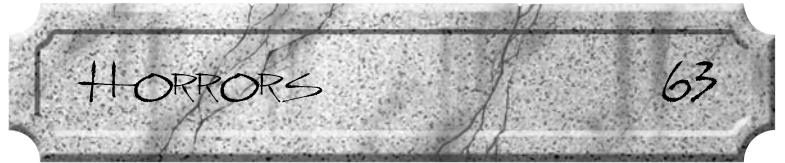
Weaknesses: Garlic, roses, sunlight, beheading. Garlic and roses cause a wampyr 2d6 damage if they contact them—and the monsters find the plants abhorrent. Sunlight causes 3d6 massive damage each round to a risen wampyr; resting wampyr are immune to this. A wampyr can be destroyed by digging it up, beheading it and placing garlic in its mouth.

Description: A wampyr resembles a walkin' dead in many respects, save that its flesh is full and bloated. Its eyes may have a vacant or glassy stare and its fingernails are often splintered and dirt-encrusted from its escape from the grave.

CINEMATIC VAMPIRES

We've provided this last type of vampire in case you want a more "modern" form of bloodsucker to throw at your posse than the others we've listed. The abilities and weaknesses of this abomination are more in line with those seen in literature and movies than in folklore, and it's much more formidable in a stand-up fight than those of legend.

Vampires of this sort are best used as recurring villains than one-shot



encounters. These undead are more concerned with the "long view" of their unlife than those of folklore, whose entire existence usually revolves around the next drink. As such, they make good long-term opponents for a posse—especially since they can generate hordes of lesser vampires to throw at the heroes nearly at will!

Finally, the profile below is for a fairly "new" vampire; as these monsters get older, they become vastly more powerful. In addition to simply improving their Traits and Aptitudes, the monsters may acquire other arcane abilities, such as shapechanging, animal control or weather manipulation.

See the profile on Dracula (page 92) for an example of just how dangerous these monsters can become.



PROFILE: VAMPIRES

Corporeal: D:4d12, N:4d12, Q:4d12+2, S:4d12+2, V:4d12+2

Climbin' 5d12, dodge 4d12, fightin' brawlin' 4d12, shootin' pistol, rifle, shotgun 4d12, sneak 6d12

Mental: C:4d10, K:3d6, M:4d12, Sm:4d6, Sp:3d10

Overawe 4d12, scrutinize 3d10, search 4d10

Pace: 12

Size: 6

Wind: 22

Terror: 9 (when true nature is known)

Special Abilities:

Damage: Claws (STR+1d6). A hit with a raise in hand-to-hand combat lets a vampire bite its victim for (STR+1d4) brawling damage.

Infection: Anyone slain by a vampire's bite rises in 1d6 nights as a lesser vampire (use the profile for a nosferatu). Often, the lesser vampire is controlled by its creator.

Regeneration: Each six points of Wind drained by a vampire's bite heals one wound level it has suffered.

Speed: Vampires are incredibly fast. They can move up to four times their Pace on *each* action.

Undead: Focus—heart.

Weaknesses: Wood, holy water, beheading, and sunlight. Beheading or a wooden stake through the heart kills the vampire. A pint of holy water thrown at it does 2d6 damage. A vampire takes 3d6 massive damage each round it has any flesh exposed to sunlight.

Description: Vampires appear much like normal humans until they attack. Then, their eyes turn black, sometimes with a faint red gleam, and their fangs and nails lengthen. However, much of the terror generated by this sort of bloodsucker comes from the aura of sheer malevolence than shrouds it once revealed.

GHOSTS

Haunts, specters, phantasms — all of these are disembodied souls that haven't moved on to the afterlife and remain to plague the folks of the Weird West. All of these restless spirits fall under the heading of that Dr. Sutherland correctly identified as ghosts.

Below, we've listed several types of spirits to populate the old cemeteries and lonely roads of your campaign. These are by no means the only kinds of wraiths out there, but they should get your evil mind turning on haunts of your own.

Some of the more powerful ghosts may grant Coup to a Harrowed when defeated. If so, the character gains the *ghost* power (or *voice o' the damned* for banshees) at level 1.

COMMON WEAKNESSES

Ghosts can usually be driven away or destroyed by means of the blessed miracle *exorcise*. *Consecrate armament* allows a weapon to affect ghosts and *consecrate item* creates an aura that is repellent to the spirit on the item affected. Other miracles that affect them normally are *expose*, *falter*, *hinder*, *protection*, *safekeepin'*, and *sanctify*. Ghosts are considered "evil" for the purposes of these miracles even if they are not malign.

The shamanic favor *bind ghost* compels the ghost to perform a service for the shaman if successful, and *destroy spirit* vanquishes one from the Earth.

Most miracles hexes, favors and voodoo spells that affect Mental Traits work normally on apparitions as well, subject to specific exceptions chosen by the Marshal—*bedazzling* one may have little effect, for example. On the other hand, *spirit coils* can trap an ghost, and *soul blast* and *argent agony* both can damage ghosts.

On the other hand, Marshal, you may not want some big-britches hex-slinger gunning down your favorite ghost with his hopped-up six-guns. That's absolutely fine—it does kind of spoil the effect of a good haunting if the heroes can just walk up and blast the spirits!

If you choose to make them immune to normal magical damage methods, we've got you covered. There's another way for heroes to cleanse a haunting, one that requires them to do a little leg- and mind-work. It's called an anchor.

ANCHORS

All ghosts have an anchor to the world of the living. This may take the form of an item, a place, or even a person. Some ghosts are even anchored to a particular action, such as avenging an act of violence or treachery.

Regardless of its nature, the anchor is something that was of great importance to the apparition during life; a bit of diligent research should point a posse of ghost hunters toward a spirit's anchor.

While the anchor keeps the ghost on Earth, it is also the spirit's Achilles heel. A clever group of heroes can use the anchor to draw the ghost to them, or even, in some cases, vanquish the spirit from the Earth.

Each type of spirit is anchored in a different way; some, like haunts, vary from individual spirit to individual spirit. In the descriptions for each sort of ghost on the following pages, we've detailed what sorts of things anchor them and how the posse might use that to their benefit.

Regardless of the type of apparition or what it's tied to, no spirit may ever travel or manifest more than 1 mile from its anchor.

USING GHOSTS

Ghosts are great for building a sense of tension and fear in your game. Apparitions have an air of mystery that most encounters with corporeal undead can't achieve. However, drawing out this sort of atmosphere does take a little more work on the Marshal's part than having a horde of zombies batter down the door to the posse's hideout.

The less seen of the spirit, the more suspenseful the session is likely to be. But, you're probably asking, if the ghost's the main threat in the adventure, how are you supposed to do that?

Well, there are a couple of ways to accomplish this little bit of spiritual legerdemain.



MANIFESTATION

In each ghost's description, we've detailed how the spirit appears when it allows itself to be seen by the living (or un-living). This is called its manifestation.

However, this description is for when the spirit makes itself fully visible. Ghosts have a great deal of freedom in how much of themselves they reveal. A wraith may choose to appear as a faint, diffuse light, a wispy outline, or even just the sensation of a presence. A good idea is to save the full manifestation for a high point in the session, or maybe even the climax.

The only limitation on a spirit's appearance is that it cannot appear as someone (or something) else. Ghosts are *not* masters of disguise!

INVESTIGATION

Encounters centering on a haunting often tend to be investigative in nature. Often the posse spends much of its

time trying to discover the history of the ghost rather than planning an ambush for it.

A good ghost-based scenario should be as much a mystery as a horror story. Developed characters, sinister plots, and deadly secrets related to the ghost keep the posse involved in the world of the living. That doesn't mean there can't be a nice big fight, of course. After all, it's possible the greatest threat to the heroes in a haunting may come from a human opponent who's actions created the ghost rather than the spirit itself!



OUT OF SIGHT—NOT MIND

Most hauntings are subtle affairs. An odd and eerie light in the old cemetery, a strange dream or a cryptic message are all good effects to keep a ghost story rolling. Unexplained noises, low whispers in a dark room, or a movement caught in the corner of the eye are good ways to let the heroes know something's around without flaunting the ghost.

GHOSTLY PROPS

Sometimes, you may want to use a ghost as a set-up for another, more horrifying abomination. Death at the hands of some supernatural terror is certainly enough to spawn a ghost or phantasm now and then.

In this case, the ghost isn't the main threat to the community. Instead, its presence is more "background music" for the real encounter. It can make a nice prelude for your next symphony of terror.

BANSHEE

Banshees are the restless spirits of folks who died as a result of non-requited love. Often, they committed suicide after realizing their heart's desire was denied them. Occasionally, the banshee was actually murdered by the object of its affection. In either case, the banshee's death occurred in a remote spot and the body was unburied.

Legend depicts banshees as exclusively female, but there's nothing to prevent the ghost of a jilted man from becoming one in the Weird West.

As a result of their failed love lives, banshees have a very distorted view on the world of the living. Banshees perceive beings of the opposite sex as their former—and now hated—love, while those of the same sex are rivals for affection. These spirits pretty much despise anybody!

A banshee's anchor is its former body. Providing the body with a proper burial, according to its religious beliefs, severs the link and destroys the banshee. *Exorcism* or *destroy spirit* are effective when cast on either the banshee itself or its body.

On a subconscious level, the ghost is aware of the importance of its body and takes steps to prevent its discovery. Although the body remains near the site of its death, the body is usually hidden or camouflaged in some way. A banshee *always* manifests to protect its body from those who disturb it—even in daylight.

PROFILE: BANSHEES

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d6, Q:3d8, S:2d6, V:3d8

As in life

Mental: C:2d8, K:3d6, M:2d10, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d10

As in life

Pace: 6

Size: 6

Wind: NA

Terror: 11

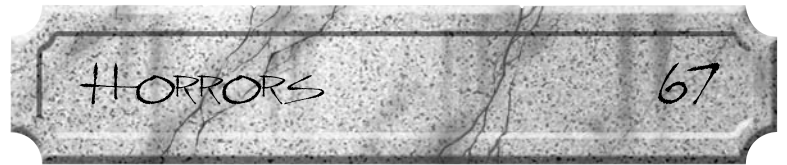
Special Abilities:

Doom: A banshee can pronounce *doom* upon a single hero at a time. While under a banshee's *doom*, the poor sap suffers as if he had the Hindrance *bad luck* any time he's in a potentially life-threatening situation. Even worse, he can't spend Fate Chips to avoid wounds! Luckily, the banshee can only *doom* one hero at a time. Pronouncing *doom* on a hero takes a single Action Card for the banshee if the apparition invokes it during combat.

Ghostly Form: Banshees, like all ghosts, are intangible, and able to pass through corporeal objects at will.

Immunity: Wind or physical damage. Hexes and enchanted (or *consecrated*) weapons can hurt them. Under no circumstances do banshees suffer Wind loss.

Shriek: A banshee can inflict Wind damage by the blood-curdling sound of its voice. All cowpokes within 10 yards of the banshee must make an Opposed Test of *Spirit* against the ghost when it shrieks. Those who fail suffer the difference in Wind. This takes two actions to perform, and the banshee can shriek as often as it desires.



Vulnerability–Sunlight: Banshees suffer 3d6 damage each round if they, or their anchor (i.e., their corpse) is exposed to direct sunlight. This is massive damage.

Wail: Once per night, a banshee can cut loose with an truly unearthly wail that chills most folks to the bone. Any cowpokes unlucky enough to be within 10 yards of her when she does must make an Opposed Test of *Spirit* with the banshee, adding their Grit and +2 if they're *brave*. Success means they shake off the effects of the wail. If an unlucky stiff fails this roll, he suffers a heart attack as detailed on the Scart Table.

Description: Banshees appear as spectral forms that float a foot or so above the ground. Their lower extremities are nothing but tatters of fabric and most banshees are clothed in a gray or greenish-gray robe. A banshee's decayed face is contorted as if in horrible agony.

HAUNTS

Haunts are the most common form of ghost. They are created when a person died while experiencing an extreme—usually unpleasant—emotion and is doomed to relive it or inflict it on others. The most common motivator for a haunt is revenge for a violent or treacherous death.

Unfortunately, although many haunts are not evil in intent, their undead state skews their perceptions, causing them to terrorize or even attack otherwise innocent folks.

Usually, a haunt is anchored to a specific place (most often that of their death); *exorcising* the area or casting *destroy spirit* cleanses such spirits. In a few rare instances, a haunt may be anchored to a vehicle, like a train or ship, where its death occurred; these “mobile” haunts can be cleansed in the same fashion as noted above.

Individual haunts vary greatly according to the circumstances and cause of their death, so feel free to adjust the profile below as you see fit.

PROFILE: HAUNTS

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:2d6, Q:3d6, S:3d8, V:3d10

As in life, *fightin': brawlin'* 4d6

Mental: C:2d6, K:3d6, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d10

As in life

Pace: 6

Size: 6

Wind: NA

Terror: 5-11 (sometimes greater, depending on haunt's appearance and demeanor)

Special Abilities:

Chill Touch: Haunts can "touch" corporeal beings and inflict Wind damage by chilling them. A successful *fightin': brawlin'* attack does 2d6 Wind to the target. If the victim is reduced to 0 Wind in this manner, he passes out for 1d6 minutes as well as suffering the usual effects of having no Wind.

Fear Attack: A haunt can inflict fear upon any human within 10 feet. This requires an Opposed *Spirit* roll against the target. If the target loses, he must roll 3d6 on the Scart Table (or, at the Marshal's option, flee at top speed for 1d8 minutes). For each raise the haunt gets on the Opposed roll, add an additional die to the roll on the Scart Table.

Ghostly Form: Haunts are intangible, able to pass through walls, sink into the ground, and move their ghostly hands through an hombre's chest.

Immunity: Wind or physical damage. Haunts cannot be harmed by physical weapons, unless the weapons are made of silver. Hexes and enchanted/*consecrated* weapons can also hurt them. Haunts never suffer Wind loss.

Description: Varies. Some haunts are clearly ephemeral beings—you can see right through their ghostly forms. Others appear to be made of true flesh and blood, but bear horrible wounds or ghostly pale skin that reveals their true state. A chill always accompanies a haunt.

PHANTOMS

These are the least powerful (and, therefore least dangerous) of all the ghosts haunting the lonely places of the Weird West. Phantoms—also called spooks, wraiths and phantasms—are merely spirits who've yet to realize their time has come. They remain tied to the site of their death until someone releases them from the limbo of undeath they are trapped in.

Phantoms are little more than supernatural "recordings" of the last moments of their former lives. The apparitions nearly always appear as virtually transparent images of their former selves prior to death. They often react to other unseen people or things as they play out their death scenes again and again.

A phantom's anchor is the site of its death. *Exorcise* or *destroy spirit* cast successfully on the location will dispel the spirit. Another method is for a hero to convince the phantom it's dead and should move on. That's no easy task—he must get a raise on an Incredible (11) *persuasion* roll. Other forms of attack, magical or physical, do not affect phantoms.

These apparitions do not pose a threat to living beings other than a good scare. Anyone seeing a phantom "reliving" its death must make a Hard (9) *guts* check. Other than that, phantoms do not interact with the corporeal world.

Phantoms are more an event than an abomination, an afterimage of a person's life rather than a free-willed undead. For that reason, we haven't provided any game statistics for them.

They are usually found in areas with a Fear Level of 4 or higher, and may be connected (often by death) with another, far more dangerous, abomination.

POLTERGEISTS

Poltergeists are often thought of as pesky, if somewhat spooky, pranksters. Like simple phantasms, poltergeists result from a soul's refusal to accept the death of its corporeal body. However, poltergeists are fully aware they're undead—they're just mean-spirited about it!

A poltergeist invariably chooses a victim for its supernatural temper tantrums, usually a child or adolescent. These apparitions are apparently jealous of the young one's life and vitality, and seek to make the target as miserable as possible.

These spirits are able to interact with physical objects and use this ability to confound their victim. They may perform acts of vandalism or theft so that their target takes the blame, or they may rely on more straightforward scare tactics. Usually, the apparitions employ a mix of these, escalating from simple pranks to outright ghostly terrorism.

The poltergeist's chosen victim is the spirit's anchor. There's seldom any readily apparent rhyme or reason as to the apparition's choice of target, but a little investigation usually reveals a tenuous link of some sort.

Exorcism and *destroy spirit* have no effect on the poltergeist if cast on its anchor. They do work if the caster uses them against the spirit itself.

A hero who gets two raises in a single Test of Wills against the poltergeist using either *bluff*, *overawe*, *persuasion* or *ridicule* can force the spirit to abandon its anchor (thus destroying it). A hero can make only one such attempt—ever. The poltergeist always uses its *Spirit* to resist these Aptitudes.

PROFILE: POLTERGEISTS

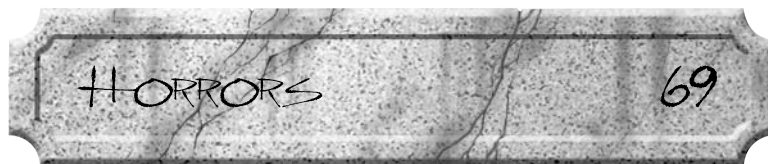
Corporeal: D:2d10, N:3d6, Q:3d6, S:2d10, V:2d8

As in life, plus *filchin'* 4d10, *lockpickin'* 3d10, *throwin'*: balanced, unbalanced 3d10

Mental: C:2d6, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d8

As in life

Pace: 6



Size: 6

Wind: NA

Terror: 7 (Although they seldom visually manifest, their actions are often obviously supernatural.)

Special Abilities:

Ghostly Form: Poltergeists are intangible, able to move freely through corporeal objects.

Immunity: Wind or physical damage. Poltergeists are immune to physical weapons, including those made of silver. Hexes and enchanted or *consecrated* weapons can hurt them.

Mischief: Poltergeists can readily manipulate physical objects. They're fond of moving furniture, stealing valuables, locking/unlocking doors, and the like, often making their victim appear responsible. More malicious poltergeists even make subtle attacks this way, "knocking" poisons into foods, tripping victims on stairs, or even smothering them with pillows.

Projectile Attack: A poltergeist can fling small loose objects—books, glasses, rocks, etc.—with relative ease. It can hurl one of these objects per action for STR damage and a Range Increment of 5. Of course, if no such items are available, it can't throw them! Some truly powerful poltergeists can even manipulate weapons well enough to attack normally with them. These spirits have *fightin'*: *brawlin'* 3 in addition to their other Aptitudes.

Projectile Storm: Once per day, a poltergeist can cause a storm of small objects or weapons to fly about, injuring and terrifying its targets. For three rounds, the poltergeist can make up to five projectile attacks per action. Anyone taking a wound from these attacks immediately has to make a *guts* check against the poltergeist's Terror score.

Description: Poltergeists seldom manifest visually, even when interacting with the physical world. When they do appear, they usually choose forms that are only vaguely humanoid in appearance—the more ridiculously monstrous the form, the better (up the Terror score by 2 in this case). They often choose to chill the air noticeably when present.

SHADES

Shades are apparitions that maintain some tie to a living person—or group of people—responsible for the shade's death. Of all the types of apparitions, shades are most able to interact with the physical world, yet the spirit is prevented from acting on the one thing it most desires.

As a part of the spirit's curse, it is unable to directly affect the person responsible for its condition; it can manifest to its target—and even attack other humans—but it can *never* take direct action for or against its target. Shades can manipulate inanimate objects to hinder or even harm their targets or influence others to do so for them. They can even aid those opposed to their target (if the spirit is benevolent).

The apparition's anchor is the person or group to whom the shade is linked. The shade always manifests within one mile of the anchor (or one of the anchors, in the case of a group), no matter how far or fast the person has traveled since the spirit's last appearance.

Unlike most apparitions, *exorcise* and *destroy spirit* have no effect when used against the shade's anchor. Bringing the guilty party (or parties) to justice releases a malevolent shade from its revenge. This isn't necessarily as easy as it sounds; the villain must be publicly proven guilty of the shade's death, not merely gunned down like a back-shooting bushwhacker!

PROFILE: SHADES

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:2d6, Q:3d6, S:3d8, V:3d10

As in life, plus fightin': freezing touch 4d6, throwin': balanced, unbalanced 3d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:3d6, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d12

As in life, plus overawe 3d8

Pace: 6

Size: 6

Wind: NA

Terror: 7-11 (Terror score increases as the shade's form begins to depict corruption and decay.)

Special Abilities:

Bad Dreams: Although it can't directly affect its anchor, a shade does plague the person, turning her life into a living Hell. A shade inflicts either the Hindrance *bad luck* or *night terrors* on its anchor until it is dispelled or satisfied.

Freezing Touch: Similar to some ghosts, shades can "touch" corporeal beings and inflict damage. However, the shade's touch is much more potent. Treat the attack as a normal *fightin'* attack, except the target gets no benefit from weapons, normal armor or even her own *fightin'* Aptitude. A successful attack does 2d6 damage to the target. Magical protections work are effective against this attack.

Ghostly Form: Shades, like all apparitions are intangible, and interact with the physical world only when they choose to do so.

Immunity: Wind or physical damage. Shades cannot be harmed by physical weapons, even silver ones. Hexes and enchanted/*consecrated* weapons can hurt them.

Immunity: The same curse that prevents the shade from harming its anchor also prevents that person (or persons) from affecting it in any way. Even hexes, miracles, and the like are ineffective when wielded by the spirit's target.

Description: A shade's visual manifestation appears much like its murdered corporeal body, complete with wounds. The shade's appearance shows the effect of



gradual decay, appearing to slowly rot as time advances. A noticeable cold accompanies any manifestation, and some spirits of this sort are accompanied by a faint odor of decomposition.

SPECTERS

Most apparitions are linked to the material world by the nature or cause of their death—not so specters. These abominations are the black hats of the ghostly dimension. Specters are the spirits of particularly evil people who've been cursed to continue their existence in a state of undeath. The Reckoners aren't about to let a little thing like death cut short a good (if unwitting) servant's service.

Unlike most ghosts, specters are driven by their hatred of all living humans and actively seek to cause harm to them. To that end, specters have a limited ability to inflict physical damage on their victims—while remaining untouchable themselves!

