

CRAWLING UNDER A BROKEN MOON



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CRAWLING UNDER A BROKEN MOON

Welcome to the Sixteenth Issue of Crawling Under A Broken Moon!

MONSTERS!!!!!!!!!! Like I said in issue #10, I love monsters. I have been looking forward to doing another all monster issue and *here it is!!!*

For me, the selection of monsters in an RPG helps me grok the intended setting much more than any amount of world info or cultural explanations. That is why *every* issue so far has a at least one Twisted Menagerie monster in it.

Without further ado, here is a fresh hoard of abominable assailants for your campaign!

Reid "Reidzilla" San Filippo

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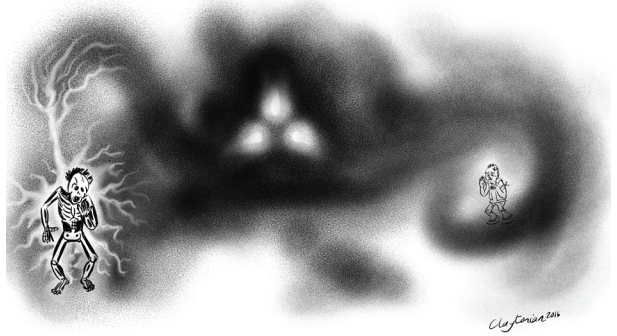
The Black Cloud

By Kevin Searle

Black Cloud: Init +2; Atk suffocating smog +5 melee (2d4) or radioactive lightning bolt +5 missile fire (2d10, 30'); AC 16; HD 6d8+3; MV 30; Act 2d20; SP immune to mundane physical attacks; SV Fort +5, Ref -3, Will +5; AL C.

The Black Cloud is a sentient, billowing mass of choking smog and pollution. It pours forth across the blighted coasts and once-thriving industrial zones of ancient America. The center of this unlikely creature is a single, glowing red core powered by discarded nuclear waste surrounding it by a 15' to 30' radius. It seeks vengeance against the descendants of those who unwittingly created it during the peak of their civilization. The Black Cloud does this by either engulfing and suffocating its victims or shocking its enemies with radioactive, crimson lightning bolts.

Confrontations with a Black Cloud usually result in death for those unlucky enough to engage one. It is impossible to destroy, unless its attacker uses an energy or sonic weapon. The gray haze of a Cloud is generally impervious to damage - the pulsing core itself must be destroyed or contained in order to defeat it.



Adventure Hooks

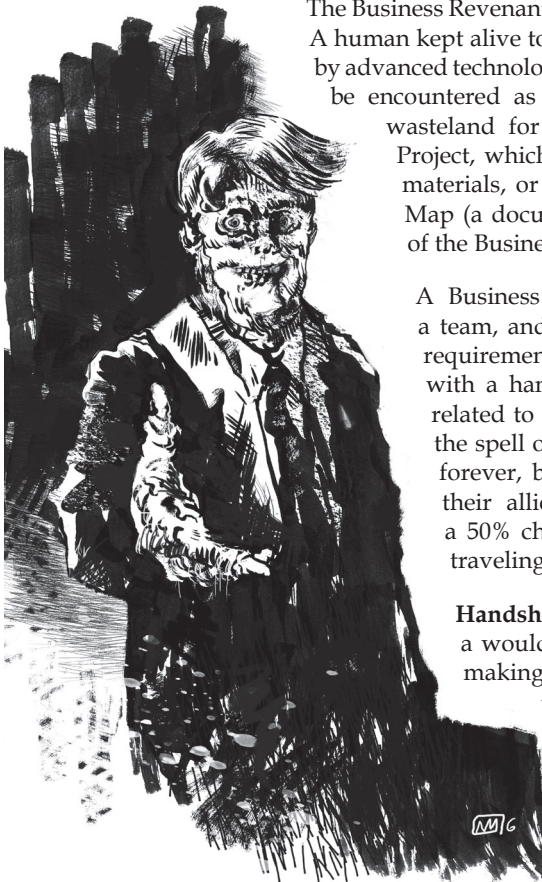
- ▶ The party stumbles on an abandoned, yet pristine, research facility of the ancients. There are no signs of life - just the malfunctioning robots guarding and tending the labs and its secrets. As dusk approaches, a dark fog rolls in and the real resident returns!
- ▶ A war mage has discovered the location of a Black Cloud and desires its nuclear core for use in his latest doomsday device. The players, owing the sorcerer as part of a previous bargain, are tasked with retrieving it alive.
- ▶ Resting in a meager village after their latest exploits, the locals inform the group that some residents have been turning up dead every morning either charred and blackened or as if they choked on the air they breathed.
- ▶ A wizard the party has befriended tells of a rival war mage looking to complete the doomsday weapon he has been constructing. In order to stop the mage from completing his nefarious goal, the friendly wizard asks the group to stop his rival's minions from retrieving "the heart of a black cloud".

Business Revenant *By Jon Carnes*

"Oppppppptimization....., must find process mappppppp, must compleeeete project."

Business Revenant (Undead Project Manager): Init -1; Atk Briefcase Bash +4 (1d6 +2), Handshake (See below), Confer Belt (see below); AC 12; HD 4d8+4; MV 25; Act 1d20; SP Single-Minded Devotion; SV Fort +4, Ref -2, Will +6; AL Lawful.

Team Member (Hypnotized Entourage): Init-3; atk: Club +3 d4 +1 damage, AC 11, HD 2d8+2, MV 30, Act 1d20, SV fort +1, Ref -1 Wil +1, AI: Lawful



The Business Revenant is a creature from the distant past. A human kept alive to complete a long forgotten project by advanced technology. A Business Revenant will likely be encountered as it searches across the American wasteland for what it needs to complete The Project, which could be team members, project materials, or the holiest of holies, The Process Map (a document describing the entire course of the Business Revenant's project).

A Business Revenant prefers working with a team, and will gather people based on the requirements of The Project, infecting mortals with a handshake, or by giving them titles related to colored belts. Those caught under the spell of a Business Revenant are not lost forever, but will require serious help from their allies for deprogramming. There is a 50% chance that a Business Revenant is traveling with 2d7 team members.

Handshake: The Business Revenant grabs a would-be Project Member by the hand, making a melee attack at +4. If this hits, the individual targeted must make a DC 16 will save as radioactive mind control nanites course through their body, or fall under the Business Revenant's control, as per the Charm Person spell (DCC rule book, pg 131, result level 15), for 1 turn. A character

under the sway of the Revenant feels as though he or she is part of something greater, and temporarily views The Project with religious fervor.

Bestow Belt: The Business Revenant grabs a colored belt from their briefcase, and bestows it on the strongest willed individual nearby (as determined by the individual with the highest personality). The belt acts as a receiver for radio

commands, and is difficult to remove, requiring a DC 15 strength roll to remove. If an individual is unwilling, they can resist this attack with a DC 15 reflex save as they attempt to wriggle away.

Roll d7 for color of belt and consult the table below. Typically the Business Revenant attempts to bestow belts upon individuals who are already hypnotized by the handshake attack. Note, an individual under the spell of a handshake is considered willing for the purpose of this attack.

- White** The individual will complete 1 word commands, Will save every 2 hours, subject gains +1 to fort saves while under the effects
- Blue** The individual will complete 1 word commands, Will save every 6 hours, subject gains +1 to fort saves while under the effects
- Black** The individual will complete 1 sentence commands Will save every 2 hours, subject gains +2 to fort saves while under the effects
- Red** The individual will complete 1 sentence commands, Will save every 6 hours, subject gains +2 to fort saves and requires no food while under the effects,
- Green** The individual will complete complex commands, Will saves every 4 hours, subject gains +2 to fort saves, and requires neither food nor rest while under the effects
- Orange** The individual will complete complex commands, Will saves per 12 hours to break free. The subject requires neither food, sleep, nor rest, gains +2 to all saving throws, and the ability to regenerate one hit point per turn while under the effect of the belt.
- Purple** The individual has completely bought into the process map, and will become a fully fledged Business Revenant at the end of the next quarter (full moon), and must be rescued by allies before then. Prior to that transformation, the subject gains all the benefits of entry 6

Single Minded Devotion: The Business Revenant can push itself beyond the breaking point in the pursuit of The Project. If the Business Revenant is actively pursuing project related goals, it will likely reform after being destroyed. When a Business Revenant is destroyed through normal means, roll a fortitude save, DC 14. If the Revenant passes, it will reform within d5 turns. If the business Revenant beats a 19 on the Fortitude save, it will reform in d5 rounds, but at ½ health. The Business Revenant can be totally destroyed with banishment, immolation in a volcano, or with advanced energy weapons, per the discretion of the judge.