Specters are anchored to their former bodies. In addition to the weaknesses shared by all apparitions, specters can also be defeated by exhuming their original bodies and burning them to ashes. Using the miracle *exorcise* or the favors *destroy spirit* on the corpse has the same effect.

PROFILE: SPECTERS

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:2d8, Q:3d10, S:2d8, V:3d10

As in life, plus fightin': brawlin' 4d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:3d6, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d10

As in life, plus overawe 3d8

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: NA

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Fear Attack: A specter can inflict fear on any human within 10 feet. This requires an Opposed *Spirit* roll against the target. A successful attack causes the target to roll 4d6 on the Scart Table, plus an additional d6 for every raise the specter got.

Ghostly Form: Specters are intangible, able to pass through solid objects—including cowpokes—at will.

Immunity: Wind or physical damage. Specters are immune to physical weapons or attacks, unless the weapons are enchanted, *consecrated* or silver. Damaging hexes, spells, favors, and miracles can hurt them. Specters never suffer Wind loss from any effects.

Incorporeal Attack: A specter can lash a victim with its claws, inflicting physical damage by damaging the victim's spirit! Once per action, the specter can roll an Opposed *Spirit* roll against its target; if it succeeds, it causes 1d8 damage for each success to its victim's guts. Regular armor does *not* protect against this, although certain magical protections, like *armor o' righteousness*, *bodyguard*, *ogu's aura*, and *turtle's shell* work normally.

Description: These apparitions nearly always choose a frightening form in which to manifest. A black-hooded figure with skeletal hands or a pale-skinned corpse with glowing red eyes, long claws and pointed teeth are good examples of specters' forms.

LIVING HOUSES

Not all haunted houses are home to ghosts. Well, that's not entirely true—not all haunted houses are haunted...wait, let's try that again. Not all haunted houses are even *houses*!

There exists a strange type of abomination currently unknown to even the Rangers or Agency we like to call a "living house." This abomination is actually a living entity that resembles a house in all respects—it even has furniture, carpet, books, you name it. But the truth is, it's actually an enormous servant of the Reckoners.

Living houses—and yes, there are more than one of them—resemble old



American Gothic mansions. They are a dingy gray color, both on the walls and shingles, and furnished with the finest accoutrements. Once a family takes up residence within, the house begins to produce effects that resemble those of a haunting.

The result is the same as that of a haunted house: the local Fear Level raises by one. Worse, the usual methods to cleanse a haunted house have no effect. The living house often gives investigators false clues and red herrings to distract them from its nature. It even secrets bodies away in hidden rooms, leading ghost hunters to believe the corpse is a spiritual anchor.

The house has near complete control of its internal areas, able to modify humidity and temperature by as much as 20 degrees. It can move furnishings about at and even alter its inner structure at will, creating dead-end rooms, false doors, and so on to foil investigators—or even trap them to starve.

There are a couple of clues that all is not as it seems with a living house. First, while the house has a limited psychic ability to alter nearby folks'

memories, no official records exist of its building or purchase. Furthermore, all living houses look exactly alike on the exterior—a posse even recall having seen an identical “haunted house” elsewhere. Finally, the house has very little ability to alter the surrounding landscape, so yards, walkways and the like don't exist unless later occupants build them.

Because of these limitations, living houses are most often found on the distant outskirts of cities. There, enough folks are around to affect with false memories, yet record keeping is spotty at best. Since the houses literally spring up overnight, they also choose sites somewhat off the beaten path to avoid attracting attention.

PROFILE: LIVING HOUSES

Corporeal: D:2d10, N:4d8, Q:3d6, S:3d12, V:4d12+10

Fightin': brawlin' 4d8, throwin': balanced, unbalanced 4d10

Mental: C:3d10, K:4d8, M:3d12, Sm:3d8, Sp:3d12

Performin': haunting 6d12, scrutinize 4d10

Pace: 0

Size: 25

Wind: —

Terror: 9 (once revealed)

Special Abilities:

Armor: 1. This only applies to the house itself, not the furnishings and such inside it.

Climate Control: In addition to controlling temperature and humidity, the house can alter air flows. It can combine these abilities to create wavering heat waves that a cowpoke may mistake for a ghost unless he makes Onerous (7) *Cognition* roll. It also uses this control to create "cold spots" to further mislead investigators.

Damage: The house can throw its own furnishings at heroes. Furniture does (STR) brawling damage, while knives, broken glass, and other edged missiles do (STR+1d4). The house can make up to five such attacks on a single action.

Foggy Memories: This power affects the minds of neighbors. Every one within 5 miles of the house has vague "memories" of the house "always being there." These memories may even go so far as to recall former occupants, etc.

Lord of its Domain: The house has complete control over doors, windows, furniture, and even the books that are a part of its interior. *Nothing* happens to these items that the house does not allow. However, only attacks against the structure of the house itself actually damage the thing. Breaking up the furniture and bric-a-brac simply makes the house mad.

Night Terrors: The house can inflict *night terrors* on anyone sleeping within its walls. It usually picks a single target for this and presents them with misleading visions.

Description: Living houses are large, three-story American Gothic houses. A large turret occupies the right corner of the front of the house, and a covered porch runs from the turret around the left. The paint is always a dreary gray and the shingles match it nearly exactly. A sense of brooding malevolence oozes from the edifice, and its windows almost seem like eyes.

FEAR AND MYTH

Ahhh, poor Dr. Jensen. He's as nutty as a Christmas fruitcake, of course. Years of working in an asylum while the Reckoning gives fear new life sent the poor man over the edge. He's in a straightjacket in a quiet cell in Stockton. But that doesn't mean he still isn't pretty much right on the money!

Jensen's manuscript was far less specific than that of Thaddeus Washington or Dr. Sutherland, so we'll simply talk about the creatures that fulfill the concepts he talked about: superstition, rampant technology and alienation.

MONSTERS OF LEGEND

First of all, lets talk about the creatures of legend. These are the shadowy terrors of myths and fireside stories—but in the Weird West, such stories are often true.

THE THING UNDER THE BED

Kids aren't being childish when they run in and jump on their bed at night—there really is a monster under there! And it's just waiting to snatch at the feet of a careless little one.

The Thing preys on the fears of a community's children, allowing kids to get a glimpse of it shifting under the bed or hiding in the back of a dark closet. It keeps them on edge by snatching a child every month or so. These little ones are taken to the abomination's lair—usually subterranean—and never seen again. The monster may gobble them up or, possibly more disturbing, turn them into Things themselves.

The Thing isn't just limited to beds, either. It can lurk in a dark closet, a

musty attic corner, or behind the stairs to the basement. The monster takes great pains to keep its presence hidden from the older population. Adults seldom believe it exists, even after it's taken a child or two, which only heightens the kids' feelings of helplessness. Any disappearances are usually explained as runaways or other, more mundane occurrences.

The monster further weakens the bond between adults and children by committing acts of theft or vandalism. It then frames the most outspoken children.

PROFILE: THE THING

Corporeal: D:1d10, N:2d10, Q:3d8, S:3d8, V:2d4

Climbin' 2d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d10, filchin' 3d10, lockpickin' 4d10, sneak 6d10

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d6

Overawe 3d6, search 2d8

Pace: 10



Size: 6

Wind: 10

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Contortionist: Although the Thing is roughly adult-sized, it can wedge its body into areas normally accessible only to much smaller (Size 3) creatures.

Damage: Claws (STR+1d4)

Immunity—Normal Attacks: Normal weapons can't hurt a Thing. Magical attacks and weapons can.

Shadow Transport: The Thing can teleport from one shadow to another within 100 yards as long as it is not being directly observed. For example, it can blink from underneath the bed to the closet or any other darkened area. It must either see its destination or know that it is there and the shadow must conceal it (but remember its *contortionist* ability). However, if anyone is watching it, the Thing can't use this ability.

Weakness—Light: Direct exposure to light equal to that of a torch or greater does 3d6 massive damage to it each round.

Description: Things seldom exist in light long enough for folks to get a good look at them. Most people only see a clawed hand coming up the side of the bed or a hunched humanoid figure in the shadows behind hanging clothes. Exact descriptions vary from Thing to Thing, some seem skeletal while others are gray-skinned, warty, troll-like monsters.

UKTENA

The uktena is a large water serpent, but there the similarity between it and the Maze dragon ends. This abomination, although smaller, is much tougher to kill.

A small, diamond-like crystal, about the size of a rifle cartridge, is imbedded in the uktena's skull. It serves as a conduit to the Hunting Grounds, constantly feeding the monster supernatural energies. Not only does this make the creature nearly immune to injury, but it also has a hypnotic effect on any human.

After the uktena is slain, the crystal can be pried from its skull, giving its owner easier access to the Hunting Grounds. The crystal provides an additional Appeasement to a shaman whenever he successfully completes a ritual. If the shaman combines a number of rituals into a single ordeal, he still only gains a single extra point. Mad scientists and hucksters who possess one of these crystals gain a +2 to either the *mad science* or *hexslingin'* Aptitude, respectively.

Every seven days, the crystal must be soaked in the blood of a small game animal. If not, it not only loses its power, but also saddles its owner with the *bad luck* Hindrance. A cowpoke must possess the crystal for a week to be considered its owner.

The resemblance of this creature to the horned serpent described in *Rascals, Varmints & Critters* is strictly superficial. They are not related.

PROFILE: UKTENA

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:3d10, Q:4d10,
S:4d12+2, V:2d12+2

Fightin': brawlin' 5d10, sneak 4d10,
swimmin' 4d10

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d6, M:2d12, Sm:2d6,
Sp:2d10

Overawe 5d12

Pace: 24

Size: 16 (30'+ long)

Wind: –

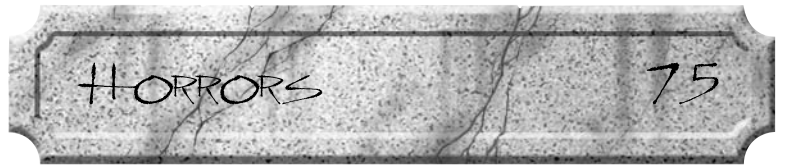
Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Horns (STR+2d10), bite
(STR+2d8)

Hypnotism: Any hero looking at the uktena must roll a contest of *Spirit* at the beginning of each round. Failure means she's hypnotized and walks slowly toward the monster, completely helpless. She can attempt to break free of the spell each round by rolling another contest of *Spirit*.

Immunity–All: The only way to harm the uktena is to pierce the creature's heart, which lies underneath seventh band on its neck. This is called shot at -6, assuming the hero knows the monster's weakness.



Description: The uktena is a 30' long snake as thick as a good-sized tree trunk. It strongly resembles a small Maze dragon with a few minor differences. It has a pair of horns on its head, between which rests a brilliant crystal. Its neck has seven faint bands of color, one for each in the spectrum. The heart lies under the violet band.

GABRIEL HOUNDS

Gabriel hounds, also called gabbe brecht or barghests, are sometimes associated with witches, werewolves, or other shape-changing humans. However, these large, black dogs are most often encountered as the forerunner of a more powerful evil.

The appearance of a Gabriel hound bodes ill for the person to whom it appears. Although others may see it, the first person to catch a glimpse of it (i.e., the highest *Cognition* roll) is cursed by its power (see below).

Gabriel hounds seldom attack outright—although it's not unheard of, by any means. Instead, the abominations make a brief, foreshadowing appearance, usually in after dark and in a lonely area.

PROFILE: GABRIEL HOUNDS

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:4d8, Q:2d10, S:3d8,
V:4d10

Dodge 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, sneak
4d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:2d6, M:2d10, Sm:2d8,
Sp:2d12

Overawe 4d10, search 3d10, trackin' 5d10

Pace: 10

Size: 6

Wind: –

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Curse: The hound has the ability to *curse* the first person to catch sight of it. The hero picks up a case of double *bad luck*—anytime he goes bust on a roll, the result is

somehow life threatening. The curse lasts until the hero defeats a fear-monger. Even killing the hound does not remove this curse.

Damage: Bite (STR+1d6), claw (STR)

Howl: A hound can inflict fear upon any human within 25 yards who can hear its howl. All affected characters must roll a contest of their *Spirit* against the hound's *Mien*. Those who lose must roll 3d6 on the Scart Table.

Immunity-Normal Damage: The hound only suffers half damage from normal attacks.

Weaknesses: The hound takes full damage from silver weapons. Holy water does 2d6 damage.

Description: Gabriel hounds are large (4' at the shoulder) black dogs, resembling either mastiffs or wolfhounds. Their hair is coal-black and unkempt. A red spark glimmers behind their pupils and a low growl constantly rolls from their throats.

LITTLE PEOPLE

The Little People aren't just an imaginary figment spawned in the bottom of a jug of liquor. Nor are they nothing more than mischievous sprites out playing a prank or two on foolish humans. What these abominations lack in size, they make up for in cruelty.

There are nearly endless variations of these monsters in literature, but we're only going to cover two here.

TOMMYKNOCKERS

Tommyknockers lurk in mine tunnels and shafts, slowly weakening supports and otherwise threatening miners. Because the Reckoners *want* ghost rock successfully mined, these monsters don't interfere with those mines until they're tapped out. Gold and silver mines are their usual haunts.

These carnivorous abominations lurk deep in the mines and damage supports, mine-car tracks, and other

important structures during the night. Miners and watchmen sometimes hear the creature tapping away down in the depths after the work force has left for the evening. Should the creature succeed in causing a cave-in, it begins to systematically hunt down and feed on any trapped miners, picking them off one by one as lack of food and oxygen weakens them.

A mine known (or even just rumored!) to be plagued by a tommyknocker may have a Fear Level one point higher than the surrounding area. Seldom does more than one of these monsters infest a single mine.

PROFILE: TOMMYKNOCKERS

Corporeal: D:4d8, N:3d6, Q:2d6, S:4d8, V:4d10

Climbin' 5d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, sneak 6d6

Mental: C:2d10, K:3d6, M:1d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d6

Search 4d6, trackin' 5d6, trade: minin' 4d6

Pace: 6

Size: 4

Wind: 16

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Burrowing: Pace 8. A tommyknocker leaves no tunnel or evidence of its passing when burrowing; it literally passes through the earth. It can use this to *sneak* up on prey.

Damage: Claws (STR+1d8)

Disorient: A tommyknocker can cause limited confusion in a victim by winning an opposed roll of its *Spirit* versus the target's *Vigor*. If it wins, the victim loses her sense of direction and may become lost in the mine tunnels. This takes the monster an Action and lasts a number of hours equal to the amount by which the victim lost the contest.

Night Vision: The monster can see in total darkness as if it were full daylight.

Sabotage: The creature can damage mine equipment, supplies, and even structure. Exactly how much is up to the Marshal, but the larger the destruction, the longer it takes. A cave-in, for example, usually



requires a week or more of work on the monster's part.

Weakness—Light: In any light brighter than a torch, the tommyknocker is -2 to all Trait and Aptitude rolls.

Description: Tommyknockers are 3' tall humanoids, with disproportionately large heads. They walk perpetually hunched-over, perhaps due to their subterranean nature, perhaps due to the weight of their enormous heads. Their skin is a mottled blackish-gray and their solid black eyes are as large as saucers. Their hands have only three fingers each and these end in thick, claw-nails.

TROLLS

Trolls inhabit dark woods, hidden mountain vales, or lair underneath old, forgotten bridges. They prey on lone or lost travelers, seeking to lead them even further into trackless wilderness or to steal vital supplies, like water, food, or maps.

Trolls don't attack humans until they are bewildered and nearly exhausted. Better yet, the malevolent dwarves wait until their intended victim passes out in exhaustion or even just beds down for the night and take him unawares. And once a person falls into a troll's clutches, he's never heard from again.

These abominations are careful to remain hidden from their prey, stalking their victims from the shadows of the woods. They are responsible for many so-called "haunted woods" and only very few folks have ever seen one—or at least lived to tell about it. Because of this, a troll's haunt often has a Fear Level one or two points higher than the surrounding area.

PROFILE: TROLLS

Corporeal: D:3d10, N:4d8, Q:2d6, S:1d6, V:4d10

Climbin' 3d8, dodge 5d8, fightin' brawlin', knife 4d8, filchin' 6d8, sneak 7d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:1d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d6

Bluff 4d8, search 3d8, trackin' 5d8

Pace: 8

Size: 4



Wind: 16

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Damage: Claw (STR+1d4). Trolls make two claw attacks each Action Card.

Illusion: Trolls can create simple illusions. They're limited to minor alterations of reality, like making a rickety old bridge appear sound, or creating a false trail into the wilderness.

Mimic: Trolls are able to mimic the sounds of nearly any creature from a specific human voice to a wolf's howl. A sharp cowpoke notices something "odd" about the sound if he makes an Incredible (II) Cognition roll.

Description: Trolls look like 4' high humans, but are very broad for their height. Their skin is a ruddy tan. Their faces appear almost stretched, drawing their eyes into narrow slits and their mouths into a constant leer. Although their clawed fingers and toes look short and stubby, they're very dexterous.



DEMONS

Fire-and-brimstone spouting circuit preachers have regaled their congregations with tales of terrible demons waiting to torment their immortal souls for decades now. With the rise of cults practicing real black magic, it's not really a surprise that some of these "devil-worshippers" actually succeeded in summoning up a demon or two.

What most folks don't know, of course, is that these so-called demons are really just another type of servant for the Reckoners. Not wanting to let a prime source of fear go to waste, they've incarnated some of the stereotypical ideas of Hell's denizens into corporeal form.

These beings are never released to roam the land at will. That's totally out of character for a demon. Instead, these monsters answer the calls of unwitting cultists for power, and egg them on to greater and more horrific deeds in the name of the "Dark Master." Seldom do the cultists have an inkling that they are nothing but cogs in the Reckoners plans.

SUMMONING RITUALS

There are more ways to "summon" one of these abominations than there to skin a cat. The real thing that matters is that the cultists or magician involved truly desire to call forth a being of Hell and be willing to perform some terrible deed to do so. Often this takes the form of blood or even human sacrifice, but it varies from cult to cult. These rituals nearly always leave some evidence, and anyone examining a summoning site can determine the magician's intent on an Onerous (7) *academia: occult* roll.

Once summoned, the abomination is bound to the corporeal world, but not to the whims of the magician or cult. It may pretend to be, but the creature places ever-increasing demands on the cult, hoping to elevate the local area's Fear Level. When the chips are down, the monster cares nothing for its human allies.

USING DEMONS IN DEADLANDS

Demons draw much of their form from the concepts of the summoning cult or magician. As a result, they vary greatly in appearance, size, and power. Most conform very closely to the standard depictions of demonic beings common to the more lurid religious illustrations of the time.

Virtually any sort of power is available to these monsters. However, due to the influence of common beliefs, they tend to stick close to those abilities most often associated with Hellish inhabitants: strength, toughness, flame, poison, and the like. Fortunately, they also possess a number of weaknesses as a result of their quasi-religious nature.

For obvious reasons, these abominations are most frightening when tied to an blatantly "Satanic" or otherwise religiously-oriented cult. Often the greater terror comes from realizing the depths of corruption to which other humans have sunk through dealing with these abominations.

Otherwise, they're just big, tough monsters. Below, we've presented a couple of demons, but these are by no means the only possible types. You can use them as written or design your own for your campaign.

Demons are seldom encountered in groups; by virtue of their creation they are almost always solitary entities.

If you've read the adventure *Heart o' Darkness* (part two of the *Devils Tower* trilogy) you've probably noticed these are a bit different than the demons the Reverend Grimme summoned up there. That's because Grimme's plan required weaker minions that his forces could readily defeat.

PROFILE: TYPICAL DEMON

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:4d8, Q:3d8, S:5d12, V:4d10
Dodge 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 5d8, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:3d10, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d8
Academia: occult 2d6, overawe 5d10, ridicule 4d8, scrutinize 3d6

Pace: 8

Size: 10

Wind: –

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: 1

Damage: Bite (STR+poison), claws (STR+1d8)

Fearless

Immunity–Fire/Heat: Fire and heat-based attacks do *no* damage

to demons. Dynamite and similar explosions do half damage.

Immunity–Normal Attacks: The demon takes only half damage from all normal weapons.

Poison: Hard (9) TN. Success means the victim suffers an additional 1d6 damage to the affected location. On a failure he takes 2d8 damage to the affected location and 2d8 damage to the guts on the beginning of the next round as the acidic poison moves through the victim's system.

Weaknesses: Silver weapons do normal damage to demons. Holy water splashed on them does 2d6 damage to the affected location. Contact with any *consecrated item* does 2d6 damage per round. Demons suffer –4 to all Trait and Aptitude rolls on holy (*sanctified*) ground. *Exorcism* destroys them.

Description: These abominations stand about 9 1/2' tall and are very broad shouldered. Their skin is usually a deep, almost blackish, red and their eyes are orange pools of flame. They have gaping maws filled with shark-like teeth that drip an acidic venom. Their arms reach to their knees and end in three-fingered claws, each the size of a child's forearm. Their legs may have a scaly or coarse-haired covering, while their feet may end in three-toed feet or bird-like claws.

PROFILE: ARCH-DEMONS

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:3d10, Q:3d12, S:5d12+4, V:4d12+2

Fightin': brawlin' 6d10

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d8, M:3d12+2, Sm:2d10, Sp:3d12

Academia: occult 5d8, overawe 6d12+2, persuasion 4d12+2, ridicule 4d10, scrutinize 4d8

Pace: 10

Size: 12

Wind: –

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Damage: Bite (STR+1d4), Claw (STR+2d8), Hoof (STR)

Fearless

Fiery Breath: Every other round, the arch-demon can belch a gout of flame instead of making a bite attack on one of its actions. This has the same area of effect as a flamethrower and does 3d10 damage.

Flaming Aura: The air around the arch-demon's skin crackles with nearly invisible black flames. Any cowpoke in *fightin'* combat with it must roll a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll each round. If she fails, she suffers the difference in Wind.

Flight: Pace 20

Immunity—Fire/Heat: Fire and heat-based attacks (even magical ones) do *no* damage to arch-demons. Dynamite and similar explosions do half damage.

Immunity—Normal Attacks: The arch-demon takes *no* damage from normal attacks and weapons. Silvered weapons do half-damage to the monster. Magic and magical weapons do affect the arch-demon.

Weaknesses: The arch-demon takes 2d6 damage from holy water splashed on it. *Exorcism* destroys the monster and it suffers -4 to all Trait and Aptitude rolls on holy (*sanctified*) ground.

Coup: The Harrowed suffers only half damage from flame and heat-based attacks.

Description: These monsters stand nearly 12' high. Arch-demons have enormous horns, bat-like wings, cloven hooves, and fang-filled mouths. Their voices rumble from deep within their chests like an impending volcanic eruption. An arch-demon is the real deal—it should only be found with the largest and most powerful cults. This is the sort of horror that Mina Devlin or her Wichita Witches might conjure up.

MODERN HORRORS

Legend aren't the only source of horror in the Weird West. While technology has greatly improved the quality of life for many, mad science has provided a dark flipside to all of that. Here are a few abominations of steam and steel teach your posse the price progress.

AUTOMATONS

Automatons are one of the most fearsome constructs to lumber from the laboratories of Dr. Darius Hellstromme. These enormous, iron-plated mechanical men have seen much action battling gangs of other rail barons or guarding Hellstromme's facilities. They are usually encountered in small groups of three to five, although lone automatons have been encountered (on some sinister mission for their amoral master, no doubt).

Currently, most automatons are crafted individually, giving each of the metal monsters a unique appearance. All conform to roughly the same design specifications, but there is sometimes variation in their operation capabilities. Gear or piston-driven limbs are attached to a well-armored torso section, housing ghost-rock boiler. Atop the body, a metallic cylinder rests, housing the real secret of the automatons' design.

Many theories have been offered for the automatons' intelligence, ranging from complex clockwork to midgets in battlesuits. The truth is far more sinister. Using a concoction stolen from Baron LaCroix, Hellstromme has found a way to reanimate and implant undead brains into his steam-powered monstrosities. The undead mind provides the automaton with the ability to react to changing conditions that would completely befuddle a simple clockwork mechanism. The whole nasty process is detailed in the *City o' Gloom*, if you don't already have that fine publication.

For obvious reasons, Hellstromme has no desire to see the inner

workings of his creations exposed. To that end, each automaton is wired with a powerful explosive that destroys the brain and most of the device's internal parts should the automaton be disabled in combat; these metal monsters *never* surrender.

As an added bonus, the explosion is powerful enough to injure – or even kill – any opponents nearby.

PROFILE: AUTOMATONS

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d4, Q:2d6, S:3d12, V:2d12

Fightin': brawlin' 5d4, shootin': automatics 5d6

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d4, M:2d6, Sm:2d4, Sp:1d4

Overawe 4d6, **search** 4d6

Pace: 4

Size: 7

Wind: 16

Terror: 7

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Damage: Pincer claw (STR+1d6)

Fearless

Gun Hands: Automatons have a grasping claw in one hand and a full-sized Gatling gun in the other. If fully loaded, the automaton has 60 rounds for the Gatling.

Immunity: Automatons are unaffected by Wind loss, physical or emotional stress.

Self-Destruct: If an automaton receives a Maiming wound to the guts or noggin, the thing immediately explodes with the force of a single stick of dynamite (3d20 damage, Burst Radius 10). The only way to stop the detonation is to render the zombie brain "unconscious." Walkin' dead usually don't take Wind, so this is nearly impossible. However, certain magical or mad science effects might short-circuit the brain.

Vulnerability: Only spells, hexes, miracles and the like that affect inanimate objects can target the automaton's frame. *Soul blast* only works on animate objects, but the hex does affect an automaton if the caster targets the noggin specifically at the appropriate

penalty. In that case, the hex ignores the automaton's armor.

Description: Automatons are roughly humanoid in shape, consisting of a large torso (housing the ghost-rock boiler), piston-driven limbs and a brassy, cylindrical head. One arm ends in a pincer-like claw while the other terminates in a Gatling gun attached at the elbow.

CLOCKWORK TARANTULAS

These are another of Hellstromme's devices designed to give his rail gangs an edge in a fight. Driven by a complex clockwork mechanism, the tarantulas are larger than the average dog and scuttle about on 8 gear-driven legs.



The mechanical arachnids are terrifying opponents, made more so by the potent acid that they can inject or spray at targets. Their metal plating makes them somewhat resistant to normal firearms and, just like automatons, these devices are absolutely fearless.

Like automatons, the duplication of these machines is beyond the ken of most inventors, because Hellstromme has combined black necromancy with mad science. However, clockwork tarantulas don't rate human brains; instead, they're guided by reanimated animal brains.

Hellstromme guards the secret of the tarantulas' control just as closely as that of the automatons. However, instead of implanting an explosive, he uses the mechanism's own acid to dissolve its brain case should it ever be incapacitated.

PROFILE:
CLOCKWORK TARANTULAS

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:3d8, Q:3d8, S:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 5d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, shootin': acid 3d8, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:2d4, M:1d4, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4

Search 3d6, trackin' 3d6

Pace: 8

Size: 5

Wind: 10

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Acidic Bite: STR. If the tarantula gets a raise against its opponent in hand-to-hand combat, it has punctured his body with a pair of metal "fangs" and injects acid. The acid does 4d8 damage to the rolled location on the round the hit took place. The acid continues to do damage at the beginning of subsequent rounds as it spreads through the victim's system. Reduce the number of dice done by one each round after the initial

hit (i.e., 3d8 on the first round, 2d8 on the second, etc.). All damage done after the initial bite is in the guts.

Acid Spray: The tarantula can use its "fangs" to spray acid a short distance. Spraying acid requires a *shootin': acid* roll. When sprayed, the acid has a Range Increment 2, ROF 1, and does 4d8 damage. Use the massive damage rules to distribute any wounds caused. Acid fired in this fashion does *not* continue to cause damage. A tarantula has enough acid for 12 sprays or bites in its reservoir.

Armor: 1

Fearless

Immunity: Clockwork tarantulas are unaffected by Wind loss, physical or emotional stress.

Self-Destruct: If a tarantula's mechanism ever stops, it vents acid from its reservoir into its brain case, destroying the secret of its construction. The reservoir actually holds 13 shots, so that there's always enough left for this act. Anyone within 2 yards of the gizmo when this happens is splashed for 1d8 damage per remaining shot.

Vulnerability: Only spells, hexes, miracles and the like that affect inanimate objects can target the tarantula's frame. *Soul blast* only works on animate objects, but the hex does affect a tarantula if the caster targets the noggin specifically at the appropriate penalty. In that case, the hex ignores the mechanical creature's armor.

Wall-Crawling: Tarantulas can move at their normal Pace up any surface soft enough for them to sink their barbed legs into, i.e. most wood, trees, people, etc. They can even hang upside down from a ceiling.

Description: Clockwork tarantulas stand about 3' high and resemble enormous, mechanical versions of their namesakes. Eight gear-driven legs, each over a yard long, emerge from the bulbous, armor-plated body housing the clockwork gears that drive the machine. The head contains



a set of sharpened, hollow tubes that function as the mechanism's primary weapons, or "fangs."

DOOM CLOUDS

These strange abominations are only formed when a large number of folks die due to mad science's latest weapon of mass destruction, poison gas. Even then—fortunately for the inhabitants of the Weird West—it's a rare occurrence. These sentient, poison clouds are truly one of the most efficient killing machines spawned by the Reckoners. To date, only a few have been spawned, and most of those on the battlefields Back East.

Their gaseous nature makes doom clouds nearly impervious to attacks. It also makes their own attack insidiously effective—and deadly.

Strong winds can be devastating to these creatures if they're caught in the open. To avoid being dissipated by weather phenomena, doom clouds stick to low ground, valleys, caves, and even buildings.

As these monsters are more products of science than legend, *academia: occult* reveals nothing about doom clouds. However, since the cloud is based on chlorine gas, each success and raise on a Fair (5) *science: chemistry* roll exposes one of a doom cloud's weaknesses.

PROFILE: DOOM CLOUDS

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:3d6, Q:2d6, S:1d4, V:2d6

Sneak 5d6

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d6, M:1d4, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d10

Search 4d6

Pace: 10

Size: 10 (10' in diameter)

Wind: —

Terror: 9 (once revealed)

Special Abilities:

Gaseous Form: Doom clouds are nearly intangible, able to pass through nearly any portal or window. Only an airtight seal stops these abominations.

Fearless

Flying: Pace 10

Immunity—Normal Damage: Due to their gaseous nature, doom clouds are immune to all forms of normal damage. Non-area effect magical attacks (*soul blast*, magical or *consecrated* weapons) only do half damage.

Poisoned Air: A doom cloud attacks simply by moving itself on top of a



victim; since it can alter its shape, it can cover a good-sized area. Any creature or hero caught inside must make a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll each round she remains inside it. Success means the hero has managed to hold her breath and not catch a lungful of the monster. Failure means her *Vigor* die is reduced a step. Once it reaches d4, she reduces the Coordination instead. As soon as the *Vigor* drops below 1d4, the victim dies. Lost *Vigor* returns at the rate of 1 die type or Coordination per minute after she escapes the monster. An airtight gas mask completely negates this attack.

Weaknesses: Weapons made of pure iron (not steel) do normal damage. Strong winds, natural or created with magics such as *sirocco*, *call weather*, or *deluge*, do 5d6 damage to a doom cloud each round. Electrical-based attacks, like *black lightning*, *lightning strike* do double damage. An electro-static gun does 1d6 real damage for each charge instead of Wind.

Description: In its natural form, a doom cloud is a 10' diameter sphere of blood-red mist. However, it may alter its form into nearly any other shape of equal or lesser volume by compacting itself. A faint set of menacing, putrid green eyes can be spotted high in the cloud on a Fair (5) *Cognition* roll. The eyes are nearly 1' across each.

PATCHWORK SCIENCE

Not all threats of the new science come wrapped in steel and powered by steam. It didn't take long for mad scientists to start experimenting with reanimation and grafting processes. But, for years, no one was able to bring get the parts to function as a whole—or even by themselves. Then, along came Dr. Wilma Meister.

Meister figured out that by putting a portion of a single brain in each of the attached parts, reanimation was possible. What she didn't know was that she was creating a type of walkin' dead that has brains everywhere in its body—not just the head! Now, a small group of mad scientists experiment with Meister's findings, creating amalgams of human and animal parts.

Patchwork surgery is a branch of mad science that, thankfully, isn't too popular in the current thought. That's probably because the idea of stitching an assortment of parts and pieces to a corpse just strikes most folks the wrong way. Yeah, right—like there's a *right* way for that to strike someone!

The whole story on patchwork science is covered in the *Lost Angels* sourcebook, but here are a couple of monsters to get you twisted minds churning, Marshal.

Dr. Meister wasn't actually the first to pioneer patchwork science, of course. Check out page 95 for the true modern Prometheus.

PATCHWORK MEN

Most mad scientists drawn to this unsavory practice focus their endeavors on the human body. Patchwork men are largely human in design and function, with a few “extras” thrown in every now and then to make them interesting.

PROFILE: PATCHWORK MEN

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d8, Q:3d8, S:2d10, V:4d8

Climbin': 1d8, dodge 2d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8, shootin': pistol, rifle, shotgun 2d6, sneak 3d8, swimmin' 1d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d6

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: 12

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR). Claws, extra-sharp teeth, horns, and the like are added to some patchwork men, giving them a STR+2 damage attack.

Enhanced Senses: Some patchwork humans have animal sensory organs (ears, eyes, noses, etc.) attached to give them a +2 or higher bonus to all related rolls—or even entirely new senses (radar, sonar, etc.).

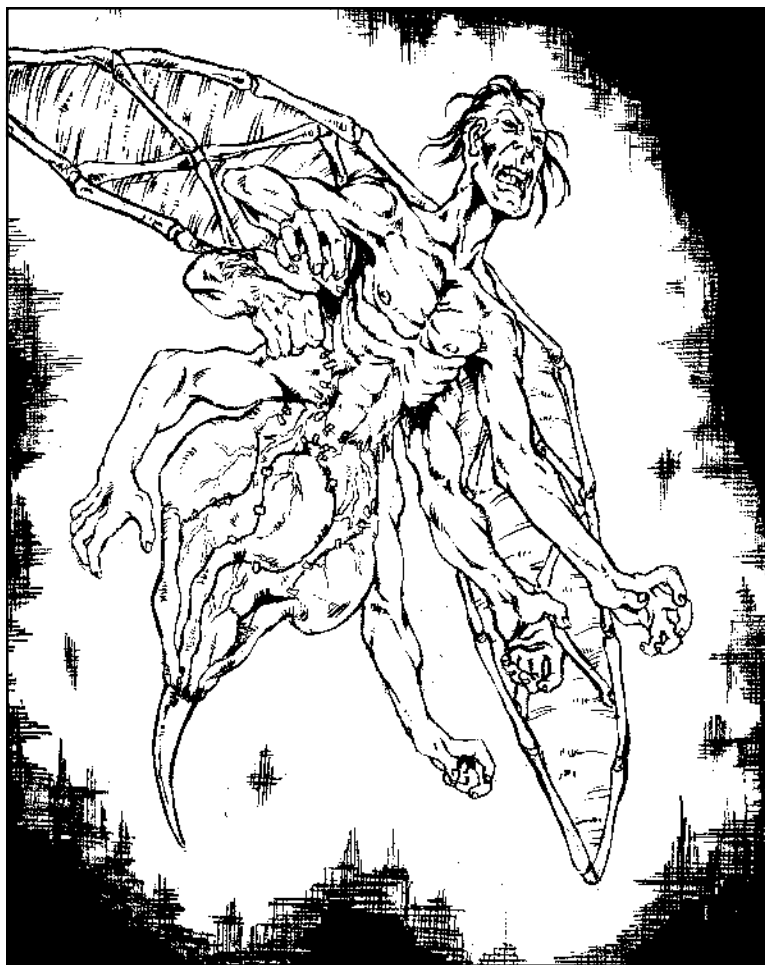
Fearless

Infection: Sometimes a patchwork scientist isn't careful about where he "harvests" his materials. A few patchwork creations may carry any number of diseases in one or more of their parts. If infected, the patchwork can pass on the disease by winning an opposed test of its *Spirit* vs. the victim's *Vigor*.

Muscle Augments: Extra muscle can be added to patchwork men, boosting their *Strength* to supernatural levels.

Undead: Focus—patchwork. The creature can only be killed if each of its parts are maimed.

Description: Patchwork men are obviously artificial creations. Large sewing and grafting scars crisscross their bodies and the abominations often have very non-human parts attached. They seldom display the decay or other signs of death that walkin' dead do.



PATCHWORK WASP

If patchwork men are the norm for patchwork scientists, then this critter is probably the far end of the patchwork science spectrum. It's design is so unusual—and disgusting—that most mad scientists steer clear of it. However, it does serve as a good example of just how extreme a patchwork creation can get.

Although it uses mostly human parts for its construction, this little horror is about as alien as you can get. The core of the body is a human head and torso. Attached to the torso like an insect's legs are six arms, complete with hands. A small, hollowed-out cow's horn on the backside is the stinger, with extra, external human stomachs serving as poison sacs. The wings are a disgusting marvel of bio-construction, made from hollow human forearm bones and thinly stretched human skin.

PROFILE: PATCHWORK WASP

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d8, Q:2d10, S:2d6, V:2d4

Climbin' 3d8, dodge 4d8, fightin' brawlin' 4d10, sneak 2d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d4, M:1d4, Sm:2d4, Sp:1d4

Search 2d6

Pace: 8

Size: 4

Wind: 8

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Bug Eyes: The wasp has a mass of human eyes grafted into each socket, giving it a +4 bonus to avoid surprise.

Damage: Sting (STR+1d4+Poison).

Flying: Pace 12.

Poison: A cowpoke must make a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll or be overcome by the poison. Cowpokes succumbing to the poison suffer 2d6 Wind from the searing pain and are paralyzed for 3d6 minutes.

Description: See above

PARANOIA

There's a good reason some folks in 1877 feel like their friends are being replaced—they are!

Distrust weakens a community, making it more susceptible to fear. A sense of conspiracy builds that distrust, especially if it involves figures of authority, or worse, loved ones. The resulting isolation leaves everyone on his own to face the unseen menace. The important thing to remember with these abominations is that the Reckoners don't want them to replace all the humans, just enough so that people begin to suspect even their closest friends and loved ones.

Below, we've given you a few creatures specifically designed to destroy trust and confidence in a community—and even among the members of a posse.

DOPPELGANGERS

A doppelganger is a malevolent supernatural being that studies and then impersonates a particular human being. After a period of observation, lasting up to a month or more, the doppelganger is able to nearly perfectly duplicate the person's actions and mannerisms.

However, the doppelganger seeks to spread discord and distrust. To that end, it twists its victim's normal traits into cruel and evil actions. The abomination has an uncanny sense of its victim's location at all times. It either precedes or follows its target and performs foul deeds that are likely to get the unsuspecting cowpoke strung up when he arrives.

A doppelganger exactly duplicate's its victim's Traits and Aptitudes. If the human target has an *arcane background*, it instead uses black magic to replicate, in its own twisted way, the effects the hero might produce. For example, a blessed's doppelganger may call down burning holy light (*bolts o' doom*) to consume a minor criminal—or even an innocent!

After committing its crime, the monster usually flees the scene, leaving the unsuspecting hero to take the blame. Only the doppelganger's target can wound the creature; it may feign injuries from other attacks, but no one else can truly harm it—not even with magical means.

These abominations always choose well-known or even famous people (*renown 3* or higher), because those individuals provide the greatest impact on society.

Note that the doppelganger that replaced Jefferson Davis is a unique and



very powerful servant of the Reckoners. The abominations we're talking about here are far weaker and less concerned with the "big picture."

REPLICANTS

Replicants are a more dispassionate and inhuman sower of discord. These abominations are actually a form of intelligent plant life.

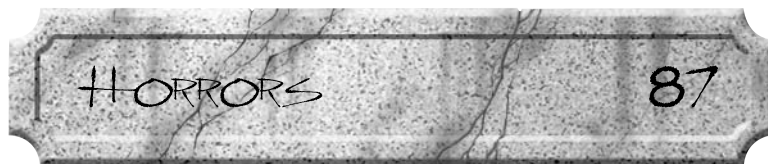
They begin as bulbous seed pods nearly 6' in length. The pod forms a psychic connection with the nearest human mind and a replicant begins to grow within the pod. Initially, it is a featureless humanoid, but when the process is complete, the replicant is a perfect physical copy of the victim. The one difference is that replicants do not bleed—instead a whitish liquid leaks from deep wounds for a short period of time.

Once the copy is complete, the replicant must make physical contact with its victim to gain access to his memories and personality. To do so, it has to touch its victim for 5 minutes and then win an opposed test of *Spirit*. The monster usually waits until the victim is asleep to attempt this. The creature then kills its victim and places the body in its seed pod, which releases a powerful acid destroying both the cadaver and itself.

This transfer must happen within 24 hours or the abomination perishes, rapidly melting into a puddle of greenish goo.

Replicants are capable of mimicking their victims almost perfectly once they've siphoned their memories. Close friends or relatives do notice a few inconsistencies in the replicants' behavior, however. Perhaps the abomination doesn't hold its fork the right way or smiles just a little off kilter. Whatever the cues, they're not easy to notice even for loved ones, and a Hard (9) *Cognition* check is allowed only once every day.

Fortunately, replicants reproduce slowly. Each abomination can produce a new seedpod each month. These monsters are usually discovered long before they have the chance to overrun a settlement—which is exactly what the Reckoners want.



PROFILE: REPLICANTS

Corporeal: D:*, N:*, Q:*, S:*, V:3d10

Prior to memory drain: Fightin': brawlin' 4, sneak 4

After drain, as original victim

Mental: C:3d/8, K:*, M:*, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d8

After drain, as original victim

Pace: *

Size: *

Wind: –

Terror: 7 (once revealed as replicant)

Special Abilities:

Edges and Hindrances: Replicants possess all physical Edges and Hindrances of their victims. They also possess knowledge of any mental or social Edges and Hindrances. Note that some (*outlaw*, *law man*, and *renown*) remain in effect, since the replicant becomes the victim. Under no circumstances can a replicant make use of an *arcane background*.

Emotionless: Although they can fake emotional responses, replicants have no true emotions. They are immune to all Aptitudes (*ridicule*, *bluff*, *overawe*, etc.) or magic that influence emotions in anyway.

Fearless: Yeah, this is probably obvious, but we just wanted to be clear about it.

Immunity: Replicants are immune to Wind loss from any source. They have no blood or other vital fluids and do not experience mental stress of any sort.

No Pain: Replicants do not feel pain. They ignore the first 2 levels of wound modifiers. The remaining wound modifiers are actually due to physical impairment from damage rather than pain.

*As original victim.

Description: Replicants look and act exactly like their victims. Close acquaintances may be uncomfortable around them after extended periods, but average observers can find nothing out of the ordinary.

SKINWALKERS

Baron LaCroix, owner of the Bayou Vermillion railroad, has formed a strange alliance with a number of these creatures and uses them for a variety of tasks, from spying to terrorism.

Skinwalkers are seldom seen in their natural form. They prefer to wear the skins of humans and hide among mankind. Their skeleton is made of a mutable cartilage-like substance and allows them to freely mimic any human from the size of a twelve-year-old child to the largest of adults.

Since few people intentionally remove their own outer flesh, skinwalkers usually have to take it from unwilling victims. They are very talented at this, able to accomplish the complete and flawless skinning of an adult in less than five minutes. Their claws are naturally suited for this task, and they use their coarse tongues to draw off the blood from their victims as they remove the skin. Being particularly malicious creatures, they often try to keep their victims alive for as long as possible during this process.

Finally, the tongue possesses a proboscis-like cartilage tube that they insert through the base of the skull and use to devour the brain of the subject. They are able to glean some of the subject's memories by this process. Needless to say, this final step of the procedure is invariably fatal.