The Project : The Project is left intentionally vague in this text to give leeway to the judge. The project originated with a corporate or government body, and had a national or even international scope. This could be a massive corporate training and documentation project, a shady military contract, or perhaps even the production of a film. Either way, the Business Revenant doesn't know the whole picture, and acts with single-minded devotion to an incomplete vision. Below is a table with several reasons for the business revenant to be present.

Why is the Business Revenant Here? Roll 1d7:

- 1 Required project material, such as tech or raw materials
- 2 Clue about process map location
- 3 Recruiting general team members
- 4 One of the PCs shares a genetic link to a former team member
- 5 One of the PCs looks like a former team member
- 6 The Process map is in this general vicinity (the Business Revenant will be there with 4d4 "team members," if this is the case.)
- 7 Business retreat, the Business Revenant is hiding out in a sanctuary to self-repair. There is a 50% chance that this retreat is a team building exercise with 2d5 team members, and a 10% chance that another Business Revenant is present.

Adventure hooks

- ▶ One of the PCs, or a close acquaintance has been belted by a Business Revenant. They can only be free of this burden if they assist the revenant in the completion of the next step of its project (see table above).
- ▶ 4 days ago, a team of scavengers returned to the nearest settlement with tales of a treasure trove of ancient tech inside a building that had been previously buried in rubble. The scavengers mention a glowing display in one of the central chambers which lights the ceiling, showing boxes, arrows and old pre-war writing. This is the original process map, and several rival Business Revenants will soon be converging on it. Will the PCs steal the tech for themselves in the face of an approaching wave of Revenants?
- ▶ A mysterious stranger has been cosplaying as a Business Revenant in order to keep people away from some primo scrounge materials. Inevitably, he opens up the wrong Vault, releasing a long trapped Business Revenant who gives him a purple belt and send him to town to gather townsfolk to dig. The digging releases more Team Members who work together on the next leg of the project.

Cihuateteo *By Sean Ellis*



Cihuateteo: Init +1; Atk claw +3 melee (1d4 plus Convulse Foe) or Cognitive Distortion (Special, see below; range 30', twice a day); AC 10; HD 2d6; hp: 7; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP Convulse Foe (DC 12 Fort save else -2 to saves, attacks, AC for 1d4 rounds due to seizure), Undead traits: half damage from piercing and slashing weapons and immunity to poisons and disease, Resist Turning (considered 4 HD for purposes of turning attempts); SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.

**Cognitive Distortion: When a Cihuateteo attempts to imprint Cognitive Distortion on a mortal brain, the target is allowed a DC 14 Reflex save to avoid. Failure means that the controlling player must make a Luck Check before rolling Initiative or a Skill Check. Unless the Luck Check is passed the character is unable to act due to fear, distraction, or any insane behavior the character chooses to roleplay.*

Cihuateteo is the name given by superstitious barbarians in the lands south of Umerica to corpses reanimated by a faulty nanovirus developed in the 21st century. Characters that suffer damage from both the Cihuateteo's claw and Cognitive Distortion attack must make a DC 10 Will save. Failure means that the character is a carrier of the mystic disease and will become a Cihuateteo themselves in 27.3 days unless the nanovirus is purged from the blood. Each day for the next two weeks, persons in close contact must make a DC 5 Fort save to see if the nanovirus invades their bodies. Failure means the person will become a carrier as well. Being both a technologic and arcane disease, magical means of healing is half as effective (4 dice for a cleric to heal). But most Technologists could whip up a cure if brought the proper gear from a crumbling medical facility...

The Cihuateteo appear as normal human men and women when first encountered, though when the nanobots are ready to replicate the creature's bones exude a pale blue light, causing them to appear as wan skeletons, while surgically sharp talons rise from their fingertips. When a Cihuateteo has infected a host with a successful strike, she then attempts Cognitive Distortion to protect her victim from harm while the virus gestates. This attack is a wireless transmission that is coded into a ray of the same pale light that illuminates their skeleton.

Each nanobot is essentially a technomagic monster, created in much the same way as Owlbears and Orcs were long ago. As such, the bots view themselves as members of a greater community whose only long term goals are propagation and survival. This esprit de corps does not transfer to other artificial life or undead, whom they view as rather pointless. Humanity and other Cihuateteo are all that matter. Cihuateteo think in terms of project goals: find host, infect host, protect host, repeat. Cihuateteo are therefore very team oriented. They tend to work in packs and are rarely found alone. There is also a strange quirk in their biology that enables them to occasionally socialize with other races. When a new host has been transformed into a Cihuateteo, there is a space of time where the creature does not have the reserves to infect a new host. This is when they are often sighted on roadsides at night, and where their sinister reputation as kidnappers and seducers comes from. In any case, Cihuateteo do tend to lure prey into intimate situations before attacking, as the victim is thus unarmed, unarmored, and usually taken by surprise.

Adventure Hooks:

- ▶ A group of beautiful men or women are found picking through a ruined campsite. They claim to have recently been robbed. Perhaps the adventurers could share a bedroll for the night?
- ▶ An important NPC is acting strangely: laughing when they should be working, refusing to complete simple tasks, etc. As time passes, more and more are displaying the same symptoms. Perhaps the characters are successful in curing the psychosis, but are they able to detect and destroy the underlying nanovirus before the entire population emerges as Cihuateteo?
- ▶ A Cihuateteo is discovered in whatever ruins the characters are currently investigating. In a strangely peaceful mood, she is only interested in talking. Perhaps she has some useful information or a riddle. Any boorish company will likely be blasted with Cognitive Distortion, perhaps without their teammates being aware, making for an interesting situation during the next combat encounter!

Data Elemental

Data Elemental: Init +8; Atk slam +10 melee (2d6) or info drain +12 missile (1d6 temp Int damage, range 30 feet); AC 16; HD 8d8, 12d8, or 16d8; MV 60'; Act 3d20; SP phase, hack, elemental traits; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +12; AL N.



A Data Elemental appears as a human shaped cloud of lines of programming code and compressed information. Unless directly summoned, these info-beings live on the plane of Eternal Memory or dwell in the hardware of ancient, pre-cataclysm computer network servers that are still running.

As there is very little physical substance to a Data Elemental, they can easily pass through solid objects, unless that object holds any sort of electrical or magnetic charge. Coming in direct contact with electrical current will cause 3d8 damage per round to the Data Elemental. Even touching an object that holds or passes significant current (120+ volts) will cause 1d8 damage. Strong magnets will also cause 1d8 damage on contact.

Due to their unique nature, they can quickly access nearly any data from a non-sentient computer system. When attempting to access an intelligent system, they are +10 to all hacking attempts. They can even attempt to access a living person's memories, reflected in their info drain attack. What purpose the Data Elementals have for this data is unknown but scientists conjecture that it may be their food source or be vital to reproduction.

Like all elementals, the Data Elemental is virtually defenseless against its opposite. Unfortunately for the Data Elemental, it has two such foes, the turbulent Lightning Para-elemental, native to the area between the plane of Elemental Air and the realm of Empyrean Dynamics, and the attractive Magnetism Para-elemental, native to the area between the plane of Elemental Earth and the realm of Empyrean Dynamics.

Adventure Hooks

- ▶ While traveling, the group falls victim to a large sinkhole that takes them into a yet unplundered underground military facility with a functioning power source. While attempting to gain access to the still running computer network, they discover another unearthly plunderer.
- ▶ At a wasteland trade oasis, the party is approached by a very nervous robot that will pay handsomely for protection. Other than stating that it is being pursued, the robot will not speak of what is hunting it.
- ▶ After looting a dangerous techno-ruin, the party receives an unpleasant surprise when they power up the fancy computer system they salvaged there.

Demolishroom



Demolishroom (colossal fungus beast): Init -2; Atk slam +15 melee (5d8); AC 19; HD 16d10+20; MV 60'; Act 3d20; SP spine spore spray, damage reduction; SV Fort +12, Ref -2, Will +6; AL N.

Shroomanoids (small fungus humanoids): Init +1; Atk club +1 melee (1d4+rot); AC 11; HD 1d5; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP confusing giggles, rotting touch; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2; AL N.

Considered another "favored" creation of Grokk, the Demolishroom is an enormous multi limbed fungi that seems to exist only to roam the land aimlessly and to destroy any building structures more sophisticated than a shanty, cabin, or yurt. Many of the ruins of the ancient great cities were caused by these beasts well after the cataclysm.

In combat, should the giant fungi suffer more than 30hp of damage in any one round it will unleash a terrible swarm of spiny spores in all directions the next round. Anyone within 50 feet must make a Ref save (DC 13) to find cover or suffer 4d4 damage and make a Luck roll for each metal or plastic item they are currently wearing or carrying. Failure means the spores will begin to quickly corrode the item, causing it be destroyed in 2d4 turns.

Due to its massive, fibrous body the Demolishroom ignores the first 1d4 points of damage from all non-magical or energy based attack. Also, it uses the Giant critical table. Fire attacks cause double damage to Demolishrooms.

If slain, the Demolishroom's body will explode in a cloud of fungus spores 2d14 hours later, unless burned. Anyone within 2000 feet of the explosion must make a Fort save (DC 12) or develop a fungal infection in their lungs, causing

1d3+1 permanent Sta damage. The 2000 foot area around the burst corpse will quickly sprout a plethora of rare and potent fungi over the next few days. If left undisturbed, the fungi grove has a 33% chance of sprouting a Zmooph colony (CUaBM #10, pg 27) within 1d3 months.

Shroomanoids

The giant fungi is not actually a solitary creature but a symbiotic home to dozens of other small fungi beings known as Shroomanoids. 3d3 rounds after the Demolishroom encounters melee combatants or a site it wants to destroy, 1d4+2 Shroomanoids will emerge and either gather up any easily obtained fresh organic matter or, if there are no easy pickings, will attack the nearest living creature. Additional Shroomanoids will appear each round until a number of them equal to the Demolishroom's original hit points divided by 5 have emerged (i.e. 110hp means 22 Shroomanoids). They will continue attacking and gathering until their home is killed or the Demolishroom begins moving away from the area.

The Shroomanoids are much deadlier than they appear as if 3 or more are present they can giggle as a free action, causing anyone within 20 feet that does not make a Will save (DC 11) to suffer vertigo and hallucinations. The affected person suffers a -2 to all actions and has a 25% chance of accidentally targeting a random ally instead of an enemy with every attack they make. The effect will end 1d4 rounds after the giggling ceases.

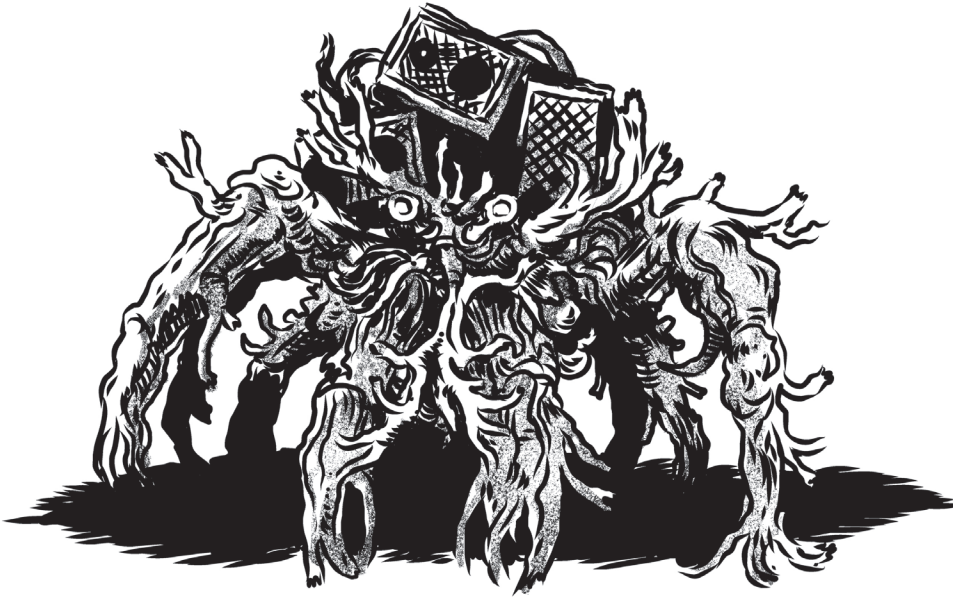
In addition, any successful club attack against a living creature requires it to make a Fort save (DC 8) or contract a rotting virus that the Shroomanoids use to break down organic matter placed in the Demolishroom's "stomach cave". Those afflicted will lose 1 Str & 1 Sta every 6 hours as their flesh begins decomposing until they are dead. Anyone touching an afflicted person, even after death, will have to make the save as well. The attribute damage caused by this effect will not heal naturally and can only be restored by magic or advanced medical treatment.

Should their home be killed, all of the Shroomanoids will flee in a random direction. Should even one escape there is a chance that it will travel deep into the wilds and grow into a new Demolishroom in a year's time.

Adventure Hooks

- ▶ Loaded down with loot, the party is enjoying the available pleasures in a prosperous reclamation mining community. Their revelry is brought to an end by a walking disaster lumbering towards the community.
- ▶ The group receives a frantic, staticy radio message from their home community. Due to distance, the message is hard to make out but the words "giant monster", "help", and "stealing the dead" can be clearly understood.
- ▶ As the party follows a map to a large city-ruin they took from a scavenger, they come upon a massive scene of destruction where the city was supposed to be. Standing in the middle of the wreckage is an immense creature working to knock down the few remaining buildings.

Frab



Frab (filching vegetable crustacean): Init -2; Atk claw +3 melee (2d4) or throw fruit-grenade +5 (see below); AC 16; HD 3d5; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP thief skills, explosive fruit, addicted to vibrations; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1; AL C.

The Frab is a man-sized, robber crab-like plant creature with a crusty carapace that easily blends into natural surroundings. Dangling from its undershell are 3d4 spiky yellowish green fruits the size of grapefruit. Below their large grasping claws are several smaller fine manipulation claws that it usually keeps concealed against its thorax near its fruit growths.

The fruit-like growths are highly explosive when removed from their shell-stems. They act as grenades (see CUaBM #2, pg 12); Damage Die: d6, Blast Range: 10ft. It is possible to harvest them from a fresh Frab corpse (DC 15, failure results in an explosion, Ref save DC 12 to throw it away in time). Harvested fruit-grenades will stay fresh (i.e. explosive) for 2 weeks.

If a Frab fumbles throwing a fruit-grenade, there is a 33% chance it will explode at point black range under the Frab instead of rolling on the fumble table. Also, there is a 10% chance that any critical hit scored on a Frab will set off one of the fruit-grenades. If a fruit-grenade detonation, or any other type of explosive, inflicts damage on a Frab that still has unpicked fruit-grenades, there is a 15% chance per fruit that it will explode as well. Thus, a melee critical scored on a Frab with a ripe bunch of unpicked fruit-grenades can result in a multiple explosion massacre, especially if other Frabs are caught in the blast radius.