A skinwalker can wear a skin for about a month before decay makes it unusable. The hide can be used indefinitely if the creature maintains it with vinegar or formaldehyde. They can also store skins for up to three months in solutions of either substance.

This preservative process gives the skin an odor, noticeable by anyone near the creature on an Onerous (7) *Cognition* roll. Also, anyone closely examining a skinwalker from behind may notice a faint line or "seam" up the back on a Hard (9) *Cognition* roll.

PROFILE: SKINWALKERS

Corporeal: D:3d12, N:3d10, S:1d10, Q:3d8, V:2d8

Fightin' brawlin' 4d10, skinnin' 6d12, sneak 6d10

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d8, M:1d8, Sm:3d12, Sp:3d6

Bluff 5d8, disguise 6d8, persuasion 3d8

Pace: 10

Size: 6

Wind: -

Terror: 9 (only without 'skin')

Special Abilities

Armor: 1 (only once 'skin' has been destroyed).

Damage: Claws (STR+2d6), bite (STR+1d4).

Disguise: A skinwalker in "disguise" gives all *scrutinize* tests to detect it a -2.

Immunity: As long as a skinwalker wears another's skin, it is impervious to physical harm. Once a total of 30 points of damage has been dealt to it, however, it sloughs off the destroyed skin. This is a horrifying site in itself, and any witnesses must make an Impossible (11) *guts* check. Once its true form is exposed, it can be harmed by normal weapons.

Description: A skinwalker's "skinless" appearance is very similar to a skinless human body. Long, retractable claws extend from the index and middle fingers of each hand and their tongues are rough and rasp-like.

GAKI

A gaki is a powerful abomination, not a form of undead as legend suggests. It does, however, have the ability to turn itself into a tiger-like monster or impersonate others. These monsters are sometimes found near isolated graveyards, as they aren't above graverobbing to sate their hunger.

In its normal form, a gaki appears like a decaying, emaciated corpse. However, it uses this form only to startle its victims before attacking; due to its shapechange abilities, it usually chooses a normal human appearance.

The creature may hunt in animal form or use its disguise ability to lure

in unsuspecting victims by appearing as an attractive member of the opposite sex. After it has feasted on a victim, it may use their appearance as a lure to capture others, but it has no knowledge of the person's memories or personality. It can only mimic the physical form.

A gaki is most likely to be found either in the Great Maze—especially near Shan Fan or Kwan Province—or plaguing Kang's Iron Dragon rail workers. While most Westerners would no doubt be terrified by a shape-changing flesh-eater, legends of this creature are well-known only among immigrants from the other side of the Pacific.

PROFILE: GAKI (HUMANOID)

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d8, Q:3d6, S:4d6, V:4d10

Climbin' 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 5d8, sneak 4d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d10

Bluff 3d6, performin': actin' 4d6, trackin' 3d10

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: –

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Claw (STR+1d4), bite (STR)

Immunity–Normal Damage: The gaki takes half damage from normal attacks.

Fearless

Rapid Healing: A gaki heals one wound level in each hit location every hour. However, a maiming result in the noggin or guts kills it and can not be regenerated in this fashion.

Shapechange: The gaki can mimic another human's appearance perfectly. It also can become a monstrous cat as detailed below. This takes an entire round to perform.

Weaknesses: A gaki takes full damage from a sword blessed by a Shinto or Buddhist priest. A gaki cannot enter *sanctified* ground, regardless of the religion.

Description: See above.



PROFILE: GAKI (CAT-FORM)

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:2d10, Q:2d12, S:3d12, V:4d10

Climbin' 1d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d10, sneak 3d10, swimmin' 1d10

Mental: C:2d10, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d10

Overawe 4d6, trackin' 2d6

Pace: 18

Size: 9

Wind: –

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR+1d6), claws (STR+1d8)

Immunity–Normal Damage

Fearless

Rapid Healing: As above.

Shapechange: As above.

Weaknesses: As above. Also, gaki in cat-form are vulnerable to sunlight, taking 4d6 massive damage each round. They can avoid this by shapechanging to humanoid form.

Description: The cat-form resembles a large, black-furred tiger.



WERE-SHARKS

The term "were-sharks" isn't really accurate, as these monsters have no relation to true sharks. However, since the abominations can freely change between a human form and a form of carnivorous marine life, we'll overlook the finer details.

In their humanoid form, were-sharks are, for all intents, normal humans. If you use these monsters in your campaign, Marshal, you can either use a generic profile for the human form or create more detailed write-ups of the alter-egos.

In their beast form, these creatures stand almost 7' tall and are covered with a gray, scaly hide. Thick webbing stretches between their clawed fingers

and toes, and a small dorsal ridge hunches out of their backs. Their eyes become solid black and their lips harden over an abnormally wide mouth filled with shark-like teeth. Rows of gills appear on their throats, below their receded chins.

These abominations lurk in port cities, particularly in the Maze, and join ship crews. Once the vessel is at sea (or deep within the Maze channels), they begin preying on the crew. At least one ship plying the waters between Shan Fan and Lost Angels (the *Edward Fitzhugh*) is crewed entirely by were-sharks.

The profile below is for the abominations' predatory form; otherwise, use a normal human profile.

PROFILE: WERE-SHARKS

Corporeal: D:2d4, N:3d10, Q:2d10, S:4d8, V:3d8

Climbin' 2d10, dodge 2d10, fightin': brawlin' 5d10, sneak 4d10

Mental: C:2d6, K:2d6, M:3d6, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d6

Guts 3d6, overawe 4d6, search 2d6, trackin' (in water) 5d6

Face: 10

Size: 7

Wind: 14

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: -4 (light)

Damage: Claw (STR+1d4), bite (STR+1d6)

Swimming: Pace 20

Description: See above.

NORMAL CRITTERS

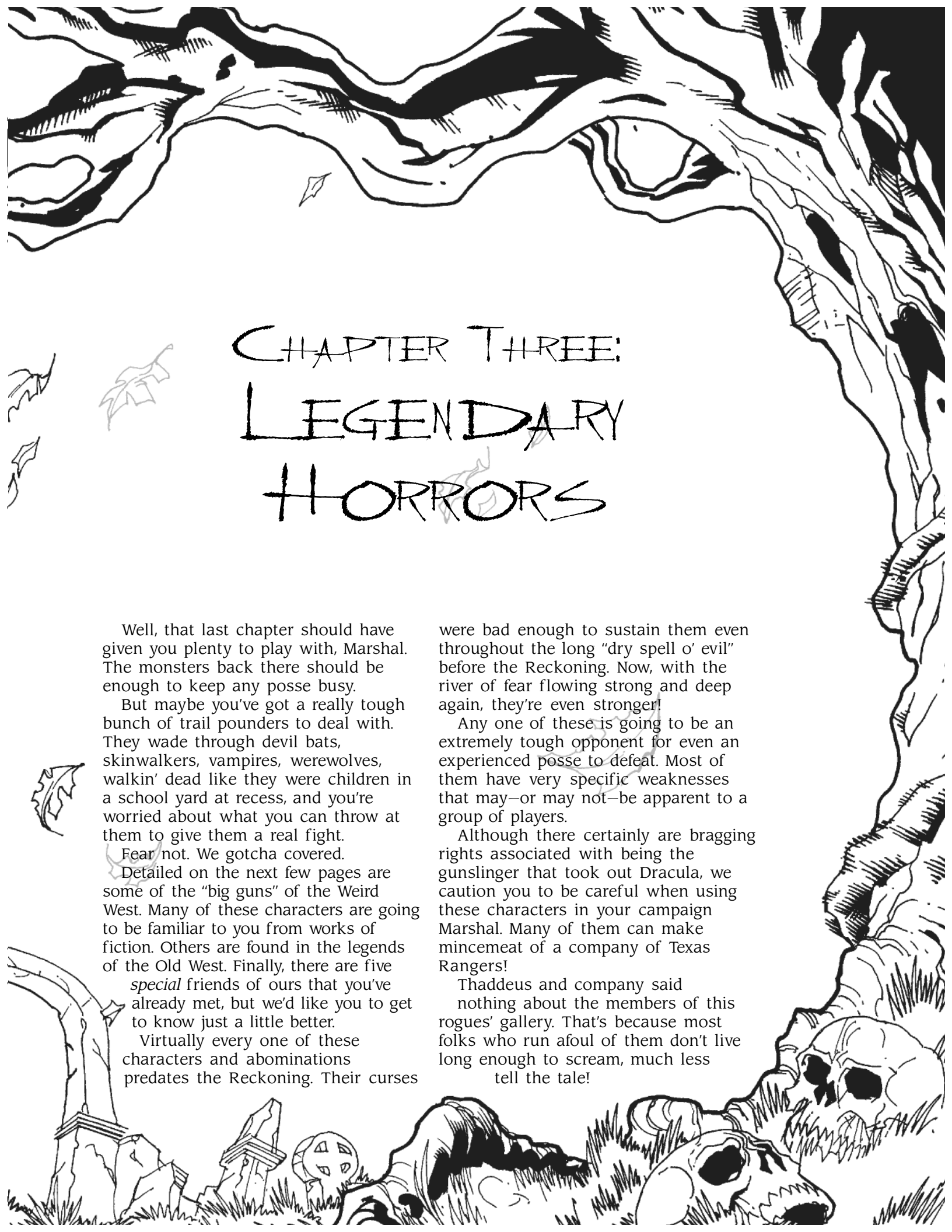
Here are a few more normal varmints to throw at your heroes. Combined with the ones from the *Marshal's Handbook* and *Rascals, Varmints, & Critters*, you should be able to produce just about any common animal you need.

While many of the animals we've presented are horror or western cliches, you'll notice pretty quick that a few of them are fairly exotic. Lions and gorillas aren't exactly native to the American West, but might show up as escapees from a zoo or circus. Edgar Allan Poe even used an orangutan in his classic *Murders in the Rue Morgue!*

NORMAL CRITTERS

Critter	D	N	Q	S	V	C	K	M	Sm	Sp	Pace	Size	Wind
Bats	1d6	4d10	4d8	1d4	2d6	2d8	1d4	2d4	1d4	2d4	2/20*	2-3	10
Special Abilities: *Flying: Pace 20 Night Vision: Through echolocation (sonar) bats can navigate through even total darkness with no penalties. Swarm: Agitated bats may attack in a <i>swarm</i> . Every 10 bats does 1d6 damage. Terror: 3													
Badger	1d6	3d8	3d8	1d6	2d8	1d4	1d4	2d6	1d4	2d8	8	3	16
Special Abilities: Damage: Bite (STR), claws (STR+1d4) Stink: Badgers possess stink glands not unlike a skunk, although a good deal weaker. If provoked, they may spray an attacker instead of fighting, but this is rare. While the odor remains, all social-related skills are at -3. This penalty drops by -1 every 2 days.													
Cat	1d4	2d10	2d10	2d4	2d6	2d6	1d4	2d4	2d4	1d6	10	2	16
Note: Cats aren't likely to attack a human. However, it's a horror movie staple to have one of these animals jump out during a tense moment.													
Gators	1d4	3d8	3d8	3d10	2d10	1d4	2d4	2d6	1d4	1d6	8/12*	8	16
Fightin': brawlin' 3d8, sneak 2d8, overawe 3d6													
Special Abilities: Armor: -4 (light) Damage: Bite (STR+1d6). Once a gator gets a hold on a victim, it doesn't tend to let go. The victim can break free by winning a contest of <i>Strength</i> with the gator. Otherwise, the gator automatically does bite damage on each of its actions. *Swimmin': Pace 12. Tail: Opposed STR roll. If the gator wins, the target is knocked off her feet and stunned. The victim must make a Fair (5) <i>Vigor</i> roll to recover. This attack can only be used against victims to the critter's rear. Terror 5. Thick-skinned: Gators ignore 1 level of wound modifiers.													
Note: Normally found only in the Gulf Coast states of the Confederacy.													
Gorilla	2d6	3d8	2d8	3d12+2	4d8	2d6	1d6	1d8	1d6	2d8	8	7-8	16
Climbin' 2d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8													
Note: Gorillas are virtually unknown in the Weird West. Only a very few know that such creatures are animals and not some legendary creature. They are only found in truly exotic circuses or zoos and are likely to be mistaken for some new abomination.													
Jaguars	1d4	3d10	2d12	4d6	2d8	2d8	1d4	1d8	1d4	2d4	20	6	14
Climbin' 4d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d10, sneak 5d10, overawe 2d8													
Special Abilities: Damage: Bite (STR), claw (STR+1d4)													
Note: Jaguars are found mainly in central Mexico and below, so posses south of the border might run into them. They are either spotted or solid black. Solid black jaguars receive a +2 to <i>sneak</i> rolls after dark.													
Lion	1d4	3d8	2d10	3d12	3d8	2d6	1d4	1d8	1d4	2d6	18	8	16
Climbin' 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, sneak 2d8, overawe 4d8, trackin' 2d6													
Special Abilities: Damage: Bite (STR+1d6), claw (STR+1d8).													
Note: Lions are found in America only in circuses and zoos.													
Sharks	1d4	2d8	4d8	3d12	3d10	2d6	1d4	2d4	2d4	3d6	20	10	16
Fightin': brawlin' 4d8													
Special Abilities: Armor: 1. Damage: Bite (STR+1d8). Terror: 5													
Note: Sharks are primarily saltwater fish, however, instances of shark attacks have occurred as far as 15 miles upriver from the ocean.													
Rats	2d6	2d6	3d8	1d4	2d6	2d8	1d6	1d4	1d6	2d4	6	1-2	10
Climbin' 4d6, dodge 2d6, fightin': brawlin' 1d6, filchin' 4d6, sneak 5d6, swimmin' 1d6, search 3d6													
Special Abilities: Chisel Teeth: Given time, a rat can gnaw through just about anything—wood, lead piping, and even concrete! Rat Horde: Rats can attack as a <i>swarm</i> (see page 31). The horde does 1d6 damage for every 5 rats in it.													
Vulture	1d6	2d6	3d6	1d6	2d6	2d8	1d4	1d4	1d4	2d4	4/20*	3	10
Fightin': brawlin' 1d6, search 3d8													
Special Abilities: Damage: Beak (STR), Flight: Pace 20													





CHAPTER THREE: LEGENDARY HORRORS

Well, that last chapter should have given you plenty to play with, Marshal. The monsters back there should be enough to keep any posse busy.

But maybe you've got a really tough bunch of trail pounders to deal with. They waded through devil bats, skinwalkers, vampires, werewolves, walkin' dead like they were children in a school yard at recess, and you're worried about what you can throw at them to give them a real fight.

Fear not. We gotcha covered.

Detailed on the next few pages are some of the "big guns" of the Weird West. Many of these characters are going to be familiar to you from works of fiction. Others are found in the legends of the Old West. Finally, there are five

special friends of ours that you've already met, but we'd like you to get to know just a little better.

Virtually every one of these characters and abominations predates the Reckoning. Their curses

were bad enough to sustain them even throughout the long "dry spell o' evil" before the Reckoning. Now, with the river of fear flowing strong and deep again, they're even stronger!

Any one of these is going to be an extremely tough opponent for even an experienced posse to defeat. Most of them have very specific weaknesses that may—or may not—be apparent to a group of players.

Although there certainly are bragging rights associated with being the gunslinger that took out Dracula, we caution you to be careful when using these characters in your campaign Marshal. Many of them can make mincemeat of a company of Texas Rangers!

Thaddeus and company said nothing about the members of this rogues' gallery. That's because most folks who run afoul of them don't live long enough to scream, much less tell the tale!

DRACULA

Dracula's history is pretty much the stuff of legend nowadays—a Transylvanian nobleman cursed to feed on the blood of the living. However, in the Weird West Bram Stoker's famous novel won't be written for another couple of decades. Only a few outside of his home territory even suspect he might be more than he seems—a rich, eccentric noble. The name Count Dracula *doesn't* strike fear into the hearts of all mortals in *Deadlands*. At least not yet.

Dracula, the most powerful vampire in existence, was once known as Vlad Dracul, ruler of a small country in what is now Romania. Vlad, while a military genius, had a few unsavory practices—among them a habit for sticking folks on huge sharpened posts, which gained him the nickname “the Impaler.” So brutal was he that his actions resulted in his curse of vampirism back in the 15th century—

when the manitous were still chained in the Hunting Grounds. That's a powerful lot of evil!

Now that the Reckoning has begun, Dracula is far more powerful than ever. Although his home is in the Carpathian Mountains of eastern Europe, he does travel from time to time. On such journeys, he takes several coffins, as many as three “wives” (treat these as cinematic vampires, described earlier) and a loyal retainer or two who knows his true nature. Dracula is old-blood nobility and usually surrounds himself with accoutrements of his wealth. While encountering him on the high plains isn't all that likely, his nibs could easily show up in any of the larger cities of the Weird West, or Back East if your posse has headed there.

Dracula is not tied in any way to the Reckoners (although his actions certainly work well with their plans). The Count has his own agenda and plans.

It's important to remember that Dracula has been around for over four centuries. In life, he was a plotter and schemer to do Machiavelli proud; in undeath, he's much, much worse. He has wealth and social connections in addition to his vampiric abilities. He's likely to *always* be a step-or three-ahead of any hunters. Dracula is a powerful foe for any posse and should be nearly undefeatable.

PROFILE: COUNT DRACULA

Corporeal: D:3d10, N:3d12+2, Q:3d12+6, S:5d12+4, V:5d12+6

Dodge 5d12+2, climbin' 7d12+2, fightin': brawlin', sword 8d12+2, sneak 8d12+2, teamster 3d12+2

Mental: C:4d12, K:3d12, M:3d12+4, Sm:3d10, Sp:4d12+4

Academia: history (Europe), occult 4d12, area knowledge (Europe) 4d12, disguise 3d12, language: English 2d12, language: Hungarian, Romanian 5d12, persuasion 5d12+4, professional: military 6d12, professional: politics: 4d12, overawe 6d12+4, scrutinize 5d12, search 3d12

Pace: 14

Size: 6

Wind: 36

Terror: 9 (once revealed)



Special Abilities:

Damage: Claws (STR+1d6). A raise on a *fightin': brawlin'* attack allows Dracula to bite his victim for (STR+1d4) brawling damage.

Fog: Dracula can create a thick fog over an area roughly three miles in diameter. He, and anyone he chooses, can see normally within it. All others can only see 5 yards and suffer a -4 to ranged attacks. The fog takes about 5 minutes to rise and lasts for an hour and a half.

Hypnotic Gaze: Dracula can command a victim to do his bidding by winning an opposed contest of *Spirit*. If he gets a raise on the roll, he can order them to commit even obviously harmful acts. This takes an Action Card to activate and Dracula must maintain concentration to exert his will on the victim. Dracula gains a +4 on his *Spirit* roll when attempting control other vampires.

Infection: Anyone who has taken at least one wound from Dracula's bite can sense his general location, no matter the distance between them. Anyone slain by Dracula's bite arises in 3 nights as either a nosferatu or cinematic vampire. He has full control of these lesser vampires—although you may want to allow player characters a chance to resist, Marshal. See Chapter Four for some very special rules on how to handle this.

Mist Form: Dracula can change himself to or from a mist in a single Action. While in mist form, only area-effect attacks (explosions, large fires, sunlight) can harm him. He cannot fly in this form, but can creep into anything not airtight.

Regeneration: Every six points of Wind Dracula drains *completely* heals one wounded location he's suffered.

Shapechange: Dracula can assume the form of a massive bat (Size 3) or wolf. Use the appropriate animal profile, but increase the Corporeal Traits by 2 die types, while Dracula maintains his own Mental Traits. Either change requires 1 Action Card to perform.

LEGENDARY HORRORS 95

Summon Swarm: Dracula can summon an enormous horde of lesser creatures (bats, rats, etc.) to fight on his behalf by spending 2 Action Cards. Afterwards, the creatures attack his opponents as long as he concentrates.

Weaknesses: Wood, garlic, holy water, roses, sunlight. Garlic and roses repel Dracula—he must make an Incredible (11) *Spirit* roll to bypass them. Driving a stake through his heart paralyzes Dracula until it's removed. Holy water does 2d6 damage when splashed on him. Sunlight does 3d6 massive damage to him.

Undead: Focus—heart (special). The only way to truly kill Dracula is to drive a stake through his heart, behead him, stuff his mouth full of garlic and expose his remains to the noonday sun. Anything less merely temporarily defeats him.

Coup: The Harrowed gains the ability to hypnotize living humans with his gaze. He must make eye contact and win an opposed test of *Spirit* with his victim for it to be effective. If successful, the victim stares blankly into the hero's eyes, unaware of his surroundings. She may attempt to break the gaze by winning another opposed *Spirit* test, but she can only do so at the beginning of each subsequent round. The hero may maintain the power and still take simple actions that don't cause him to break eye contact with the victim.

Description: Dracula normally appears as a tall, dark-haired man with strong facial features, a high forehead, and thick eyebrows. His hands are broad, with thick fingers. The nails are cut to a sharp point and he has hair on his palms. His skin is always pale and he prefers refined, black clothing. Like many vampires, he casts no reflection in mirrors and despises garlic.

EL DIABLO NEGRO

According to legend, El Diablo Negro is a huge, coal-black, carnivorous horse. His territory is said to run from the Sioux Nations deep into Mexico, but he's usually reported in the western Confederacy or northern Mexico.

El Diablo Negro isn't truly a horse, any more than los diablos are Texas longhorns. He's one of the more powerful servants of the Reckoners, a monster wearing the shape of a horse.

The legends are true about one thing—El Diablo Negro is a carnivore. Anything that moves is fair game for this abomination, but he favors horse meat and human flesh to all others. He often attacks outlying homes or small ranches, killing and devouring everything he can sink his teeth into.

El Diablo Negro occasionally hunts down heroes who've been too successful in battling the minions of the Reckoners. When he does so, he is *always* accompanied by El Diablo Rojo.