Natural robbers, all Frab have the following Thief skills:

Backstab	+1	Sneak silently	+5
Hide in shadows	+3	Pick pocket	+3
Climb sheer surfaces	+8	Pick lock	+3
Find trap	+3	Disable trap	+3

All Frabs are very sensitive to vibrations and enjoy them quite a bit. They have enough of an understanding of electronics to wire up simple devices to batteries so as to create the vibrations they crave. Their favorite device to pilfer is woofers from speakers of all types. Most Frab caves will be lined with as many woofers as they can power. Also, magical or technological persuasion or control attempts involving vibrations gain +2 die steps against Frabs.

While not the best of conversationalists, Frabs will make simple deals or trades with other creatures for woofers and strong batteries. This includes offering safely harvested fruit-grenades or electrical devices that do not vibrate enough to be interesting.

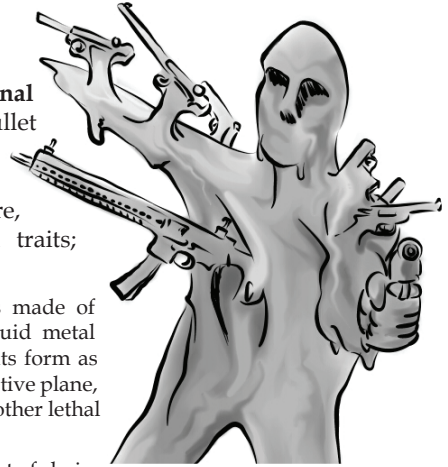
Adventure Hooks

- ▶ The group comes upon a heavily fortified junkyard controlled by a well armed family. They offer valuable parts and safe lodging as a reward for finding a group of thieves that have been pilfering their stores.
- ▶ The party is acting as caravan guards for a truck convoy traveling between large communities. An otherwise dull night of guarding the camp during a layover is interrupted by cries of "THIEF" coming from the mechanist's truck.
- ▶ The group wakes up to find their vehicle and non-personal tech thoroughly stripped of all electronics, motors, and speakers. A trail of odd prints leads into the wastes in the direction of a large rock outcropping.

Gun Elemental

Gun Elemental (native to the plane of Eternal War): Init +4; Atk slam +8 melee (4d4) or bullet barrage +10 missile (4d8, range 200 feet); AC 20; HD 8d8, 12d8, or 16d8; MV 30'; Act 1d20 or 2d20; SP Immune to gunfire, absorb firearms, stray bullets, elemental traits; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +8; AL N.

Gun elementals are roughly humanoid beings made of dozens of firearms sprouting from a dark, liquid metal skin. The firearms eerily flow and shift within its form as the creature moves. Little is known about their native plane, the Eternal War, but one can only imagine what other lethal horrors dwell there.



In combat, the gun elemental will face its opponent of choice and begin unleashing a torrent of bullets in single minded determination until the target is dead. Only then will it pick a new target. While the majority of its "active" guns will be pointed at its current target, many of the other firearms that make up its body will fire randomly in every direction for the duration of the combat. Anyone within 100 feet of an attacking gun elemental must roll under their Luck attribute each round using a d16 or be struck by a stray bullet for 1d8 damage.

Should the gun elemental be reduced to less than 50% of its total hp, it can absorb any firearms it can touch as an action. This will restore a number of hit points equal to the damage rating of the firearm (i.e. a pistol that causes 1d6 damage would heal the gun elemental 1d6 hp). The maximum number of firearms it can absorb per round is equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ of its hit dice. It cannot exceed its original full hp total in this way.

The gun elemental is immune to damage from all non-magical, non-explosive projectiles. In fact, it will recover 1 hp for every successful firearm attack made against it. It is aware of this and will always move towards the greatest volume of gunfight aimed at it. It is possible to lure it in this manner.

Upon its death, its body may be pillaged during the 2d3 rounds before it returns to its home plane. There is a 20% chance each round that either 1d3 perfect condition firearms, each fully loaded with ammo, or 4d10+10 bullets/shells of a random type can be retrieved from the corpse.

Like all elementals, the gun elemental is virtually defenseless against its opposite, the Mercy Elemental native to the plane of Unending Tranquility.

Adventure Hooks

- ▶ Returning home after a successful ruin pillaging, the party finds the road blocked by a standoff between two local communities. It appears that the forces are evenly matched until a massive amount of gunfire erupts in the middle of one side, mowing down the majority of their troops in short order.
- ▶ The group has been paid a large sum to track down the raiders that decimated an ally's trade oasis with a massive hail of gunfire. Following a wandering path of carnage through the wastes, they find many clues that it is not a band of psychopathic raiders that they are following.
- ▶ With a maniacal laugh, the xeno-genie gladly agrees to fulfill the party's wish for an "endless supply of bullets" and then disappears in a sizeable cloud of silvery nanite-mist. As the mist clears they see something standing where the alien trickster vanished from.

Lion Snakes

Lion Snake (mutant predator): Init +4; Atk bite +7 melee (3d4+3) or constrict +5 melee (1d7+grapple); AC 18; HD 4d8; MV 40'; Act 1d20+1d16(constrict only); SP pack tactics, ambush, roar, hide & sneak +6; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4; AL N.

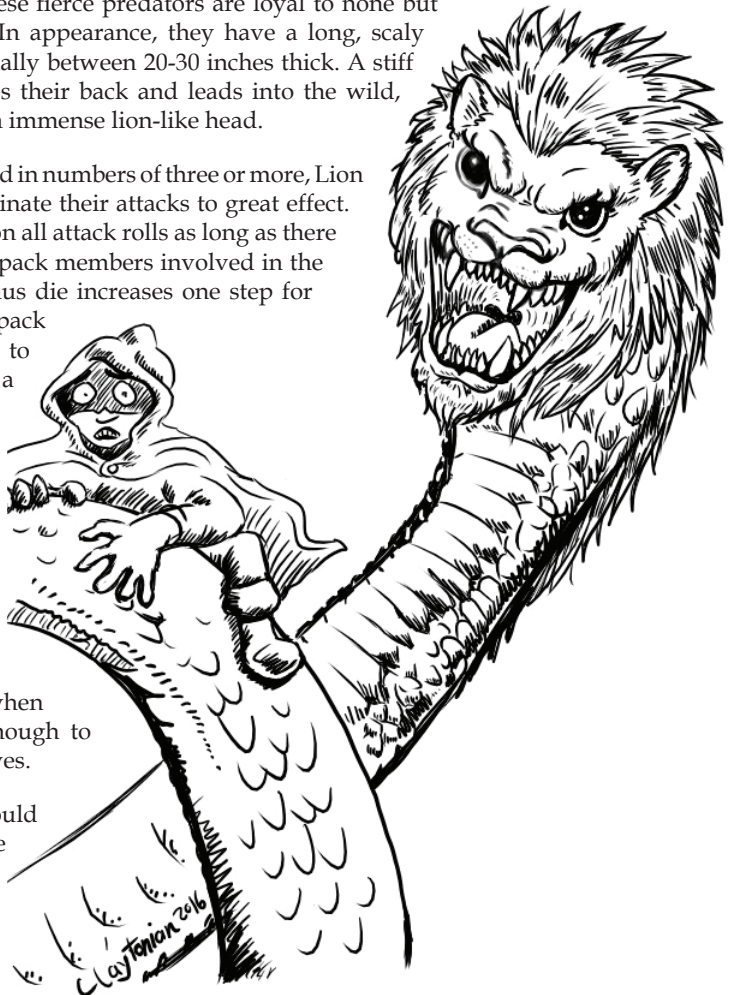
Lion Snake Cub: Init +1; Atk bite +4 melee (1d4+2) or constrict +2 melee (1d3+grapple); AC 13; HD 1d8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP pack tactics, ambush, hide & sneak +3; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

Two-headed Lion Snake: Init +4; Atk bite +10 melee (3d4+4) or constrict +8 melee (1d7+grapple); AC 18; HD 6d8; MV 40'; Act 2d20+1d16(constrict only); SP ambush, roar, rend, hide & sneak +8, further mutation; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +6; AL N.

Equally claimed by the clergy of both sects to be the creation of either Grokk or Mother Nuka, these fierce predators are loyal to none but their own pack. In appearance, they have a long, scaly serpent body usually between 20-30 inches thick. A stiff ridge of hair lines their back and leads into the wild, bushy mane of an immense lion-like head.

When encountered in numbers of three or more, Lion Snakes can coordinate their attacks to great effect. They gain a +d3 on all attack rolls as long as there are at least three pack members involved in the combat. This bonus die increases one step for every additional pack member present, to a maximum of a +d6 for six pack members. It is rare for a pack to have more than six adult members as the young are encouraged to leave the pack and seek their own fortune when they are large enough to hunt for themselves.

Able hunters, should a pack be aware of unsuspecting prey and have at least a turn to utilize their



expert stealth they may set up an ambush and lie in wait until the perfect moment to strike. If the prey has not detected the imminent attack, the pack gains a +1 die step to all attacks during the surprise round. This is in addition to their coordinated attack bonus above if applicable.

Any target entrapped by the Lion Snake's constrict attack will suffer the listed damage at the end of each round until they have broken free from the grapple (DCC rulebook, pg 96). They must also make an Agi check (DC10) each round or drop whatever they are holding in their hands.

The roar of a Lion Snake is a unsettling peal of raw bass fury with undertones of a gravelly hiss that can be heard for miles. Anyone within 100 feet of a roaring Lion Snake must make a Will save (DC 14) or hastily flee for the next 1d3 turns. Prey animals will suffer a -4 penalty to this save. Lion Snakes rarely employ this in combat unless the battle is going very poorly for the pack.

There are stories of an even larger, more deadly cousin of the Lion Snake that has two heads. Thankfully these anomalies are solitary hunters as they are more than lethal on their own. Their dual roar has all of the properties of a normal Lion Snake with the additional effect of causing 2d6 damage to anyone within a 30ft wide, 60ft long cone, Ref save (DC 11) for half damage.

If a two-headed Lion Snake successfully strikes the same man-sized target with bite attacks from both heads on the same round, the beast will hold the victim fast in its double jaws. Then it will use both heads to mercilessly pull and twist with all of its might, causing an additional 2d8 damage. Should the victim survive, they will be tossed aside at the end of the round and they cannot act until the end of next round, due to pain and disorientation.

There is also a 25% chance that any two-headed Lion Snake has an additional mutation. Roll on the Hybridization Mutation tables (CUaBM #2, pg 4-6) to determine the nature of the mutation.

Adventure Hooks

- ▶ The "perfect" campsite the party has settled into is unfortunately right in the middle of a local pack of Lion Snake's hunting grounds.
- ▶ The group is paid to find out what happened to a small caravan of Shroomer ranchers. While investigating the wreckage of the caravan, the pack ambushes them.
- ▶ A brush fire near a small water farming community drives a pack of Lion Snakes into their settlement. It is a good thing the party is currently resting up at the community's tavern, or is it?

Organic Data MULE (Mobile Ubiquitous LAN Extension)

By Anna Costa with ideas from Claytonian

Organic Data MULEs are unnaturally-occurring animals with vast swathes of information encoded into their very DNA. Breathing reliquaries of the ancients, MULEs often harbor precious libraries of pre-cataclysm data, imperfectly preserved or corrupted through generations of breeding. MULEs may appear as any mundane species, but are exotically differentiated by a host of signature mutations. Few wasteland factions know of their existence; even fewer possess the means to reverse-engineer the technology – yet it can be done.



Table ODM-1: Types of Data Found in MULEs (Roll d10)

A wide variety of information may be secreted away in living MULEs (the following are simply examples). Parsing MULE data involves sequencing the genome in an operational laboratory, then running the compiler program spoken of in rare instances of surviving MULE literature. Due to the nature of DNA duplication, data can be partially or wholly corrupted.

1	Schematics for a wide variety of Era 3 and Era 4 weaponry. Possessing this data grants +3 to weapon tinkering and gunsmithing.	6	Genetic ark containing the genomes of thousands of extinct, pre-cataclysm species: insects, animals, and plants.
2	Three-dimensional models of artificial limbs and organs; made for use with advanced rapid prototype printers.	7	Installation files for a primitive virtual world of sword and sorcery; gameplay is simple, but psychologically addicting.
3	Consciousness of tens of thousands of people stored as strings of code. Individuals could feasibly be exhumed from this digital afterlife.	8	Treatise on temporal measurement. Discusses ancient art of timekeeping; provides instructions for atomic clocks; hints at time travel technology.
4	Map detailing locations of bunkers and safe houses across Umerica; stocked with undisturbed supplies, technology, etc.	9	30,000 ancient digital missives revealing the crooked hypocrisy of a long-dead politician; amusing, but useless.
5	Several dozen experimental formulas for reversing the effects of mutation. Requires a functional laboratory.	10	The national library of an extinct nation state. A boon of information in myriad languages, many indecipherable.

Saddled with hundreds of thousands of duplicate genes, the genome of a MULE is more diverse than a human's by a factor of twenty. All these redundant genes possess a unique plasticity, enabling a wide range of mutations in response to environmental conditions. Neck-teeth to discourage predators, eyestalks granting superior sight, bony plates shielding vulnerable areas: the ancients engineered MULEs for adaptive survivability. Those eager to uncover or document a strain of MULE may hunt for tell-tale anomalies (see Table ODM-2 for more information). Occasionally, humans were used as MULEs by shadowy patrons or organizations. Some of these organizations survived the cataclysm, protected in deep underground bunkers and extra-terrestrial hideaways. Perhaps a mutant PC is descended from such stock!

Table ODM-2: Base Mutation Table (Roll d%)

The amount of data a MULE (or herd of MULEs) carries in its DNA correlates directly to level of mutation. Judges are encouraged to create mutations or edit existing ones.

1-25	1-25% data capacity; roll once each on Fortification mutation table(s).
26-50	26-50% data capacity; roll once each on Fortification, Physiology mutation table(s).
51-75	51-75% data capacity; roll once each on Fortification, Physiology, Instability mutation table(s).
76-100	76-100% data capacity; roll once each on Fortification, Physiology, Instability, Weaponization mutation table(s).

1 or 100: Mule at empty or full data capacity; in addition to above, roll once on table of choice until unique result is achieved.

ODM-2a: Fortification Subtable (Roll d4)

1	Armored Plate - Patches of bony plate (scaly or smooth) defend beast's vulnerable areas; AC+2 and -5 move
2	Suffocating Slime - When skin is pierced, beast's pores rapidly ooze a thick, mucous compound; SP half damage from slicing and piercing weapons
3	Neck-Teeth - Bony spikes wreath beast's throat and spine, deterring predators; AC +2, opponents making unarmed and natural attacks suffer 1d4 damage
4	Death Coma - On command, beast suspends metabolic processes beyond point of clinical death; non-responsive to external stimuli for up to one hour

ODM-2b: Physiology Subtable (Roll d4)

1	Glass Form - Musculature and organs are barely visible beneath beast's translucent, non-reflective skin; +3 to hide when standing still (+4 in direct sunlight)
2	Eye Stalks - Highly articulated eyestalks grant beast superior sight and (like a slug) superior smell; +5 to track by smell, +1d5 to initiative rolls
3	Vegetization - Symbiotic fungi and flowers blossom thickly across beast's hide; beast only requires water when exposed to 5+ hours sunlight daily, SP half damage from bludgeoning weapons
4	Natatorial - Possessing both lungs and gills, this amphibious beast is equally at home hunting on land or in water; +5 swim checks, +15 swim move speed

ODM-2c: Instability Subtable (Roll d4)

1	Expanded Mind - Remarkably intelligent, beast masters commands with ease and comprehends most speech; understands up to two languages
2	Dynamic Camouflage - Rapidly altering coloration ensures beast is exceedingly difficult to track against any backdrop; +2d4 to hide, moving or still
3	Rapid Regeneration - Due to rapid cellular regeneration, beast's broken bones and wounds mend at alarming rate; SP gains 1d3 hit points per turn when injured