PROFILE: EL DIABLO NEGRO

Corporeal: D:1d4, N:3d12+2, Q:3d12, S:4d12+8, V:3d12+2

Dodge 2d12+2, fightin': brawlin' 4d12+2, sneak 3d12+2, swimmin' 4d12+2

Mental: C:3d10, K:2d6, M:2d10, Sm:3d8, Sp:2d8

Overawe 4d10, search 4d10, trackin' 3d10

Pace: 28

Size: 11

Wind: 16

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2. A combination of thick hide and the supernatural protect El Diablo Negro.

Damage: Hoof (STR+2d8, AP 1), bite (STR+1d4).

Keen Senses: El Diablo Negro's *Cognition* roll to avoid surprise is always Fair (5) or better. He gains a +2 to all *search* and *trackin'* rolls to

find humans. He can equally well in full daylight or pitch darkness.

Whinny: When El Diablo Negro lets loose his shrieking whinny, all normal animals automatically fail the *guts* check against his Terror score. For most, this means the creatures flee at maximum pace in the opposite direction. However, he can paralyze horses with fear. It takes El Diablo Negroone Action Card to whinny, and the creature can do it once per round

Coup: Any horse ridden by the Harrowed gains a Pace 28. However, it also picks up a taste for meat—fresh or otherwise!

Description: El Diablo Negro appears as a large, black horse the size of the largest Clydesdale. His eyes gleam with a faint red light in twilight or darker. His mouth is more like that of a wolf, stretching the length of his jaw and filled with large canine fangs. His hooves are as hard as iron and as sharp as axe blades.

EL DIABLO ROJO

El Diablo Rojo was once a powerful Apache shaman in northern Mexico. After his entire tribe was hunted down and killed by Mexican soldiers, he forswore his humanity and sought the power for vengeance. The Reckoners were all too glad to oblige.

El Diablo Rojo is now a powerful black magician who stalks the mountains of northern Mexico and the western Confederacy. Recently, he somehow forged a bond with the monster El Diablo Negro and the two are now among the favorite "troubleshooters" of the Reckoners.

The Apache sorcerer wears only knee-high moccasins, a tan loincloth, headband and a set of laced-bone chest armor. He is always armed with a number of weapons and often keeps a string of scalps on his belt.

Through his sorceries, El Diablo Rojo is able to communicate with the devil horse. The abomination even allows the Apache to ride him when necessary. This comes in handy when the two are overmatched. Both are more than willing to flee and strike again later from ambush

Although El Diablo Rojo despises Mexicans and kills them on sight, no human is safe from attack. Worse yet, he's picked up some of his monstrous companion's bad habits, taking up cannibalism in addition to his other practices.

Fortunately for normal folks in the area, the two are so tied to the Reckoners' whim that they have little time anymore for simple slaughter and depredation.

PROFILE: EL DIABLO ROJO

Corporeal: D:2d10, N:1d8, Q:4d10, S:3d6, V:3d8

Bow 4d10, climbin' 4d8, fightin': brawlin', knife, tomahawk 5d8, filchin' 3d8, horse ridin' 4d8 shootin': rifle 4d10, sneak 7d10, swimmin' 2d8, throwin': balanced 4d10

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d10

Academia: occult 4d6, area knowledge: northern Mexico, western Confederacy 6d6, faith: black magic 5d10, overawe 4d8, scrutinize 3d8, search 4d8, survival: desert, mountain 6d8, trackin' 5d8

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: 18

Edges: Keen 2, level-headed 5, sand 2, thick-skinned 3

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty -2, enemy (Mexicans) -3, mean as a rattler -2, vengeful -3

Special Abilities:

Armor: -2 (bone ceremonial chest armor). This may be increased by black magic, however—see below.

Black Magic: Cloak o' evil 3 (blurred heat waves or shadow), dark protection 2 (bone chest plate), forewarnin' 2 (human entrails, sand pictures), scrye 3 (eyeballs and a clear puddle), stormcall 2 (sandstorm), stun 2 (poisoned knife)

Pact: El Diablo Rojo can communicate with El Diablo Negro on a telepathic level. The two *always* know what the other is doing.

Gear: Ceremonial chest armor, big knife (STR+1d6), stone tomahawk (STR+2d6), Winchester '76, 25 bullets, various ceremonial trappings.

Description: El Diablo Rojo is a darkly-tanned and aging Apache with long white hair. His contempt for all humanity is obvious in the permanent scowl on his wrinkled face.

VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN

Frankenstein and his experiments predate the Weird West by nearly a century. However, since we've already rewritten a fair portion of history, there's no reason to not move him and his ghoulish creation forward so you can use them in your campaign, Marshal.

Victor Frankenstein is a Swiss-born mad scientist specializing in the study of life and death. He's one of the few researchers to successfully bring a corpse back to life, although, as most everyone nowadays knows, not with the results he'd hoped for.

Using parts purloined from local graveyards, Victor fulfilled his scientific dream. He created a man and gave his creation life.

But something went wrong. Rather than the perfect specimen he had aimed for, his creation was twisted and freakish, a parody of humanity. When Victor refused to create a companion for the monster to share its existence with, it killed his bride, Elizabeth, on their wedding night. Since that time, the two—man and monster—have hunted each other across several continents—including North America.

Victor's desire to destroy the monster overrides any other consideration for him. Other people are merely tools in this pursuit. The monster, in turn, won't hesitate to kill anyone who it thinks is allied with its despised creator.

Although Victor is a mad scientist, his creations are limited to experiment on the nature of life and death.



PROFILE: VICTOR
FRANKENSTEIN

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:2d6, Q:3d6, S:3d6,
V:2d8

Fightin': sword 2d6, ridin': horse 4d6,
shootin': pistol, rifle 3d8

Mental: C:3d10, K:4d12, M:2d8, Sm:2d10,
Sp:2d10

Academia: history 3d12, academia: occult
2d12, language: French, German 4d12,
language: English, Latin 2d12, mad
science 6d12, medicine: surgery 6d12,
persuasion: 4d8, science: alchemy,
chemistry 4d12, science: anthropology
2d12, science: biology 5d12, scroungin'
3d10

Pace: 6

Size: 6

Wind: 18

Edges: Arcane background: mad science
3, brave 2, nerves o' steel 1

Hindrances: Big britches -2, enemy
(Adam) -4, yearnin' (destroy his
monster) -4

Description: Victor is a brown-haired
man in early middle age. He is
handsome, but not extraordinarily so,
and he dresses in the most current
fashions. However, when consumed by
his quest (which is nearly always), his
hair may be unkempt and his eyes
show an almost irrational and
fanatical gleam.

FRANKENSTEIN'S
MONSTER

The monster itself is an odd amalgam
of mad science and undead. Although
Victor's experiments brought the
creature to life, it is sustained by an
unholy tie to its maker.

Victor's monster has suffered the
prejudices of all humans because of its
horrific appearance. Because of that, it
holds humanity in general in contempt.
However, the creature holds an all-
consuming hatred for its creator—the
one who saddled its unwanted second
life upon it.

The creature is not an unthinking evil
brute contrary to some depictions, and
can both read and write. After reading
Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the monster has
begun to liken itself to a modern-day
Adam with Frankenstein as its unloving
creator.

PROFILE: FRANKENSTEIN'S
MONSTER (ADAM)

Corporeal: D:2d4, N:3d6, Q:3d6, S:6d12+6,
V:4d12+8

Climbin' 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 5d6, sneak
6d6

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d8,
Sp:3d8
Survival: mountains, arctic 5d6, trackin'
5d6

Pace: 6

Size: 8

Wind: 28

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Berserk: If Adam is wounded in a fight he automatically goes berserk. He gets two *fightin': brawlin'* attacks each round, but no defensive bonus for his own *fightin'* levels. He also gains a bonus of +1d4 to his damage rolls equal to his highest current wound level.

Creator Bond: Adam has a supernatural homing sense for Victor, no matter how great a distance separates the two.

Strangle: The monster's incredible strength allow it to crush its victims' throats. With a raise on a *fightin': brawlin'* attack, the monster grabs its opponent's neck and begins to strangle. Roll an opposed test of the creature's *Strength* vs. its opponent's *Vigor*; the victim suffers the difference in Wind. Should the victim go bust on this roll, her neck is broken and she dies instantly. Only a successful opposed test of *Strength* allows a victim to break free from the monster.

Undead: Focus—Victor Frankenstein. In a doubly ironic twist of fate, as long as Frankenstein lives, Adam *will* return to hunt him. Should Adam succeed in killing Victor, he dies as well.

Weakness—Fire: Fire does no extra damage to him, but Adam is terrified of it and seeks to escape open flame at any cost. If there is no route open for him, he goes *berserk* as above.

Coup: Ending the monster's existence raises the Harrowed's *Strength* by two die types. However, it lowers his *Knowledge* by one.

Description: Frankenstein chose the "best" parts for his creation, hoping to build a beautiful artificial specimen. Unfortunately, the sum of the parts turned out to be greater than the whole. Stitching scars mar much of the creature's body. Its eyes are glazed

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and yellowish, while its skin has a pasty pallor. Once beautiful features are contorted into a rictus of death by faulty facial muscles.

HANGIN' JUDGES

Marshal, you probably remember the hangin' judges we presented in the *Marshal's Handbook*—at least we hope so, because they're one of our favorite abominations. In that book, we gave you a standard profile to use for all hangin' judges because space prevented us from giving each of one of the abominations his own write-up.

Well, now we've got the space, so here they are. With the added detail, the judges form a cabal of powerful foes worthy of a campaign to defeat!

As you no doubt remember, the hangin' judges started out as five corrupt Confederate judges who hatched a scheme to make a land grab and ruin their enemies along the Chisolm Trail back in the 1860s. The judges schemes were uncovered and they were each hunted down and lynched by angry mobs of Texans. They rose as horrific abominations, and stalk the Chisolm to this day. That's the gist of how things went, but if you read the individual judge's descriptions carefully, you can get a little more insight into exactly how they hatched their scheme.

You'll notice the judges below are even tougher than the ones detailed in the *Marshal's Handbook*. Additionally, although the only way to destroy a hangin' judge is still a good old lynching, each one has his own special weakness, so a posse that discovers one judge's Achilles' heel doesn't have the inside track on wiping out all of them. A diligent posse that does a *lot* of research into the judges' history should discover clues pointing them at the particular weaknesses of each abomination (the finer points of each one's hanging requirements, for example).

We've also given each one individual powers more in line with the original circuit judge's personalities to further confound posses. Each judge now conveys its own coup power. That way, a Harrowed who takes it on himself to cleanse the Chisolm Trail of these monsters doesn't end up with five pairs of the judges' signature weapon. The weapons of those with new coup powers fade away within hours of their defeat. Or, if you've got a trophy-hunting party, Marshal, you might want to let them decay into corroded, useless lumps of metal so the heroes have a souvenir.

Without further ado, here are the five chief justices of Hell on earth, the hangin' judges.

LOWER COURT JUDGES

If you want to continue to use the judges as described in the *Marshal's Handbook*, by all means do so, but we've provided you with an alternative so those sets of statistics aren't wasted. The ringleader of the original judge's scheme, Hiram Jackson has the ability to create lesser judges. So those nasty rascals still can come in handy. Read on to find out more about that.

HIRAM JACKSON

Jackson was the ringleader for the whole scheme. He was the first to see the potential represented by the Chisolm Trail and lust for a way to get his hands around it. Unfortunately, he lacked the charisma and legal knowledge to accomplish it.

However, what talents he lacked, he made up for with his keen sense of human nature and organizational skills. He simply kept an eye out for readily corruptible peers with the abilities he needed. Jackson soon found just the right mix to pull off his scheme: Cyrus Call for popular support, Luther Kirby for legal know-how, Moses Moore for respectability, and Marcus Lafayette for brute force.

Jackson was the true power behind the original plan, although no one realized it until the very end. As a hangin' judge, he is the most cautious and scheming—in many ways the most dangerous, even though he lacks some of the formidable powers available to the other abominations.

Jackson holds law-abiding folk in particular contempt. Being an honest lawman (Marshal's call on this one) is always a hanging offense in his "court."

PROFILE: HIRAM JACKSON

Corporeal: D:2d10, N:2d8, Q:2d12, S:3d12, V:2d8

Shootin': pistol 5d10, fightin': scythe 5d8, horse ridin' 3d8, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:4d12+2, K:3d6, M:4d12, Sm:3d10, Sp:2d10

Area knowledge: Chisolm Trail 3d6, overawe 5d12, scrutinize 4d12+2, search 6d12+2, trackin' 5d12+2

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: –

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Damage: Two Single-Action Army Revolvers (3d6). These reload themselves 1 round after they're empty. Scythes extend from the end of the pistols, which the judges can use in *fightin'* combat for (STR+2d6) damage.

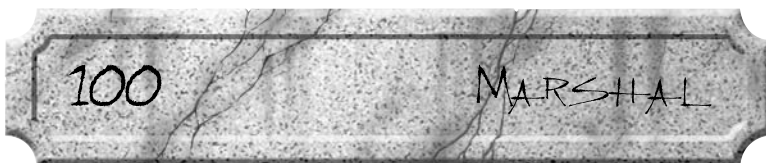
Fearless

Immunity—Normal Weapons:

Stringing Jackson up sends him to Boot Hill, but a legitimate judge must preside over the hanging. Bullets fired from a real lawman's gun can put him down—but only for a single night.

Recruit: Once a month, Jackson can create a lesser hangin' judge if he gets his hands on a dishonest (Marshal's call) attorney, judge or lawman. This takes a night—and a hanging—to accomplish, but not consent.

Ringleader: Jackson can summon any of the other hangin' judges (lesser or superior) to his side. Regardless of the distance, it arrives the next night. However, he can only summon one at a time.





Coup: The Harrowed gains the power to command walkin' dead—to an extent. He must win an opposed contest of *Spirit* with the abomination and maintain concentration (i.e., only take simple actions) while doing so. He can only control one walkin' dead at a time and must be able to see and communicate with the zombie at all times.

Description: Jackson dresses in a completely black outfit, including the hood shrouding his features.

CYRUS CALL

Cyrus Call's claim to fame was as a demagogue. He was the glue that held the group of crooked judges together in life and Jackson's first accomplice.

Call had a knack for stirring up otherwise decent folk into an angry lynch mob. He used his rabble-rousing abilities to remove landowners that the judges knew would never be convicted in a court. His persuasive nature has followed him to the Netherworld, allowing him to call forth his own mob of undead to back his plays.

Whenever possible, Call preferred to see cases "settled" before trial. In his opinion, if a man wasn't guilty, he wouldn't have been arrested in the first place. Any cowpoke with the *outlaw*

Hindrance, no matter how low the level, gets himself a sentence of "hanged until dead" from Call.

PROFILE: CYRUS CALL

Corporeal: D:2d10, N:2d8, Q:3d10, S:2d12, V:2d8

Shootin': shotgun 5d10, horse ridin' 3d8, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:3d6, M:4d12+2, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d8

Area knowledge: Chisolm Trail 3d6, overawe 7d12+2, persuasion 6d12+2, ridicule 5d6, scrutinize 2d10, search 6d10, trackin' 5d10

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: —

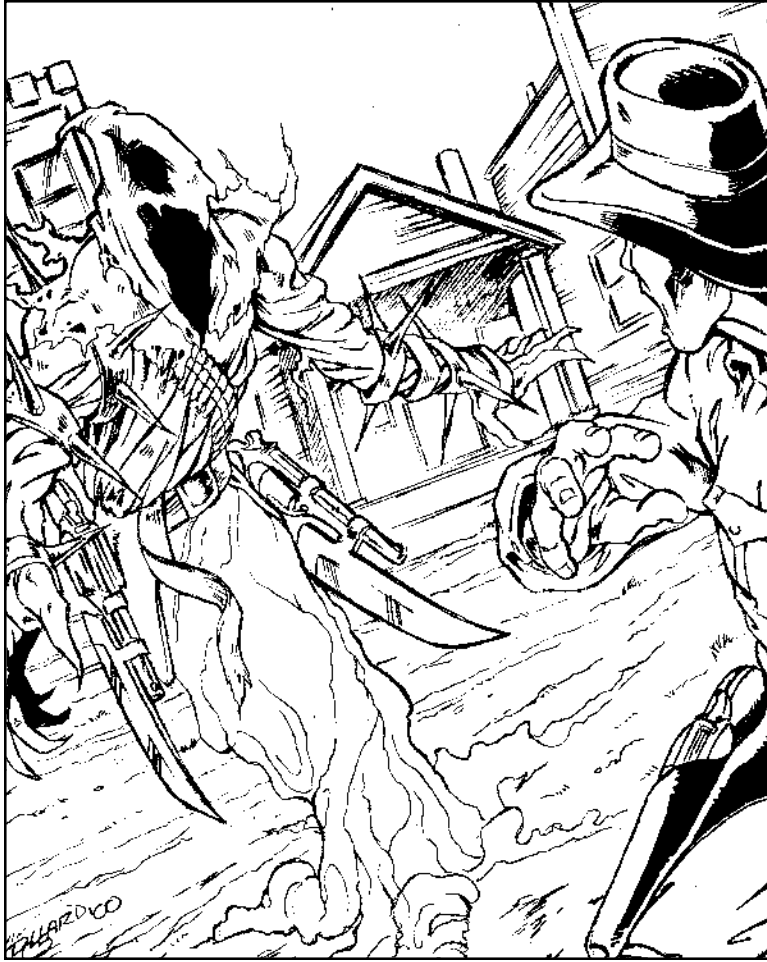
Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Damage: Scattergun (1-6d6). This sawed-off double barrel reloads itself in a single Action Card.

Fearless

Immunity—Normal Weapons: If a group of heroes outnumbers Call and his "lynch mob" (see below) by at least two-to-one, the cowpoke with the highest *Mien* die type can affect him with normal weapons—even to the extent of killing him for a single night. The next night, though, he's gunning for the "opposition leader." The only way to



LUTHER KIRBY

Luther Kirby was the judge responsible for the legal shenanigans the group undertook. He spent months pouring over Texas legal code looking for a loophole that would allow the judges to seize the valuable land along the Chisolm Trail.

He discovered that the judges had reasonable precedent to seize the lands of executed criminals under a state receivership until they could be offered for public sale. "Public sale" meant purchase by the judges themselves for less than a penny an acre.

His letter-of-the-law approach hinders him in his incarnation as an abomination. He doesn't pursue victims over what his twisted mind perceives as "jurisdictional boundaries" in the course of a single evening. A hero can shake his pursuit by crossing a county line or running water (a common property line marker in the Weird West), but only for that night. The next evening, he appears within the same "jurisdiction" as his victim.

Being an attorney or judge is always a hanging offense in Kirby's court.

put Call for good is to hang 'im high with at least four folks present.

Mob Justice: Call never goes into a fight outnumbered. He is always accompanied by twice as many veteran walkin' dead (see the *Marshal's Handbook*) as there are heroes. He can also raise those killed by himself or his "mob" as walkin' dead, although this takes an Action Card per zombie raised.

Coup: The Harrowed gains the *unholy host* ability at level 1. If the hero already has that power, raise it a level. If the power is already at level 5, raise the Harrowed's *Mien* die type by one level instead.

Description: Call wears an impressive black cloak over his features. His voice is deep and rumbling—even for a hangin' judge

PROFILE: LUTHER KIRBY

Corporeal: D:2d10, N:2d8, Q:2d12, S:3d12, V:2d8

Shootin': pistol 5d10, fightin': scythe 4d8, horse ridin' 2d8, sneak 2d8

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d12+2, M:2d12, Sm:3d10, Sp:2d8

Area knowledge: Chisolm Trail 4d12+2, overawe 3d12, professional: law 6d12+2, scrutinize 2d8, search 3d8, trackin' 4d8

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: —

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Damage: Two Single-Action Army Revolvers (3d6). These reload themselves 1 round after they're empty. Scythes extend from the end of the pistols, which the judges can use in *fightin'* combat for (STR+2d6) damage.

Fearless

Restraining Order: Kirby can impose a "restraining order" by

winning an opposed contest of *Spirit* against a victim within 10 yards. If the victim loses, he can't move from that spot until he wins another test of *Spirit*, which he can attempt on each of his Action Cards.

Immunity—Normal Weapons:

Hanging destroys Kirby for good, but only if a hero makes a Hard (9) *professional: law* roll prior to the event. Other than that only crossing "jurisdictions" or beating him in an opposed contest of *professional: law* can shake him from a victim's trail for a night. The next sundown he's back on his victim's trail, however.

Coup: The Harrowed gains the ability to open handcuffs, jail cells, and the like, as long as they are used to restrain him. He can't simply open a cell and free a companion unless he's locked up as well. This takes the Harrowed an Action Card to perform. Honest lawmen and attorneys react to the Harrowed at -2, however, because he seems "slippery."

Description: Kirby is the shortest of the judges and wears a dark brown, shoulder-length cowl to cover his head.

MOSES MOORE

Moses Moore was a snake-in-the-grass Confederate guerrilla up in Missouri and Kansas for the early years of the war, but after he made a name as a "war-hero," he headed down to Texas to cash in on his fame. He quickly secured a judgeship and set about finagling that into as much power and money as possible.

When Hiram Jackson approached him with the scheme, he immediately realized the potential. After all, he'd spent enough time in Kansas to realize the money to be made moving cattle into the Disputed Lands for resale to Northerners. Jackson, on the other hand, wanted the "respectability" Moore's name would bring to his group.

An expert cavalryman before ever taking up a judge's gavel, Moore is the most dangerous gunfighter of the five.

Moore always considers all Northerners, even deserters, capital criminals. Southerners consorting with Northerners are just as bad to Moore.