4	Amorphous Form - When threatened, beast melts away into a pool of slippery ooze for 1d3 turns; actions restricted to movement only, +15 to swim and move speed
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ODM-2d: Weaponization Subtable (Roll d4)

1	Calcite Spears - Hyperactive pineal gland produces crystalline quills on beast's back; may be launched at cost of 1d3 hit points, 1d6+2 piercing damage
2	Sucking Tentacles - Tentacles lash out from beast's side when it strikes, hooking onto prey and draining blood; SP automatic 1d4 damage after normal attack
3	Corrosive Vomit - Glands inside beast's mouth spray attackers with noxious acid; all attacks deal additional +1d5 acid damage, SP criticals damage worn armor (AC reduced by 1d3 until armor is repaired)
4	Spring-Loaded Extremities - Beast's appendages are capable of lightning speed, and attacks strike with alarming velocity; SP +20 to move speed for three rounds, add 1d4 damage to normal attacks

Creating DATA MULES

The following is an example of a common wolf modified by mutations from the four tables provided. The Data Wolf is at 90% data capacity; thus, it has four mutations, one from each table.

Common Wolf: Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 1d6; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AL L.

Data Wolf: Init +3 (+1d5 init from Eye Stalks); Atk bite +2 melee (1d4, +1d4 from blood drain); AC 14 (+2 from Armored Plate); HD 1d6; MV 35 (-5 from Armored Plate); Act 1d20; SP gains 1d3 hit points per turn when injured (from Rapid Regeneration), blood drain (automatic 1d4 damage after normal attack, from Sucking Tentacles), +5 to track by smell (from Eye Stalks); SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AL L.

Adventure Hooks

- ▶ Within the Robo-Priest temple's sacred halls, disciples of Ultimospark whisper of a cryostasis vault containing a blasphemous herd of sheep-like MULES. These MULES are said to harbor vile videographic evidence of natal celebrations, travel logs, and rites of passage. The temple begs the PCs to recover the profane beasts, so they may sacrifice them and pay data-dump veneration to the Ultimospark.
- ▶ A group of brisk Yestermen in antique military vestments request that PCs investigate a Soviet orbital shuttle landed nearby. Rumor suggests the vessel was caught in a time rift eras ago, and contains a Corgi cosmonaut programmed with sensitive data. This canine MULE could be the key to resolving a long-standing feud between members of extinct nation states.
- ▶ The Cyberhive buzzes with tales of undead dire wolves infected by a unique reanimator fungus. PCs meet a Robolich (CUaBM issue #2) whose specialty is the discreet study of MULES; he suspects this unusual strain was created when the cosmic event interacted with the vegetation mutation. The lich-scientist requests that one or several of these beasts be subdued and brought back to him for further study.

The Posse of Perception

By Quinn Coffman

Amongst the many constantly rising and falling factions of Umerica, the Posse of Perception holds many lands. From a small gang they climbed, using their heightened senses and careful planning to perform coups, stage revolts and crush enemies. From humble origins, they now have spread out, seeking new targets.

The Posse uses a hierarchy of members to keep order, each member is marked by highly recognisable body alterations.

Tier one are the grunts, they do the heavy lifting, fighting and dying for the other tiers. They are marked by their heightened sense of feeling. The alteration that marks this increased sense is a gigantic hand sprouting directly out of the neck in place of a head.

Tier two are the captains, leading bands of Tier ones and keeping order within the mob. They are marked by their heightened sense of hearing, often using this to act as look outs. In place of a head, a large ear facing outwards is what discloses the Tier two's position.

Tier three act as messengers and bards, inspiring the mobs of Tier ones and projecting them into combat. They sport a fleshy head with nothing but a large mouth on it. This in addition to their, heightened sense of taste and vocal volume, marks them as Tier threes.

Tier fours are the scholar class of the posse, focusing in ways to poison their enemies. Tier fours act as assassins and advisors, dealing with tracking any escaped prisoners. Their excellence in alchemy is due to their increased sense of smell. They are marked with, a protruding nose for a head and heightened sense of hearing.

There is only one Tier five, ruling the entire posse with his enhanced sense of vision and psionic abilities. The Tier five has the head of a swollen eyeball instead of a head, it pulsates and leaks fluids constantly. The Tier five has many gifts, including spell casting and psychic abilities.



	Tier 1 (The Hands)	Tier 2 (The Ears)	Tier 3 (The Mouths)	Tier 4 (The Noses)	Tier 5 (The Eye)
Init	+2	+2	+2	+3	+4
Atk	Rusted Pole +1 melee (1d3+1)	Dart Launcher +1 ranged (1d6+2)	Bite +1 melee (1d4+2) or Scream +2 ranged (1d8+1 Sonic)	Acid Spray Gun +2 ranged 50' (1d6+3 and +1 point of damage a turn, until magically healed)	Staff (1d6+4) or Plasma Scimitar (1d12+4)
AC	12	13	14	10	16
HD	1d4-1	1d6-1	1d10-1	2d6	3d12 (HP 27)
MV	15'	25'	25'	30'	30'
Act	1d20	1d20	1d20	1d20	1d20 + 1d20 (casting only)
SP	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below
SV	Ref +1 Fort +0 Will -1	Ref +1 Fort +2 Will -1	Ref +2 Fort +1 Will +0	Ref +0 Fort +1 Will +3	Ref +2 Fort +3 Will +4
AL	Chaotic	Chaotic	Chaotic	Chaotic	Chaotic

- Tier 1 heightened sense of feeling, can sense creatures vibrations up to 50' away, +2 to grapple-like attacks to hold targets.
- Tier 2 heightened sense of hearing, can sense creatures vibrations up to 100' away, cannot be surprised in combat by any but magical means.
- Tier 3 heightened sense of taste, heightened vocal volume, can be heard for 600' around, any other members of the Posse gain a +1 to all roles when hearing the scream of a Tier Three.
- Tier 4 heightened sense of smell, can smell creatures up to 70' away, gets a +5 on check to track targets it can smell.
- Tier 5 heightened sense of sight, can see as a result of 26-28 and below, on the 4th level wizard spell "Wizard Sense" (DCC rulebook, pg 245), can also cast spells as a 3rd level wizard, with 3 1st lvl spells, 2 2nd lvl and 1 3rd level spell, psionic abilities: Telepathy (restricted to the giving of messages to others minds' range 1,000'), Telekinesis (can lift any object weighing 800lbs or less).

The Posse was originally started by Tier Five. Once a human moisture farmer, he one day found an underground complex while digging a ditch. After entering it, he climbed into one of the many machines inside the building. What Tier Five didn't know was that the building used these machines to upgrade pre-apocalypse soldiers with genetic alterations. The whole operation was run by a complex AI, but over the years of decay this AI had been corrupted. This led to the machine's disfigurement of Tier Five.

After, leaving the facility, Tier Five soon found out about his powers, with them he could experience so much more than before. He now understood the world

around him. He knew the planet's past greatness, and how it and he were doomed. Tier Five's fear for his own death was replaced with thought, his mind wracked itself with visions of ways to survive, until he had it. His plan was to use whatever power he could to survive.

The first to join him were kidnapped by Tier Five, and altered in the machines. Tier Five would either sneak into settlements and kidnap villagers, or threaten the village with force if they didn't deliver people as tribute. Once he acquired the victims, they'd be subjected to the machine's power, and converted into the Posse. Since the beginning, the Posse has grown large. Beyond gathering members, the Posse also searches for tech that may help Tier-Five's escape. The Posse stays motivated with promises of escape, but in reality Tier Five is only looking out for himself, bringing along any of his followers is an after thought. Tier Five's ultimate plan is to have Umerica's eyes be as open to the horrors of the world as his is, if only so that he may escape.