PROFILE: MOSES MOORE

Corporeal: D:2d12+2, N:2d8, Q:3d12+2, S:3d12, V:2d8

Quick draw 5d12+2, shootin': pistol 6d12+2, fightin': scythe 5d8, horse ridin' 6d8, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:3d6, M:4d12, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d8

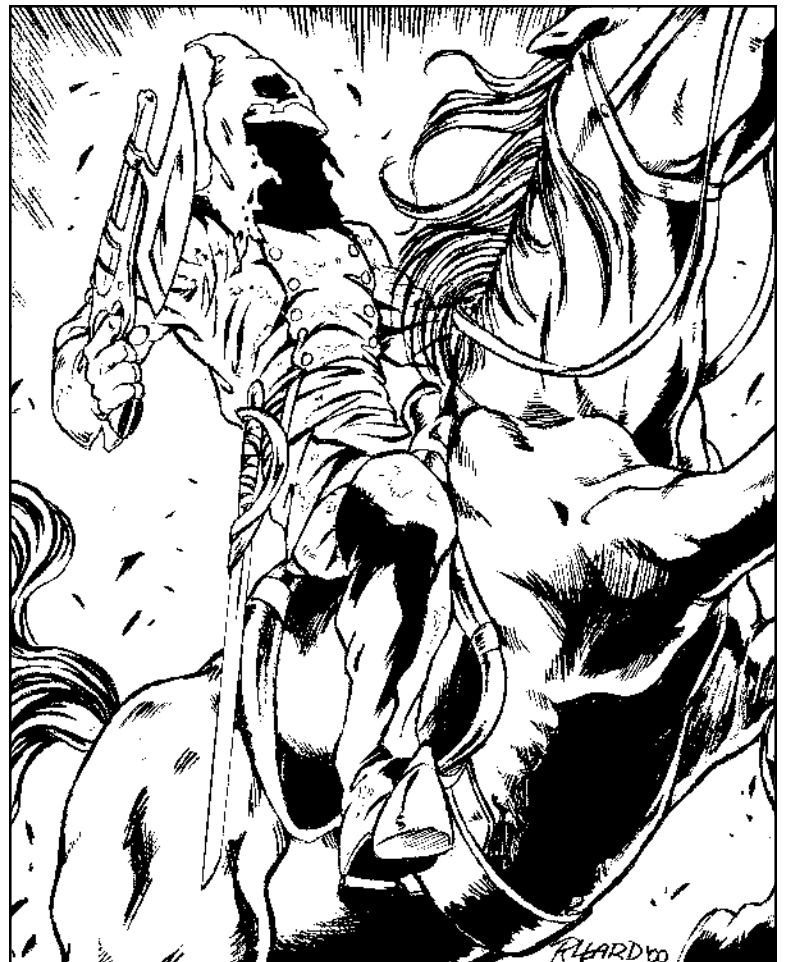
Area knowledge: Chisolm Trail 3d6, overawe 5d12, scrutinize 2d10, search 6d10, trackin' 5d10

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: —

Terror: 11



Special Abilities:

Damage: Two Single-Action Army Revolvers (3d6). These reload themselves 1 round after they're empty. Scythes extend from the end of the pistols, which the judges can use in *fightin'* combat for (STR+2d6) damage.

Fearless

Horseman: Moore's mount, a night-black stallion, cannot be harmed while he's on it. It has a Pace 28 while he's riding and he suffers no movement penalties to his attacks on horseback.

Immunity—Normal Weapons: The only way to destroy Moore for good is to hang him by pulling a horse out from under him. Bullets from a firearm manufactured in the Union (including the ammunition) wielded by a U.S. (not Confederate) citizen can wound and even "kill" Moore—for a single night. He returns the next evening to hunt down his "killer."

Coup: The Harrowed gains Moore's twin, auto-loading pistols. They vanish in the hands of the living, however.

Description: Moore wears an old, dusty Confederate uniform. A hood drapes over his head, hat and all, hiding his features in shadow. He rides a dark gray stallion.

MARCUS LAFAYETTE

Marcus Lafayette got his start as a bad-tempered rancher in central Texas. Lafayette fenced any land he laid claim to—legal or not—and dared trespassers to set foot on it. He had a reputation for rapacious land-greed and a rage like a prairie thunderstorm when balked by smaller landowners. The rancher once beat a cow to death in a fit of anger.

His influence and power in that region was so great that the other four judges decided not to risk a fight with the cattleman. Instead, they conspired to bring him into their fold. With Jackson's

influence and Kirby's legal fancy-footwork, Lafayette was appointed a circuit judge in a matter of weeks.

Lafayette's legal knowledge was sadly lacking, but he served the group primarily as an enforcer. Word had it no man had ever stood up to Lafayette in a fair fight—or at least not for long—and most folks didn't think to question his decisions for fear of his anger.

He always considers any rancher or cowboy a rustler or horse thief—a hanging offense, of course.

PROFILE: MARCUS LAFAYETTE

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:2d12, Q:2d10, S:4d12+2, V:2d20

Shootin': pistol 5d8, fightin': brawlin' 5d12, horse ridin' 3d8, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d6, M:4d12, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d8

Area knowledge: Chisolm Trail 3d6, overawe 5d12, scrutinize 2d8, search 4d8, trackin' 5d8

Pace: 12

Size: 7

Wind: —

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Berserk: As soon as anyone takes a shot at Lafayette, or even just questions his "authority" he goes insane with rage, raising his Corporeal Traits by a level and reducing his Mental ones except *Mien* and *Spirit*, by the same amount. He makes two *fightin'* attacks each action if an opponent is in range and charges them if not. He can fire his pistols while charging.

Damage: Two Single-Action Army Revolvers (3d6). These reload themselves 1 round after they're empty. Lafayette's six-shooters don't have the standard scythes on them. Instead, this burly abomination carries an axe-handle wrapped with unnaturally big barbed wire (STR+2d8, DB +1).

Fearless

Immunity—Normal Weapons:

Stretching his neck with a noose of barbed wire ends Lafayette's reign of terror for good. Shooting or otherwise attacking him directly from behind does normal damage

and can put him down—for a single night. It's the Marshal's call as to what is "directly behind" him or not. The judge comes back the next night gunning for his "murderer."

Coup: The Harrowed gains the *berserk* power at level 1, or, if she already has the power, raises it by a level. If she's at level 5, raise her *Strength* by a die type instead.

Description: Lafayette is the largest of the judges, standing nearly 7' tall, and carries his wire-covered club in one hand.

JOAQUIN MURIETA

According to legend, Joaquin Murieta came to California with his young wife Rosalita hoping to strike it rich in the gold rush of the late 1840s. The territory was ceded to the U.S. in 1848 and the U.S. government passed a law in less than two years that made it virtually illegal for Mexicans to mine gold in the region. Joaquin, however, filed for all the legal paperwork he needed to stake a claim and he and Rosalita set up a small homestead.

That wasn't good enough for other miners in the region who felt he was somehow "stealing" their rightful bounty. They beat him into unconsciousness, raped and killed his wife, and later, after whipping Joaquin to death's door, hung his brother in front of him. Needless to say, this got Joaquin riled.

He rounded up a band of other angry Mexicans and a few bandits from the U.S. and started a reign of bloody terror in southern California. Many of the poorer workers saw Joaquin and his band as a modern day Robin Hood, but the California government had a different opinion. Especially since Joaquin and his band were rumored to have murdered over 300 men.

Captain Harry Love led a band of California lawmen against Joaquin and his band. They surprised the bandit leader away from camp one day with only a few men and quickly dispatched the group. To prove he'd bagged Joaquin—and to claim the \$1000 reward offered by the California governor—Love chopped off the bandit's head and returned it to the governor.



Unfortunately for folks in the Maze and the rest of the Southwest, Joaquin's come back looking for his missing head. He appears near mining camps, asking for his head. If no one produces it (which hasn't happened yet), he "liberates" the heads of U.S. or Confederate miners and tries them on for size. Joaquin never harms folks of Mexican descent or women of any nationality.

Joaquin's head soaks in formaldehyde in a jar in a Shan Fan bar called the *Ivory Palace*, owned by one of Harry Love's descendants.

PROFILE: JOAQUIN MURIETA

Corporeal: D:2d12+2, N:3d12, Q:4d12+4, S:3d10, V:3d10

Climbin' 1d8, fightin': brawlin' 5d8, horse ridin' 4d8 shootin': pistol 7d12+2

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d6, M:2d10, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d12

Overawe 6d10, scrutinize 3d8

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Wind: –

Special Abilities:

Damage: Twin Single-Action Colt Dragoon revolvers (3d6). These weapons completely reload themselves one round after they're emptied. They crumble to rust after Joaquin is destroyed.

Fearless

Head Hunter: Joaquin has a unique and terrible ability—he can literally tear a man's head off with his bare hands! To do so, he must get a raise on a *fightin': brawlin'* roll. Once he does so, he's gotten a grip on the head and rolls a contest of his *Strength* vs. his victim's *Vigor* on each subsequent Action Card. Each success and raise he gets inflicts one wound level on the victim's noggin. When the victim reaches maimed in his noggin, the head tears free with a sickening squelch—requiring a Hard (9) *guts* rolls from onlookers. The victim can break free by winning a contest of *Strength* with Joaquin.

Undead: Focus—Head. This might cause the heroes some problem since the abomination's head is several hundred miles away!

Weakness—Alcohol: Pouring liquor of any sort down Joaquin's neck stump causes the abomination to stop attacking and leave peacefully. This requires two raises on a *fightin': brawlin'* roll to accomplish.

Coup: Destroying Joaquin nets the Harrowed the ability—or curse—to once again get drunk. It might not sound like much, but if you were a moldering corpse, you'd want to tie one on now and again!

Description: Joaquin is a headless corpse dressed in black clothing. His shirt is stained with blood from his decapitation and he's sometimes seen riding a black stallion as well. His head has long hair, a faint beard, and is pale and pickled in a large, screw-top jar.

SPRINGHEEL JACK

Springheel Jack is an old terror from merry old England, but it would be right at home in a Back East campaign. The first sightings on this creature occurred in the late 1830s and persist through the time of the Weird West.

Jack is actually a nature spirit horribly corrupted by an addiction to ancient blood sacrifices. It ran amok on the English countryside for years prior to Roman conquest, but was eventually trapped in warded tor (hill) by a band of druids. In the mid-1830s, the tor was accidentally excavated and Jack was freed on the populace of that otherwise green and pleasant land.

Prior to the Reckoning, most Springheel Jack's activities, while horrifying, were more mischievous than deadly. Jack's first attacks were limited to a belch of bluish flames to stun its victims. Then, it fumbled and tore at its victim's clothes before springing away into the darkness.

Now, all of that has changed. Since the Reckoning, Jack's true evil has risen to the surface. Instead of merely tearing at clothing, Jack attempts to gut its victims after it has stunned them. If successful, it strings their entrails about the murder site like a grotesque cat's cradle.

Springheel Jack is generally human in appearance. His body is extraordinarily thin and tall—nearly 7'—and his flesh is a ghastly greenish white. His hands end in slender, extra-jointed fingers tipped with talon like claws. His face is stretched into a long, devil-like appearance, locked into an evil, predatory grin. He has a pointed beard on his chin, but is otherwise bald. His eyes protrude from their sockets almost as if they are going to pop out at any moment. Finally, his body is covered with ancient clothing somewhat resembling an oilskin suit, complete with tattered tails.

Marshal, if you want to use Springheel Jack in the Weird West, there are a couple of ways to transplant it. First, you could simply change the abomination's history so

that it was actually plaguing the Indians prior to the founding of the thirteen colonies. This method might provide the posse with a chance to figure out Jack's weakness.

Or given Jack's weakness for wooden objects, it may have fled to a sailing ship in a panic and been trapped on board. The vessel, unaware of its cargo, departed London and arrived on America's shores that way. Of course, the ship would be a floating abattoir when it arrived, adding to the horror and suspense when Jack's reign of terror begins.

Jack prefers to attack solitary victims and tries to run from any encounter where it's outnumbered.

PROFILE: SPRINGHEEL JACK

Corporeal: D:4d8, N:5d12+4, Q:4d12+4, S:4d8, V:3d12

Climbin' 4d12+4, dodge 6d12+4, fightin' brawlin' 5d12+4, sneak 7d12+4

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d6, M:4d10, Sm:2d10, Sp:3d12

Academia: occult 4d6, overawe 4d10, ridicule 5d10, search 4d8

Pace: 16

Size: 6

Wind: 12

Terror: 11

Special Abilities:

Blue Flame: Instead of attacking, Jack can belch a blue flame into the face of an opponent within 5'. The flame does 2d10 Wind. A victim reduced to 0 Wind by this attack falls stunned and helpless to the ground.

Damage: Claw (STR+1d8)

Immunity—Normal Damage: Jack takes no damage from normal weapons or attacks. Magic attacks and weapons do only half damage to him.

Springheel: Jack can leap its full Pace or up to 20' straight up on each Action Card.

Shadow Transport: Jack can teleport from one shadow to another shadow within 200 yards as long as it is not being directly observed. It must be able to see the destination shadow and both shadows must be of sufficient size to conceal it completely. If

someone is directly watching Jack's actions, it can't use this ability

Weaknesses: Springheel Jack takes full damage from weapons made from oak and half damage from weapons made from other woods. He cannot open wooden doors or *shadow transport* from an space enclosed completely by wood. Weapons enchanted by the *spirit weapon* favor do full damage to him.

Coup: The Harrowed putting Springheel Jack down gains the ability to leap his full Pace in a single bound. This gives the Harrowed a +2 to any *fightin'* attack that he can leap into. However, this can only be performed once per round.

Description: See above.







CHAPTER FOUR: LYCANTHROPY AND VAMPIRISM

If you're throwing abominations at your posse, it's inevitable that someone is going to get bitten, scratched or mauled by something nasty (at least we hope it is). A few abominations in the Weird West have the ability to pass on a contagion or infection to their victims, namely your heroes. These monsters can give a cowpoke a gift that keeps on taking—a disease or other form of supernatural malady.

Often this is some form of wasting disease that you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy. An example of this sort of nastiness is the bite of a faminite or a bout with tummy twisters. It's relatively easy to deal with—a hero who catches it either gets better or buys a long-term lease with the undertaker.

But not all infections, particularly those fostered by the minions of the Reckoners, are that easy to handle. Some take hold of a cowpoke and *never* let go.

The two most common maladies of this sort are lycanthropy and vampirism. We're going to spend a little time delving into what exactly either of those diseases means to a character. Bet you already guessed that from the title of the chapter, didn't you?

TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY

The first decision you've got to make when a hero contracts one of these infections isn't an easy one, Marshal. That's why we stuck this chapter back here away from the prying eyes of players. We don't even want them to know this is an option unless you choose to use it in your campaigns. This entire chapter is *optional*. You have to decide whether or not you want to allow players to run

werewolves or vampires in your campaign. Including either or both can seriously affect the flavor—and power-level—of things.

You might think that with Harrowed heroes already running around the Weird West were wolves and vampires might not be that big a stretch. But Harrowed are really nothing more than zombies with delusions of grandeur. The Harrowed somehow aren't quite as *monstrous* as a werewolf or vampire. On a good day, the average citizen can't pick a Harrowed out of a crowd. A vampire can't even come *out* on a good day!

On the other hand, you may not want to arbitrarily take control of a hero that's had the misfortune to contract one of these afflictions. Maybe, just maybe, the hero can hold the line and avoid becoming a tool of the Reckoners herself.

In all honesty, she probably won't—but what the Hell, if you want to give them the chance to try, read on.

LYCANTHROPY

First lets talk about lycanthropy, shall we? It's far and away the easiest infection to manage. Most of the time, the hero isn't a slaving, fur-covered monster. Instead, the lycanthropic cowpoke can live a mostly normal life and only worry about his disease—if he's even aware of it—on the nights of the full moon.

In this section, we'll give you the low-down on letting your players run a full-on wolfman. Again, we don't recommend you allow characters to start with one of these monsters, but instead that the condition come about as a result of good old fashioned mauling at the hands of another werewolf.

WEREWOLVES & HARROWED

Before we get on with our discussion, let's take just a minute and talk about the effects of lycanthropy on the Harrowed.

A Harrowed bitten by a werewolf is immune to the effects of lycanthropy. The disease simply can't find a purchase in the zombie's dead flesh. That doesn't mean a werewolf won't gleefully use a Harrowed as a chew-toy, just that he doesn't have to worry about sprouting hair under the light of the next full moon.

In the odd chance that a character afflicted with lycanthropy should become Harrowed, she retains all the advantages and disadvantages of both. Nothing spells fear like an undead werewolf!

Now that we've said that, feel free to make exceptions for your own abominations, Marshal. These restrictions only apply to player characters. The Reckoners can pretty much bend the rules on these things whenever they want.

THE LIFE OF A WEREWOLF

As in most things, there are two ways to approach the player character lycanthropy issue. The first is fairly



straightforward and puts the burden solely on you, Marshal. The second method gives the player more of a role in the process and makes lycanthropy even something of an advantage, but it also puts the hero in the spot of balancing power against self-destruction.

MARSHAL CONTROL

This method allows the player to continue to play his character, pretty much as before. However, on nights of the full moon, the curse of the werewolf takes over and you, the Marshal, handle the effects and consequences. In fact, you might not even want the player to know his hero is even a werewolf in the first place—let the poor guy figure it out for himself!

Most of the time you can handle the transformations “off-screen” and simply let the players discover what occurred on their own. Sometimes you can even use these events as story hooks for other adventures. Most of the time, feel free to employ them as background effects and plot devices to keep the posse on edge.

That’s it. Pretty simple, right? The character goes on as before, but is now an unwilling servant of the Reckoners. If that works for your style of campaign, your problems are solved.

However, if you like to give a hero a rope and see how quickly she can tie a hangman’s knot, slip the noose around her neck and spur the horse out from under herself, you should look at allowing her to have a more active role in handling the beast within.

LYCANTHROPIC HEROES

The majority of her life, a lycanthrope is nearly indistinguishable from normal folks. She doesn’t have the faint aura of death surrounding nor does sunlight cause blistering wounds to erupt on her skin. Her unnatural second nature does a pretty good job of hiding itself for her.

A sharp observer might notice a few things about her that could raise an eyebrow, however.



PREDATORY NATURE

The hero prefers red meat to other foods—the rarer the better. Unlike a Harrowed, she doesn’t suffer any effects if she can’t get it. She’s probably going to complain a bit about the sparse fare, though.

Animals can sense the predator lurking just beneath her skin. Since a werewolf is pretty much top of the food chain, she makes critters *real* nervous even when in human form. Dogs growl, cows roll their eyes in fear, and horses might shy from her if they’re unfamiliar. Because of this, she gets a -2 to all animal-related Trait and Aptitude rolls.

SILVER AND THE MOON

Even in human form, silver causes a lycanthrope a good amount of pain. Whenever a silver weapon does damage to her, the lycanthrope takes an additional +2 points of damage per die (for example, a silver bullet from a Peacemaker would do 3d6+6 damage).

Even simply holding silver is uncomfortable for her. If she touches even a silver coin for more than a round, she takes 1 Wind from the contact for every round after the first. This loss stops should she reach 0 Wind. Most lycanthropes learn very quickly to be careful about their jewelry and coinage because of this.

THE TRANSFORMATION

There are two types of transformation a lycanthrope character can undergo. Both have the same end result—a werewolf—but one occurs under the full moon (whether the hero wants it or not) and the second is a willful act on the part of the lycanthrope.

Needless to say, either transformation is tough on a cowpoke’s wardrobe. It’s a pretty safe bet that any clothes worn during the change are

going to be little more than tatters when the process is completed—including boots! Smart (or modest) lycanthropes should plan accordingly.

INVOLUNTARY CHANGES

During times of the full moon, the power of the beast is simply too strong for the hero to deny. Under a full moon, the werewolf becomes a tool of the Reckoners. The animal impulses completely submerge the hero's attempts to reign it in—the werewolf is a rampaging abomination. The hero has no memory of what she's done come morning.

On nights of the full moon, you take control of the werewolf, Marshal. Since the hero has no idea what she's done while a werewolf during these periods, the best way to handle these events is "off-screen" from actual game play.

Each night of the full moon, these changes last for a period of time equal to the hero's *Vigor* die type in hours. The transformation begins with the rise of the full moon and may continue past its setting, depending on the hero's *Vigor*. If the posse doesn't restrain the werewolf somehow, feel free to wreak all sorts of havoc during this period, Marshal.

VOLUNTARY CHANGES

Times arise when it's handy to be able to turn into a 6' tall, hairball of fangs and fury—especially when you're a hero facing the minions of the Reckoning. Lycanthropic characters can initiate a voluntary change to the werewolf form, but it's not easy.

First, the cowpoke must spend a Fate Chip and make a *Spirit* roll. The TN for the roll is based on the color of Fate Chip spent, as shown on the table below. If she's successful, she becomes a werewolf; if she fails, her Fate Chip pile is just one chip smaller.

Going bust on this *Spirit* roll means the transformation still occurs, but the beast is under the Marshal's control!

CHANGING TABLE

Fate Chip	Change TN
White	9
Red	7
Blue	5
Legend	Automatic

TO BEAST AND BACK AGAIN

The transformation to werewolf is relatively fast, but since it involves a serious amount of body restructuring it does take *some* time to accomplish. From start to finish, the process requires 5 rounds. During this time, the werewolf can take no action but let her bones and muscles reshape themselves. The transformation is rather painful, and the werewolf suffers 1d6 Wind as a result.

Once the transformation is complete, the character can remain in werewolf form for a number of hours equal to her *Vigor* die type. At the end of this time—or should she be rendered unconscious somehow—the hero reverts to her human form. She can also voluntarily end the transformation by making an Onerous (7) *Spirit* roll.

Changing back to human form also requires 5 rounds. However, the reversion does *not* cause the cowpoke any Wind loss.

STRENGTHS

Becoming a monster has certain advantages. The werewolf is considerably more fearsome in combat than its human counterpart. It also has natural weaponry in the form of fangs and claws, with which to rend its foes.

TRAITS

The werewolf form is virtually bursting with primal energy. The hero gains 1 die type in *Deftness*, 2 die types in *Vigor*, 3 die types in *Strength*, and 5 die types in *Nimbleness* and *Quickness*. The werewolf's *Cognition* die is raised to d12 and its *Mien* is raised to d10 if those were below that level prior to the change.