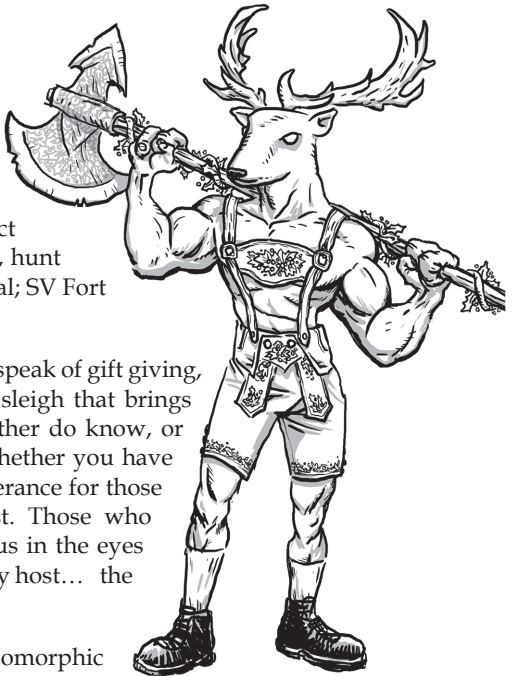
Adventure Hooks

- ▶ Locals come to the party begging for their help. People are going missing! Also strange lights and sounds come from the northern hills. Little do the villagers know, the Posse Of Perception has moved into this area and are building some kind of flight craft in the northern hills. The villagers have been abducted and transformed as extra labor in the construction.
- ▶ The party stumbles upon a dying Tier 4, who begs for their help in returning him to his village over the ridge. In reality, he's leading them directly into an ambush of lower tiers. Unknown to both the party and the Posse, is that the ambush site is right above the lair of a gigantic crustacean-lizard.
- ▶ A recently found loot cache includes a radio that continually picks up static from one place. Unknown to the party, this is Tier-Five's base. At the same time, an acid storm appears on the horizon. It may look like whatever this place is, it's the party's only hope.

Reindire

Reindire (Guardians of Good Cheer):

Init +3; Atk enchanted greataxe +6 melee (1d12+4 plus magic*) or horn gore +5 melee (1d4+3); AC 15; HD 4d10; MV 40', fly 60'; Act 1d20+1d14(Horn gore only); SP flight, hunt the wicked, sneak silently +7, immortal; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +6; AL L.



Drop the name “Santa” and folks will speak of gift giving, cookie gobbling clergy, and a flying sleigh that brings joy wherever it goes. Most people either do know, or choose to forget, that Santa knows whether you have been bad or good and he has little tolerance for those who are always on his naughty list. Those who commit crimes especially blasphemous in the eyes of Santa may be visited by his heavenly host... the dreaded Reindire.

The Reindire are immortal anthropomorphic reindeer that serve Santa with absolute loyalty.

Their hooves are charmed to make no noise and leave no hoofprints. Each is armed with an enchanted greataxe that is a beautifully gilded with precious metals and stones. Roll on the table below to determine the magical property of each axe.

Table RD-1: Enchanted Greataxe Properties - Roll 1d10

1	+2 to hit and damage
2	Firey aura causes +1d8 damage
3	Always returns when thrown, +2 to hit when thrown
4	+4 to damage
5	+8 to hit, 3/day

6	Teleport up to 20 feet, 3/day
7	+1d3 to all saves, roll each time
8	Inflicts 1 attribute damage per hit, rolled randomly
9	Crit on 15+
10	Heal a total of 6HD per day

Reindire are either sent out on solo missions or in groups of exactly 9, with one clearly marked as the leader with a glowing nose. They are intelligent and while they are fluent in just about every spoken language, they are creatures of few words. They will do their best to not harm anyone but their intended target, chosen by Santa, and they will NEVER harm a child by ANY direct or indirect action. They will hold to this even if it means dying repeatedly over the course of the mission.

When on a mission they will always know the general direction and location of their target(s) but will still need to hunt them down when they get close. Versus any magics or powers that might hinder their ability to locate their target, they receive a +5 to the save.

If felled in combat, the reindire’s body will quickly fade away and will reappear 1d3 turns later within one mile of the target. Should the reindire’s enchanted greataxe be pilfered before the body fades, it will remain with the thief instead of manifesting with its rightful owner. This respawning magic will continue throughout the duration of the mission, which can last no longer than 24 hours. Should the target evade the “punishment” intended by Santa for longer than that, they cannot be hunted by the reindire again for an entire year.

An axe stolen from a fallen reindire will turn on its wielder at the worst of times. Each battle, the GM will secretly make a luck check for the wielder. If it is a failure it will turn on the wielder sometime during this battle, chosen by the GM. The most common effect is a mishap that causes an automatic fumble, at +4 to the fumble table roll, and also inflicts the weapon’s damage to the wielder.

Should anyone choose to significantly aid the reindire in its mission, such as fight alongside it or heal it, it will offer a small gift in return when its mission is complete. Roll on the following table to determine the gift.

Table RD-2: Ally Gifts - Roll 1d8

1	1d3+1 Peppermint Candy Canes (heal 1 HD each)	5	Sprig of Holly (restores 1 Luck per day for the next 2d7 days)
2	Sack of delicious cookies, 5d3 in total (each cookie acts as one meal’s food and water, never goes stale)	6	Christmas Cracker (when opened casts Food of the Gods - DCC Rulebook, pg 262, result 28)
3	Tin of enchanted cocoa (Turns up to 10 gallons of tainted water into safe, sweet, hot cocoa)	7	A small red sack (will hold up to 50 lbs of material without encumbrance, weight, or noticeable bulk)
4	Silver handaxe (magic: +1 to hit and damage, true silver, & indestructible)	8	Floppy red hat (-1 die step to all Luck checks)

Adventure Hooks

- ▶ While enjoying a hot meal at an O’Burger, a woman races into the restaurant. She takes one quick look around and offers a backpack full of high quality medical supplies to the party in return for protecting her. While she quickly agrees to anything to seal the deal, several horned humanoid charge into the place looking for her.
- ▶ Trekking through a bramble forest, the party encounters a wounded horned humanoid. It eyes them wearily but does not attack. Should any of them be devotees of Santa, they will feel kinship with the beast.
- ▶ After looting a abandoned chapel dedicated to Santa your group discovers decorative socks full of coal among their possessions and an ominous feeling of being hunted...

Tru-Pet

Tru-Pet (Synthetic Animal Companion: Small Dog model): Init +4; Atk bite +1 melee (1d3); AC 14; HD 1d8+1; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP synthetic, regenerates 1 hp per hour, very loyal, tricks; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2*; AL L.

Tru-Pet (Synthetic Animal Companion: Large Dog model): Init +3; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4); AC 13; HD 2d8+2; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP synthetic, regenerates 1 hp per hour, very loyal, tricks; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2*; AL L.

Tru-Pet (Synthetic Animal Companion: Guardian Dog model): Init +5; Atk bite +5 melee (1d5+2); AC 15; HD 4d8+4; MV 50'; Act 2d20; SP synthetic, regenerates 1 hp per turn, very loyal, tricks; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +4*; AL L.

Tru-Pets originate in an alternate universe where the great cataclysm never occurred and humanity advanced to amazing technological heights. Occasionally due to the fractured dimensional barriers a Tru-Pet slips into this world.

Being 100% artificial, Tru-Pets do not age and require neither food nor rest. In addition, they will regenerate 1 hp per hour, even if reduced below 0 hp but not utterly destroyed. Once a week they must spend 10 minutes connected to a significant power source for rapid recharging. This means that stray Tru-Pets can most likely be found near accessible power sources. If they run out of charge they "sleep" until they can absorb 30 hours of solar energy.

A stray Tru-Pet will bond to the first living being that shows it significant affection and will remain bonded to them until that being dies or the Tru-Pet is destroyed.

While there are many models of Tru-Pets, the dog based models are one of the most popular. This is due to the exceptional loyalty factor this model exhibits. Tru-Dogs gain a +8 to Will saves involving remaining loyal to their bonded owner until death.