Releasing the beast somewhat dampens the hero's own personality, however. She loses 1 die type in *Smarts* and *Spirit* and 2 die types in *Knowledge*. While she knows who her friends and enemies are, she's not likely to do much higher math as long as she's a werewolf.

The werewolf has a Pace of 24.

APTITUDES

The transformed lycanthrope gets a few Aptitudes for free as well. When in werewolf form, the hero has *dodge* 4, *fightin': brawlin'* 6, and *overawe* 2. These are a part of the monster's nature and replace similar Aptitudes possessed by the hero. The werewolf retains most of the hero's other Corporeal Aptitudes, although some, like *ridin'*, are of questionable value to the monster.

Mental Aptitudes, on the other hand, are generally temporarily forgotten while in werewolf form. *Search* and *trackin'* are examples of Aptitudes that might be retained, but *knowledges* aren't too important to a ravening wolf-thing. The Marshal is the final authority to what Aptitudes the monster does and does not have access.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

While in the werewolf form, the hero automatically gains certain abilities. These special advantages are only effective while the character is in werewolf form.

Anyone getting a look at a werewolf must make a *guts* check against the monster's Terror score of 9. Fellow posse members may be exempt from this roll if they've seen the hero in werewolf form before, at the Marshal's discretion.

The werewolf can make two *fightin': brawlin'* attacks per action. One of these is a bite that does STR damage and the other a claw for STR+1d6 damage. Both of these deal actual—not brawling—damage. Additionally, any character bitten by the werewolf may contract lycanthropy himself. See the *Marshal's Guide* for details on this.

Normal (non-magical) attacks do only half damage to the werewolf.

WEAKNESSES

Along with all those cool perks come a few disadvantages. First of all, silver weapons (bullets, daggers, etc.) cause full damage to them.

Also, the werewolf is considered evil for the purposes of any miracles, spells, hexes or other arcane powers. This is the case regardless of the character's true intent. She's still drawing power from the dark side, after all. This is true only while the lycanthrope is in werewolf form; in her human form, she has no particular vulnerabilities to such magic.

Additionally—as mentioned on the previous page—once a month the hero is under the Marshal's control. Unlike a Harrowed, who gets to fight the manitou for control of the body, the werewolf has no chance to resist the full-moon change.

THE BEAST WITHIN

But aside from those problems, the most disadvantage to being a werewolf is the danger of losing your soul!

The best thing about being a werewolf is, well, becoming a werewolf. However, the more a lycanthrope lets the beast out to play, the stronger the hold the monster gets on her. Eventually, if the hero explores her second nature too deeply, she's going to wind up a pawn of the Reckoners.

Every time a hero voluntarily becomes a werewolf, she puts another little black mark on her soul. After all, she is willingly becoming a monster. It doesn't matter if she's doing it for all the right reasons, either. Remember, the road to Hell is paved with good intentions?

Whenever a hero voluntarily becomes a werewolf, she gains a single Corruption point. Note this is only for voluntary changes—those that occur under the full moon don't give the hero any Corruption points. It's one thing to have the transformation thrust upon you; it's another entirely to embrace it.

Corruption points can be reduced—at the cost of one Legend Chip each. Removing the taint of the Reckoners from a soul doesn't come cheap!

Marshal, since you might be allowing players to read this section, we've moved the result of too many Corruption points to the end of the chapter. That section is *off-limits* to players—so, if you're playing a lycanthrope, no peeking! Just know that once your Corruption points equal or exceed your *Spirit* die type, it's a BAD thing.

WEREWOLVES AND FEAR

Oh, there is one other thing. A werewolf has a habit of making folks nervous, even if they aren't sure one's around. After someone other than a posse member (or Ranger or Agency operative) gets a good luck at a werewolf or a full-moon period passes where the werewolf was roaming free, the Fear Level in the surrounding countryside, usually a ten-mile radius, raises by one. This can be kind of a problem for a heroic posse; one of their own members may be maintaining the Fear Level they are striving to reduce!

There are only two ways to reduce this increase. The first is to kill the werewolf—usually not the posse's first choice once they figure out who's behind the fur and fangs.

The second is for two full moons to pass without any werewolf-related incidents. The heroes can accomplish this by staying on the move or simply finding a secure and isolated place to lock up the friendly neighborhood wolfman.

There's another reason to avoid stirring up the locals as well—vigilante mobs. A werewolf that ravages a countryside is eventually going to have a whole posse of riled-up ranchers and other folks gunning for his hide.

And you can imagine the embarrassment when the "horrible monster" turns out to be one of the so-called heroes defending the town!

ADDITIONAL WEREWOLF POWERS

A lycanthrope can gain powers beyond that of simply becoming a werewolf when the chips are down. Most of these are related to the character either tapping into her bestial second nature while still human or her mastery of the transformation process.

GAINING & IMPROVING POWERS

Buying a new power at level 1 costs 5 Bounty Points. However, the process takes no game time; the hero is merely assumed to have slowly been developing the power over time. The hero can only purchase new powers between game sessions.

Improving a power costs double the new level, but, likewise, requires no time to accomplish. A power can only be raised 1 level between game sessions.

POWER DESCRIPTIONS

Below we've listed the powers available to lycanthropic heroes. Unless otherwise noted, powers are always in effect and require no roll to activate.

ALPHA MALE

Contrary to the name of this power, both male and female lycanthropes can take this power. *Alpha male* lets a little of the beast within slip out from time to time. These slips are subtle—perhaps a narrowing of the eyes or baring of the teeth—and few folks notice them outright.

However, they have a profound subconscious effect in social confrontations. The lycanthrope gets +1 to any *overawe*, hostile *bluff*, *ridicule*, or *persuasion* roll.

Since it only affects hostile rolls, it's probably not too useful to a gambler's *bluff* in a friendly card game or talking that miserly storeowner into a better price. It does come in handy for getting an unruly cowhand to back down from a fight though.

These bonuses apply in human or werewolf form.

BESTIAL NATURE

The lycanthrope's furry alter ego gives it some insight into how to handle other normal animals. A hero with this power does *not* suffer the normal -2 that lycanthropes usually get to all animal related Trait and Aptitude rolls.

The hero actually gets a +1 to those same rolls for each level she has in *bestial nature*. This bonus is due to the lycanthrope's ability to manipulate the fear the animals normally fear in her presence—not any sense of love or loyalty—so the exact game consequences of this are left to the Marshal.

On a Hard (9) *Cognition* roll, the hero can even get a sense for the general emotional state of the animal—not counting the fear she is causing herself, of course. She gets a +1 bonus to the *Cognition* roll for every level she has in the power as well.

Bestial nature is only effective against normal animals. Abominations of any form are completely immune to it. This power is only effective in human form. Once a werewolf, all bets are off in the animal kingdom.

LEADER OF THE PACK

This power summons a small group of wolves to the werewolf. One wolf joins the werewolf's "pack" for every level the hero has in this power. Use the profile in the *Marshal's Guide* for the wolves.

The werewolf can communicate with his pack of wolves about as well as a cowpoke can with a smart dog. The wolves obey fairly simple commands, but are likely to get confused by complex requests. They are only animals, after all.

The animals are loyal to the hero and fight to protect her. However, a character should think twice about leading a pack of wolves into a saloon—or even a town. Many localities have a bounty on wolf hides and folks are liable to see the hero's pack as fast money.

The wolves are unfazed by the hero's human *or* werewolf form and hunt with her in either shape.

LUPINE FURY

In toe-to-toe combat, werewolves are already pretty tough customers. But once combat is under way, a werewolf with this power becomes an even deadlier opponent. Her senses and muscles operate at a much higher level than a mere human's, allowing her an enormous edge in a fight.

For each level she has in the *lupine fury* power, the werewolf can discard one Action Card and draw another in its place. Unfortunately, Black Jokers can't be discarded in this fashion—sometimes even a finely-tuned killing machine slips up—but any other card may be.

This power is only effective when in werewolf form.





PREDATORY SENSES

This lycanthrope's combination of animal senses and human reasoning lets her catch things most folks miss. She begins to notice sounds and smells beyond the range of normal human experience.

The hero gains a +1 bonus per level in *predatory senses* to several *Cognition*-related Aptitudes and rolls. She always receives this bonus to *trackin'* and *scrutinize* rolls (she's sensitive to subtle odors and changes in posture others miss). She also gains this bonus to *Cognition* rolls to avoid surprise.

Finally, whenever making a *search* roll to detect a hidden enemy or any sneaky movement, she also gains the *predatory senses* bonus. She does not gain this bonus when searching a room for clues, unless the Marshal deems otherwise.

This bonus applies whether the lycanthrope is in human or werewolf form.

QUICK CHANGE

A lycanthrope with this power has mastered the transformation between werewolf and human. She's able to shift between the two forms much more quickly than most werewolves.

The speed with which she can do this is dependent on her level in the power, as shown on the table below.



Level	Time Required
1	4 rounds
2	3 rounds
3	2 rounds
4	1 round
5	1 action

RAZOR CLAWS

Nothing's more frustrating to a raging werewolf than to have a good rending foiled by a simple bulletproof vest. *Razor claws* makes the monster's claws effectively armor piercing. The table below shows the power's effectiveness at each level.

Obviously, this power only functions when in werewolf form.

MENDING

The hero with this power's body has the power to heal itself when changing from his werewolf form back to human. For every level in the power, the lycanthrope can heal one wound level in a single location. A hero with 3 levels in *mending* and a heavy wound in her guts and a light wound in her arm could heal all her wounds, for example.

This healing takes place only when changing from werewolf back to human, not vice-versa. It does heal wounds inflicted *before* and during the time the hero was in werewolf form, though, so a hero can use it to mend old injuries as well as new ones. Of course, that can rack up a whole lot of Corruption points real fast!

RAZOR CLAWS

Level	Armor Pierced
1	All Light
2	AP 1
3	AP 2
4	AP 3
5	AP 4

WEREWOLF'S HOWL

The appearance of a werewolf is usually enough to send a cowpoke scampering for the hills. Sometimes, though, it's good to be able to stir the fear pot a little. A werewolf with this power can let loose a blood-curdling howl guaranteed to chill the bones of all who hear it.

The werewolf must take an action to howl, but it requires no roll on her part to perform. Any characters—or animals—within range of the howl must make the *guts* check, even if they've made one for seeing the werewolf already.

The range of the power is 50 yards per level. The TN for the *guts* check is based on the level of the power, shown on the table below.

This power is only effective when in werewolf form. A human can howl, but it just sounds kind of silly.

WEREWOLF'S HOWL

Level	Guts TN
1	3
2	5
3	7
4	9
5	11

STARTING CHARACTERS

Marshal, if you want to allow characters to start as lycanthropes, they must purchase the Edge *lycanthrope* 3. This Edge grants them the ability to transform into a werewolf and all the powers listed as common in the

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preceding sections. Of course, it also sticks them with all the drawbacks of being a lycanthrope, like involuntary changes and a weakness for silver.

During character creation, a lycanthropic hero may also purchase a total of 5 levels in additional powers, divided as she sees fit among any two powers, at a cost of 1 character point per level. For example, a hero could select *mending* 3 and *quick change* 2, or even just *alpha male* 5. Either choice costs a total of 5 character points. The hero is not *required* to purchase all 5—or even any—levels in additional powers if she doesn't want them.

You may also wish to require such characters to be *veterans o' the Weird West* to reflect some experience with the Reckoning. Obviously, the lycanthrope has had a run-in with at least one abomination in the past, after all.

VAMPIRISM

Vampirism is more difficult to handle than lycanthropy. A lycanthrope is only a monster part of the time; a vampire is a blood-sucker from the time it crawls from its resting place in the evening to the first light of the morning sun.

Not surprisingly, this makes vampires considerably more powerful than werewolves. It also gives them a whole passel of drawbacks though.

COMING DOWN WITH VAMPIRISM

In *Deadlands*, the only way to contract vampirism is to catch it from another vampire. No character—or player character, at least—suddenly claws his way out of the grave looking for a vein to tap. He has to have died as a result of a vampire's bite. Simply getting ripped apart by a vampire isn't going to do the trick either—it has to be the *bite* that puts the hero in the ground.

But, wait, you're probably saying, some vampires can infect their victims after only a single bite! That's a very good point.

Only certain bloodsuckers inflict the type of vampirism suitable for player character vampires. Penanggalen and ustrel aren't even infective; it takes a specific set of circumstances to breed one of these horrors that no character is likely to experience. Wampyr are highly infective, but who really wants to play one of these poor cousins?

That leaves only nosferatu and cinematic vampires to pass on the stigma of vampirism to heroes.

Cinematic vampires are the best choice for this sort of conversion; those created by nosferatu are usually nearly mindless feeding machines. But if you like, Marshal, you can allow nosferatu to create vampires of the sort we detail below when a player character is the victim. Normal nosferatu victims remain nosferatu—maybe it's something to do with being a hero and all that makes the character different.

CAVEAT NOSTERATUM

Before we go any further, one last warning—vampires may be more of a pain in your game than they're worth. Their powers exceed those of even the Harrowed in many cases and this may lead other players to become dissatisfied with their characters. Even worse, you could end up with a whole posse of vampires as everyone jumps on the bloodsucker bandwagon.

In addition to their powers, vampires possess weaknesses that far outstrip those of the Harrowed or even lycanthropes. Vampiric characters, while very powerful, may find themselves very limited in their ability to participate in an adventure. Their vulnerability to the simple light of the sun alone has tremendous impact. It limits their ability to interact with other characters, participate in the plot, and even travel from town to town. Imagine

a vampire caught in the wastes of the Mojave just before sunup!

Weaknesses aside, vampires are monsters and prey on humanity. A lycanthrope can rein in her more murderous impulses by taking a few precautions. A vampire, on the other hand, must drink blood or cease to exist. This may cause the campaign to shift drastically away from the heroic nature we're aiming for in *Deadlands*.

Okay, that's it for the doomsaying, Marshal. It's your game and your choice. If, after reading all our warnings, you're still ready to allow heroes to become vampires in your campaign, read on.

THE CARE & FEEDING OF VAMPIRES

Exactly how a hero becomes a vampire is determined by the campaign. The type of vampire that afflicted the hero with the malady determines the finer points of the return from the grave. Out of all the vampir types, only two are really viable conduits for making a playable vampire character: nosferatu and cinematic vampires.

NOSTERATU

If a hero killed by a nosferatu's bite is eligible to become a vampiric character in your campaign, the process is pretty straightforward. These monsters carry a particularly fast-acting type of vampirism.

A hero bitten by a nosferatu rises again within 1d6 hours of his death. Rigor mortis sets in within a few hours of death, causing the hero all manner of difficulties. Until his first feeding, the hero is at -2 to all Trait and Aptitude rolls. After he's got a belly full of blood, this modifier goes away.

When the character rises, he's also very low on blood supply—it was the vampire's *bite* that killed him, after all. He only has 1d6 Wind, so he's going to need to feed pretty darn fast. Vampires don't regain Wind like normal folks—see below for more on this.

That's pretty much it. The fledgling bloodsucker is ready to go.

CINEMATIC VAMPIRES

Of the two types, these bloodsuckers are far more likely have their victims crawl back out of the earth as playable vampires. Normally, when one of these undead drains a victim of blood, a lesser vampire (nosferatu) is created. However, cinematic vampires may choose to make a character into a full-fledged member of their number.

This process takes an entire night and involves a lot of disgusting stuff we're not going to go into here. However, at the end of the night, the character is a vampire with 1 Wind, but no effects of rigor mortis like those suffered by nosferatu victims.

It's also not unheard of for these sorts of vampires to provide a newly-created vampire with an incapacitated victim from whom to feed the first time.

COMMON POWERS

All vampiric characters have certain powers from the time they rise for their first munchie run. Others can be purchased with Bounty Points over time. We'll get into those a little later.

Unlike Harrowed characters, vampires *cannot* gain Coup powers.

DEADER, STRONGER, FASTER

Vampires, by virtue of the fact they're two-legged undead ticks, gain a few advantages in the physical abilities department. All of a vampire's Corporeal Traits are raised one die type—d6 becomes d8, d10 becomes d12, d12 becomes d12+2, and so on.

The bloodsucker also gains a die type in *Mien* and *Cognition* as well.

The attribute vampires are best known for is their bite. Even fledgling undead of this sort can leave a nasty mark on a victim with his fangs. Any time a vampire gets a raise on a *fightin': brawlin'* roll, he can nip his opponent with his teeth as well. This is treated as brawling damage, but any Wind inflicted is actually drained by the vampire's fangs!

This attack is particularly frightening for other vampires, because the Wind lost to this attack can't be recovered normally. More on that in a bit.

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ALCOHOL, DRUGS, & FOOD

Vampires aren't capable of digesting any food or liquid except for fresh blood. They can swallow it, but anything they "eat" in this way just sits heavily on their stomachs until regurgitated. As a result, most vampires steer clear of restaurants.

Alcohol and other drugs have no effect on a vampire if taken internally. Conversely, a bloodsucker taking a sip from a drunken or drugged victim has a chance of catching the effects of the drug himself. Any vampire in this situation must make an Onerous (7) *Vigor* roll or suffer the same level of intoxication or other effect as his victim.

It's important to note that while a vampire with a *hankerin'* can't experience the effect of drugs or alcohol, that doesn't mean the hero loses the mental dependency on the substance. The poor sod might have to find creative ways to get his "fix" once he's become undead!

DECAY

Unlike many undead, vampires do not show signs of decay. They may appear a little paler than a living cowpoke and gradually lose color the longer they go without feeding (see below). However, they don't carry the odor of death that a Harrowed does, nor do they keep their "death wounds."

However, animals have finer senses for the unnatural than most people do and can readily pick out one of the "children of the night." All animal-related Trait or Aptitude checks are at a -2. Critters just don't like two-legged leeches.

FEAR AND LOATHING

Since he can pass rather easily as a normal human, a vampire doesn't automatically cause folks to make a *guts* check. Once revealed as a bloodsucking corpse, however, he has a

Terror score of 9. The Marshal may adjust this for compadres if she thinks it's appropriate to give them a break.

If a vampire starts blatantly feeding in an area, he causes the Fear Level to increase by one until a month passes without a reported case of feeding—or he's killed.

GRIT

It takes a certain amount of will to do the things a vampire has to do to maintain its existence. After some of the stuff one of these 6' mosquitoes does on an average night, a zombie just isn't as terrifying as it once was. Vampires get a bonus of +2 to their Grit—although they still can't have more 5 levels of it.

HEALING

Vampires, thanks to their unnatural existence, heal much quicker than regular folks. They get to make healing rolls once a day—or night, to be more precise—instead of once a week.

Vampires can also speed their healing process even more. By spending 6 Wind, they can heal one wound level in any one location, instantly. However, before all those would-be bloodsuckers get excited about this—there is a catch to this that we're going to tell you about in just a minute.

A vampire can heal wounds of any level to any part of its body (except the heart, which we'll get to in a moment). It can even regrow severed limbs—but not a head—beheading ends a vampire's existence. Should a vampire's limb be cut off, the limb decays and disintegrates over the course of a single day, while the creature quickly regenerates another as soon as the wound level becomes Critical instead of Maimed.

However, magical healing of any sort—even that which works on Harrowed or other undead—is totally *ineffective* on a vampire. Only the monster's own abilities can repair damage to itself.

VISION

Vampires can see fairly well after dark, which only makes sense for a nocturnal predator. As long as there is any light at all, however faint, the bloodsucker can see as if it were full daylight (i.e., no penalties). In total darkness, they're just as blind as normal folks, though.

Conversely, sunlight burns their light-sensitive eyes—in addition to the other bad effects it has on them. All Trait and Aptitude checks made in daylight are at a -2 if they require vision. Of course, the vampire can close his eyes to avoid this—but then he can't see at all. This might work for some tasks, but certainly not trick-shooting.

UNDEATH

Being undead has its perks. Vampires can ignore bleeding and Wind caused by physical damage, drowning, poison or other indirect damage that affects the body's organs. Nor do they continue to bleed from wounds—these guys are blood misers after all.

Magical effects and mental strain, like a failed *guts* check or backlash, can cause them Wind loss. Likewise magical damage affects them normally, including Wind loss.

They suffer wounds normally, but vampires can't be killed except by one of the means noted in the section below. Keep in mind, one of those methods is a Maiming wound to the heart, but we'll get into the specifics of that in a minute.

VAMPIRIC WEAKNESSES

To balance out their tremendous powers, vampires have more than their share of drawbacks. If they didn't, these parasites would likely rule the world by now!

A few of these are mere annoyances. For example, garlic makes a vampire uncomfortable—the odor is downright repugnant to the creatures. It doesn't cause any damage, but most bloodsuckers shun the herb nonetheless. Touching a bulb of garlic takes a Fair (5) *Spirit* roll on the part of the vampire.

Vampires don't cause a reflection in mirrors or mirrored surfaces. In a similar fashion, they don't show up on photographic plates. Since this sort of thing is likely to raise eyebrows among normal, God-fearing folks, the creatures usually go out of their way to avoid either.

Legends and old wives' tales lists other weaknesses for vampires as well. Fortunately for the undead leeches these are merely superstition. For example, a vampire doesn't have to sleep in the soil of his homeland nor is he prevented from crossing running water. These guys have enough problems without those!

THE NEED TO FEED

As irritating as all that is, here's the real kicker. Each day, the vampire loses a point of Wind as his undead body consumes the vital fluid. Wind lost in this fashion is not recovered in the normal manner. Neither does the creature recover Wind it expends to instantly heal wounds or to use certain special powers we'll tell you about in a minute.

The vampiric hero recovers Wind lost to other means, such as mental strain or magical damage normally. Only Wind lost to his vampiric existence, powers (which includes accelerated healing), or another vampire's bite must be replenished by blood. It's a good idea to use two different-colored paper clips to track this—one for temporary Wind loss and one for longer term losses.

A vampire whose Wind is reduced to 0 or below by the daily drain, use of vampiric powers, or another bloodsucker's bite, is in big trouble. He drops into a catatonic state until some fool actually feeds the monster some human blood. Dropping to 0 or lower Wind through other means has no long term effects on the character.

A vampire can stem the daily Wind loss by sinking its fangs into a normal living animal (not abomination) and sucking down at least 6 Wind. This practice doesn't regain any Wind for the monster—it only prevents it from losing the 1 Wind for that day. The animal's blood does *not* prevent the loss of Wind for special powers or instant healing.

FEEDING

The only way for a vampire to recover Wind lost as a consequence of his undead existence or another vampire's bite is by feeding from a *living* (not dead or undead) human. A vampire regains Wind on a 1 for 1 basis when feeding from a human. He can do so in combat, as detailed above, or from a willing victim. A bloodsucker can drain 3 Wind per action from a willing victim per Action Card, should timing ever be important.

Now, a vampire's companions may be willing to let the parasite freely tap a vein. After all, it's just Wind, right? However, every 6 points of Wind lost in this fashion causes a wound level to





the guts. So, draining a victim of 30 points of Wind will kill her!

This is a little different than the normal blood loss rules, but that's because normal Wind loss incorporates a number of factors besides simple bleeding. Stress, shock, and other factors simply aren't present when a vampire is drinking a character's

lifeblood. This Wind loss is pure, concentrated blood drain.

Finally, willfully drinking the blood of a human—even a “bad” guy—has some serious effects on the vampire's soul, which we'll get into in more detail in a moment.

BLOOD GLUTTONS

A vampire is normally limited to his maximum Wind for feeding. However, for short periods, vampires can gorge themselves on excessive amounts of blood, consuming up to twice their normal Wind.

They can retain this excess blood (Wind) for a number of minutes equal to their *Vigor* die type; after that it breaks down and is useless to the character. During that time any Wind used for instant healing or to activate additional powers comes from the excess Wind first. Many bloodsuckers binge just before, during, or after combat to give them an extra boost.

INFECTION

Don't forget, the hero carries the curse of vampirism in his own bite. Any human killed by his bite *does* become a vampire as well. If the hero isn't careful, he can cause an epidemic of vampirism himself!

HOLY STUFF

Holy water does 2d6 damage if splashed on a vampire. Miracles, favors, and other spells always affect vampires as if they were “evil.” It doesn't matter if the hero is trying his best to fly right, he's still considered evil for this purpose.

REST

Vampires “sleep” during the day. The creatures don't have to bed down at morning, but it is safer for them to hole up until sundown. Even a stray sunbeam through a curtain can be disastrous for a vampire.

Remaining awake is also stressful on the creature's existence. The character must spend an *extra* point of Wind anytime it doesn't get a full day's rest.

Feeding from an animal *doesn't* prevent the loss of this extra Wind.

Vampires don't have to sleep in coffins, although a few do so. Some do because coffins are pretty safe against the sun's rays, other bloodsuckers have a strange fascination with death.

Once a vampire does bed down for the day, he slips into a near-coma until sundown. Bloodsuckers in this condition are pretty darn easy to sneak up on. A vampire needs an Incredible (11) *Cognition* roll to avoid surprise when resting. This makes them easy prey for bushwhacking vampire-hunters, so vampires usually pick their resting places carefully!

THRALL

The vampire responsible for turning the hero into one of the undead *always* has a great deal of influence over the character. Taking direct action of any sort against the "parent" vampire requires the hero to make a Hard (9) *Spirit* roll.

Also, the parent vampire can attempt to force the hero to obey simple commands. The parent vampire must win an opposed test of *Spirit* with the hero, but the hero gets a -2 modifier to his roll. With a single success, the vampire can force the hero to stop an action or stand by as the monster feasts on his friends. With a raise, the vampire can even force the hero to attack his companions!

DYING...AGAIN

Vampires are pretty darn tough. You can do just about any sort of damage to them, even magical, but if you don't do it right, they'll be back tomorrow night. Here are the ways that a vampire can be put down for good.

OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

The first way to end a vampire's existence is beheading. That doesn't mean a Maiming wound to the noggin. A sufficiently *massive* wound to the head might do it at the Marshal's discretion, but it's not likely. Usually, though, only deliberately cutting the head from the neck counts.

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FATAL SUNBURN

Sunlight is a vampire's bane. Each round the bloodsucker is exposed to sunlight, he takes 3d6 massive damage. If his noggin or guts receives a Maimed result because of sunlight, he's gone for good—expired, deceased (again), an ex-vampire.

Vampires suffer damage even if the sun is shrouded by heavy clouds or fog, although this may reduce it to 2d6. As long as any part of the sun is above the horizon, a vampire had better be careful!

HEART OF THE MATTER

A Maiming wound to the heart from *any* weapon also puts a vampire down for good, but this is a tough shot (-10!). Any attack that strikes the gizzards has a small chance (a 1 or 2 on d6) of hitting the heart.

A wooden stake driven into the heart kills the undead if even a single wound level is inflicted, however.

CORRUPTION

As with lycanthropes, the very state of being a vampir endangers a hero's soul. Vampires have a tougher time with Corruption points than lycanthropes do as well—the slope is a lot more slippery. Any time a vampire feeds from another human—willing victim or not—he acquires a Corruption point. It doesn't matter how much he drinks—1 Wind or 30 Wind—even a sip gets him a point. A vampiric hero can buy off Corruption at the cost of Legend Chip per point cancelled.

As with lycanthropes, as soon as his Corruption exceeds his *Spirit* die, he's only a hop skip and a jump from damnation! The details on what happens are at the end of this chapter, but they're for Marshal's eyes only. All players need to know is that it is the beginning of a very fast downward spiral!

We know this means a vampire is likely to descend into the depths much quicker than a lycanthrope. That's exactly what we intended. While a lycanthrope never *has* to voluntarily embrace her monstrous malady, a vampire does so simply to maintain his undead existence.

ADDITIONAL VAMPIRE POWERS

You've probably noticed that player character vampires are noticeably weaker than other cinematic bloodsuckers or even nosferatu. That's because the hero is resisting his own inherent evil to a great degree. If he gave himself over fully to the transformation he'd gain the full powers of a vampire, but he'd also lose his soul. In game terms, that means he'd become a monster under the Marshal's control by the way.

A hero can, over time, gain additional powers, possibly even becoming greater than the vampire that created them. However, pulling that off without damning themselves is not an easy task.

GAINING POWERS

Gaining a new vampiric power costs 10 Bounty Points. It's pretty simple—the hero spends the points and gets the selected power at level 1.

This doesn't take any time in game terms. Simply assume the power manifests over a period time between game sessions, during rest periods, and so forth.

Increasing an already existing power costs a number of Bounty Points equal to twice the level the hero is raising it to. For example, it costs 4 Bounty points to raise a power from level 1 to level 2. Like Traits and Aptitudes, a vampire can't raise a power more than one level at a time and then only between game sessions.

VAMPIRE POWER DESCRIPTIONS

Vampiric powers are more involved than those of lycanthropes. Each power lists three elements in addition to its description: Speed, Cost, and Duration.

Speed is the number of actions it takes to activate the power. Some powers, such as *day walkin'*, are "always on" and don't require activation.

Cost is how much Wind the vampire must expend to activate the power. Only the more potent powers require this; any power that's "always on" has no cost. Like we said before, this Wind loss can only be renewed by drinking human blood. Eghh!

Duration is how long the power lasts once activated. Concentration means the vampire must maintain his concentration on the power. While doing so, he can only perform simple actions like moving or resisting tests of will. "As desired" means the power lasts until the vampire decides to end it and requires no concentration to maintain. However, once ended the time and Wind must again be spent to reactivate the effect.

CRY WOLF

Speed: Special

Cost: 1 Wind

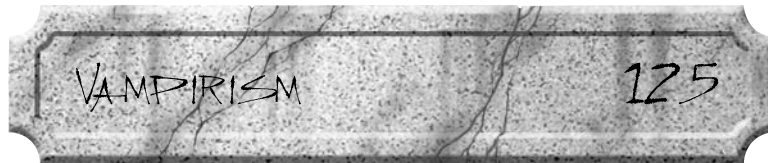
Duration: 1 hour/*Vigor* die type

This power allows the vampire to transform into a good-sized (Size 6) wolf. Use the wolf profile from the *Marshal's Handbook*. However, increase all the Corporeal Traits by one die type. The vampire retains his Mental Traits and all Aptitudes as well—even if a wolf can't make use of them (like *drivin'*, etc.).

Vampires in wolf form can use all the common vampiric powers (healing, invulnerability, etc.), but no additional powers (*claws*, *speed*, *weather control*, etc.) except those that are "always on" (*day walkin'*, *supernatural trait*, etc.). The critter form can't cast hexes, use miracles or favors, or any other arcane powers, either.

Vampires using *cry wolf* can bite for normal damage as a wolf (STR+2d4) or use their fangs for brawling damage (STR only) to drain blood from an opponent.

The change to and from wolf form isn't instantaneous. The number of Action Cards required to make the change is indicated on the table below. The vampire can end *cry wolf* at any time.



Level	Action Cards Required
1	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

CLAWS

Speed: 1

Cost: 0

Duration: As desired

Werewolves aren't the only ones that can do a little carving in hand-to-hand combat. This power works exactly the same as the Harrowed power of the same name, described in the *Weird West Player's Guide*.

DAY WALKIN'

Speed: Always on

Cost: 0

Duration: Permanent

Sunburn can be fatal for a vampire. Fortunately, *day walkin'* gives the human mosquito a little supernatural sunblock. Each level in this power gives the bloodsucker -1 light armor versus damage from sunlight or similar effects concocted by magic or mad science. So, at level 4, a vampire has light armor -4 against the cursed rays of the sun.

Note that normal sunlight damage is applied as massive damage to the vampire. See the *Weird West Player's Guide* to see how light armor affects massive damage.

FOG BANK

Speed: Special

Cost: 1 Wind

Duration: Concentration or 10 minutes/*Spirit* die type

This power creates a dense bank of fog surrounding the vampire. The

vampire must spend a single Action Card to activate *fog bank*, but the supernatural fog doesn't appear instantly. Instead, it slowly coalesces over the course of five minutes, seeming to gradually creep up from the ground.

When fully formed the fog covers a roughly circular area 100 yards in diameter for every level the vampire has in the power. Within the confines of *fog bank*, the vampire himself can see normally, but all others are limited to 5 yards of visibility. All ranged attacks—other than by the vampire—are at -4 as well.

At the end of the power's duration, the fog quickly begins to disperse and is completely dissipated within less than a minute.

MAN-BAT

Speed: Special

Cost: 1 Wind

Duration: 1 hour/*Vigor* die type

Wolves aren't the only "children of the night" that vampires share a special kinship with. This power allows the vampire to transform into an enormous (Size 3) bat. Use the Bat profile on page 89, but increase all the Corporeal Traits by one die type. The vampire retains his Mental Traits and all Aptitudes (although most of them won't be too useful to a bat!) as well.

While in bat form, the vampire can use all the common powers (bite, healing, invulnerability, etc.), but no additional powers (*claws*, *speed*, *weather control*, etc.) except those that are "always on" (*day walkin'*, *supernatural trait*, etc.). Nor can the bat cast hexes, use miracles or favors, or any other arcane powers.

The transformation to and from bat form isn't instantaneous. The number of Action Cards required to make the change is indicated on the table below. The vampire can end *man-bat* at any time.

MAN-BAT

Level	Action Cards Required
1	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

MESMERISM

Speed: 1

Cost: 1 Wind

Duration: Concentration

Some vampires have a hypnotic power over their victims. Pretty handy, huh? Especially when they can have the poor saps remove garlic or other items that might be difficult for the vampire to otherwise handle.

Mesmerism lets the bloodsucker make nearly irresistible suggestions to normal humans (not other undead or abominations of any sort). The vampire

must win an opposed test of *Spirit* against the target, but he gets a +1 bonus to his roll for every level he has in this power.

If he's successful, the subject carries out his instructions for as long as he maintains concentration. This power doesn't grant any special communication with the victim, so the vampire has to speak the right language and be close enough for the victim to hear him for *mesmerism* to work.

If the vampire tries to force the victim to take an obviously dangerous action, the victim immediately gets to roll the test of *Spirit* again—this time with a +4 bonus! If she's successful, she breaks the vampire's spell and is free to act for her self.

MIST FORM

Speed: Special

Cost: 2 Wind

Duration: 1 minute/*Vigor* die type

This power lets a vampire move like the wind—literally. It transforms the bloodsucker into a cloud of mist, able to pass into or out of nearly anything not airtight.

A vampire in *mist form* cannot attack, use any powers (including common ones), cast hexes, or otherwise interact with others. However, he does retain all his Mental Traits and is completely aware of the world around him.

The *mist form* moves at a Pace equal to the vampire's *Spirit* die type, and can't "run." Nor can it truly fly, and, instead, merely sinks to the ground level—or lower if possible.

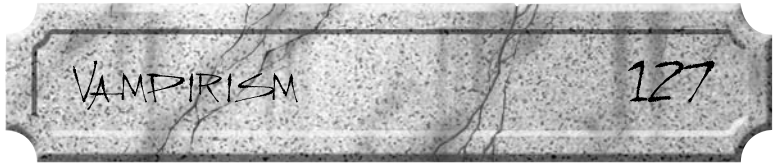
While in this form, the vampire can only be injured by a large fire (bonfire or larger), explosions, or other effects (magical or not) that affect an area. Even these attacks do only half damage to the hero. Sunlight still burns a vampire in *mist form*, but its damage is also halved.

Targeted spells—even *soul blast*—simply fail when used against a vampire in *mist form*. For obvious reasons, this is a favorite method of escape for powerful vampires.

The time required for the vampire to change to or from *mist form* is



dependent on the character's level in the power, as shown on the table below. The hero can choose to end the power before the duration expires.



Level	Action Cards Required
1	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

NO SEE'UM

Speed: 1

Cost: 1 Wind

Duration: Concentration

No, we don't mean those pesky little bugs that swarm up at dusk—although they do share a number of traits with vampires if you think about it. *No see'um* allows the vampire to cloud the minds of others to his very presence. It's not invisibility, but it's almost as good.

Once this power is activated, anyone not specifically looking for the vampire has no chance of spotting him. Someone actually looking for the vampire—or any intruder, for that matter—must win an opposed test of her *Cognition* vs. the vampire's *Spirit*. The vampire gets a +1 to this roll for every level he has in *no see'um*. Once the vampire has been spotted, he can't invoke *no see'um* again until he is out of sight of viewers.

While the power protects the vampire against casual detection, loud noises or other obvious disturbances still alert others to his presence.

SPEED

Speed: 1

Cost: 1 Wind

Duration: 1 round/*Vigor* die type

Speed lets a vampire move *fast*—scary fast. For every level the bloodsucker has in this power, he can move his full Pace on every Action Card once the power is activated. So, a vampire with 3 levels in *speed* can move three times his Pace on each and every Action he has in a round if he so chooses!

SWARM

Speed: 2

Cost: 1 Wind

Duration: Concentration

This power summons a horde of rats or bats to do the vampire's bidding. The vampire decides the type of animal he desires each time he activates the power. The animals begin arriving as soon as the power is activated.

The size of the horde depends on the vampire's level in *swarm*. The creatures fill the a radius of 5 yards per level in the power area around the vampire.

For every level in the power, the vampire can cause the animals to attack, dealing 1d6 damage to a victim within the *swarm's* area each round. If he has more than two dice with which to deal damage, he can divide these dice among multiple targets before rolling. However, each target must get at least one die—no fractional dice are allowed!

For example, a vampire with 5 levels in *swarm* can deal 5d6 damage to victims within the area of effect. He can do 3d6 to one victim and 2d6 to another, 1d6 to five different targets, or even 5d6 to a single, unlucky sod. Each round, the vampire can change the division of dice among eligible targets.

Damage is dealt on the vampire's first Action Card each round.

The *swarm* begins to disperse as soon as the vampire's concentration lapses. Damage stops immediately when the vampire releases his control, but the animals linger for a number of rounds equal to his level in *swarm*. Some vampires use this with *man-bat* as a way to cover their escape.



Level	Damage
1	1d6
2	2d6
3	3
4	2
5	1

SUPERNATURAL TRAIT

Speed: Always on

Cost: 0

Duration: Permanent

In addition to the “freebie” boost a vampire gets to some statistics just for crawling back out of the grave, some have even more enhanced Traits. This power works the same as the Harrowed power of the same name described in the *Weird West Player's Guide*. However, a vampire can raise only *Mien*, *Cognition*, and all Corporeal Traits with this power. The hero *cannot* raise the other Mental Traits with this power.

WALL CRAWL

Speed: Always on

Cost: 0

Duration: Permanent

This power allows a vampire to scamper up any surface and even upside down! A vampiric hero with *wall crawl* has no chance of failing a *climbin'* Aptitude roll to ascend or descend a wall, cliff, or whatever. The character must have at least two limbs in contact with the surface to maintain the eerie sticking effect, but he can effectively stand on the ceiling.

Each level in the power increases the vampire's *climbin'* Pace by 1. This bonus allows the character to exceed the normal limit of Pace 5 for *climbin'*.

STARTING VAMPIRES?

After reading all about these bloodsuckers, you may want to allow players to create starting vampire heroes in your campaign. Well, we'll warn you once more to consider that choice carefully—but if you are determined, here's how to go about it.

Starting vampire characters must purchase the 5-point Edge *vampire*. This gives them all the common powers (bite, healing, undeath, etc.) and weaknesses (sunlight, holy water, feeding, etc.). We advise that you also don't let them

purchase any *arcane backgrounds*. A starting vampire huckster, for example, is going to steal most of the dramatic thunder in *any* posse.

You don't have to allow beginning vampiric characters to purchase additional powers even should you decide to allow the characters in the campaign. If you do, heroes may purchase levels in additional powers at a cost of 2 character points per level. They can spend a maximum of 10 character points, divided among any two powers, in this manner.

THE DARK SIDE

That's it for the posse-types. This last section is for the Marshal's eyes only. If you're a player and your Marshal has been generous to let you peek back into this chapter to take a look at the rules on lycanthropy and vampirism, read no further!

OTHER ARCANA

Lycanthropy and vampirism are unlikely to impede most of the *arcane backgrounds*. Certain magics may have unique effects when applied to a werewolf or vampire—for example, none of the healing spells, hexes, or favors are going to help a vampire.

You can really make a case either way for limiting the arcana if you want, however. After all, the spirits might not want to speak to a shaman who turns into a ravaging wolf-thing from time to time, and the Heavenly Powers may be a little reluctant to help out a bloodsucking blessed.

Since so many possible combinations exist, we're going to leave those decisions in your capable hands, Marshal—with one exception. The blessed need a little extended discussion.

SINNIN'

At first glance, it might seem to put a hero's soul in jeopardy with the Powers That Be to be running around sprouting fur or drinking blood. Surprisingly, The mere condition of lycanthropy or vampirism isn't, in itself, considered a sin by most religions.

However, what the hero does while in that condition might very well constitute a major or even mortal transgression if the cowpoke is religious.

If the lycanthrope or vampire is a blessed, or otherwise subject to the *sinnin'* rules, you're going to have to make the calls on this one, Marshal. Drinking a human's blood is *always* a serious offense; sometimes even an animal qualifies depending on the religion. Whether or not you want to make the lycanthrope suffer penalties for what he does during the periods of the full moon is up to you—but a *really* pious individual would probably take precautions to protect the innocent.

Of course, *sinnin'* may be least of a blessed's problems if he becomes a vampire. It can be danged inconvenient to not be able to touch your own consecrated weapon or walk on holy ground that you sanctified.

CORRUPTION REVISITED

Now, just so you don't think there aren't any teeth to back up the vague notions we've been referring to about the price of lycanthropic or vampiric power, lets talk about Corruption.

When vampire and werewolf heroes invoke their special powers, they pick up Corruption points, as detailed before. Here's the lowdown on what those points do.

LYCANTHROPIC CORRUPTION

Once a lycanthrope hero accumulates as many Corruption points as her *Spirit* die type, she's on the verge of becoming a real monster. She gains the Hindrance *ugly as sin*. Hair begins to grow on her palms, her eyebrows gradually grow together, her teeth lengthen, and so on as she becomes almost bestial in appearance.

For every Corruption point over her *Spirit* die type, she gains a Hindrance from the following list: *big britches*, *bloodthirsty*, *grim servant o' death*, *impulsive*, *mean as a rattler*, and *night terrors*. If she's already got one of these, tough luck—she can't choose it a second time.

These don't appear overnight. Rather they begin to manifest slowly as soon as the hero gains that crucial Corruption point. For example, a lycanthropic hero might begin to gradually grow hair on her palms, her eyebrows slowly meld into one, her eye-teeth lengthen, and so on when she picks up *ugly as sin*.

These Hindrances can be bought off normally (at double cost), though doing this often is going to be a serious drain on Bounty Points. However, *ugly as sin* cannot be bought off in this manner; only by reducing Corruption points below her *Spirit* die allows the lycanthrope to regain her looks.

Once the hero has accumulated *all* of the Hindrances listed above, she's willingly made herself a servant of the Reckoners. Take the character sheet and explain to the player that the hero just became the villain. By her own hand, no less. Don't worry about tracking Corruption after this—she's a full-blown abomination.

VAMPIRIC CORRUPTION

Vampires have a tougher row to hoe as far as Corruption goes. It's only fair—they're full-time, blood-sucking monsters!

Once a vampire garners Corruption points exceed his *Spirit* die type, he's on the verge of becoming an inhuman abomination. Each Corruption point above his *Spirit* die type means one less Fate Chip at the beginning of a session. For example, at one above his *Spirit*, he only draws two Fate Chips (unless he has *luck o' the Irish* or a similar ability to gain extra Fate Chips).

Once the vampire's Corruption reaches four points above his *Spirit* die, he has reached the point of no return. As with the lycanthrope, he's become a monster and you should take the character sheet. You've got another villain to throw at the posse—one that probably knows most of the other heroes' secrets and weaknesses!



"YOU SAW NOTHING."

"YOU HEARD
NOTHING."

"WE WERE NEVER
HERE."

THE AGENCY

WHO SAYS GOOD GUYS
WEAR WHITE HATS?

SPRING 2000