The guardian model is based off of a military prototype and is intended to be combat ready while appearing no different than a large dog model. This allowed it to serve as a low profile bodyguard for high threat owners.

Most Tru-Dogs encounter will know at least one "trick" and possibly several more. Roll 1d5 to determine how many times to roll on the Trick Table below. Guardian dogs will automatically have the Guard trick.

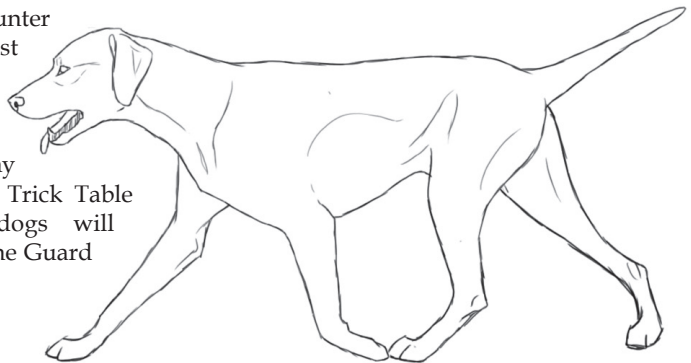


Table TT-1: Trick Table

Roll 1d8

- 1 Guard: The Tru-Dog has been programmed to be able to serve as watchdog and protector. It increases its Action die to d24 for perception checks in watch mode or when defending its bonded owner.
- 2 Seek: The Tru-Dog can be given the command to search and locate a general type of object via vocal command or a specific person/object if presented with a proper visual and scent sample.
- 3 Help: This Tru-Dog has received special programming to assist persons with some manner of physical handicap, such as blindness, deafness, or limited mobility.
- 4 Save: The Tru-Dog has been designed to render limited medical aid to persons suffering from hypothermia, exhaustion, shock, minor asphyxiation, and other minor life threatening conditions until proper medical help can arrive on the scene. They can perform a Recovering the Body action for party members (DCC rulebook, pg 93).
- 5 Perform: This Tru-Dog has been programmed to perform acrobatic stunts or involved productions. All such actions are performed with a d24 action die.
- 6 Sport: The Tru-Dog has been designed for high physical performance sports such as racing, parkour, or disc catching. Its Move is increased to 50' and all physical non-combat actions are performed with a d24 action die.
- 7 Deliver: The Tru-Dog has been programmed to deliver the contents of a case attached to its belly to a person based on specific visual references and general geographic location information.
- 8 Promo: The Tru-Dog can speak and has the ability to easily memorize up to a 30 second message/advert jingle and then announce the message throughout a large group of people.

Adventure Hooks

- ▶ After one of the party is knocked unconscious or has fallen due to hp loss, they are pulled safe from the fray and revived by a large, very friendly dog.
- ▶ The group stumbles on the scene of a fresh massacre with settler and raider bodies strewn about the road. To one side is a small group of terrified children huddled together and standing behind a very large dog. It is covered in blood and has just dispatched a raider.
- ▶ While searching through the ruins of some sort of entertainment park, the party encounters a healthy looking friendly dog. It will follow the party until adopted or chased off.

Wraith Rider

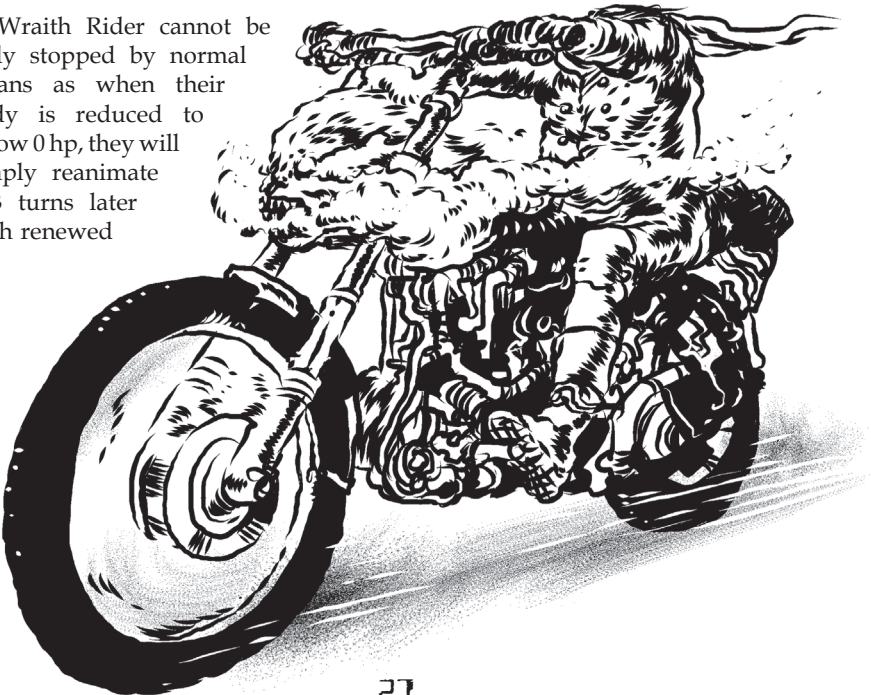
Wraith Rider (undead engine of vengeance): Init +1; Atk spiky punch +5 melee (1d4+1) or smoldering chain whip +5 melee (1d5+3, reach 10ft, can set fires); AC 15; HD 4d6+4*; MV 25'; Act 1d20+1d20(driving only); SP empower vehicle, body is indestructible, chill aura; SV Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +8; AL C.

Empowered by an unknown spirit from the plane of Eternal Unrest after suffering a traumatic violent death, a murdered human may transform into a Wraith Rider. These single minded undead are merciless reflections of their former selves that exist to avenge their murder and, if possible, complete the task they died trying to finish. They will only attack those that get in their way and ignore everyone else, except possibly former loved ones.

Regardless of the original cause of death, a Wraith Rider appears as an ashen beheaded corpse wearing clothes similar to what they died in but darker and much more menacing in appearance. If encountered on foot, they will be carrying their desiccated head; otherwise their head will be affixed to the vehicle they are driving as a prominent ornament. The ragged neck stump, empty eye sockets, and open mouth constantly issue dark exhaust fume like vapors.

The vapors that surround the immediate area around the Rider are shockingly cold. All living creatures within 10 feet of the Rider must pass a Will save (DC 10) each round to avoid suffering a -1 die step penalty to all actions due to involuntary muscle tremors. Every minute spent within 10 feet of the rider will inflict 1 point of cold damage.

A Wraith Rider cannot be truly stopped by normal means as when their body is reduced to below 0 hp, they will simply reanimate 1d3 turns later with renewed



hit points (roll their HD again). The only way to kill a Wraith Riders is to directly attack its head (area effects and collateral damage is ignored). The head has an AC 20 and 20hp. The head's hit points do not recover on their own and can only be restored by a willing chaotic cleric.

If the Rider affixes it head to any vehicle in running condition (requiring 1d3+1 rounds), the vehicle will immediately transform into a darker, scarier version of itself and begin exuding the same dark exhaust fume like vapors that emanate from the rider (causing the same chill effects). The bedeviled vehicle gains the following bonuses: +2 to Init; +1d4 to all rundown attacks and damage; +2 AC; +4 HD; Cruise and Max Speed is increased by +2; +4 to Fort and Ref saves; it requires no fuel and gains the following Vehicle Traits: Rugged, Off-Road, & Ram Plate (rules and stat blocks for vehicles can be found in CUaBM issues #6-7). These bonuses will remain until the vehicle is destroyed, the Rider removes its head, or the head is removed via direct action (such as a Mighty Deed).

Adventure Hooks

When encountered, the Wraith Rider will always be focused on achieving vengeance or completing a final task. For a random obsession, roll 1d5 on the table below:

- 1 Killed by a roadgang while trying to make a delivery. Wants to recover the package while slaughtering the roadgang.
- 2 Doublecrossed on a mission for the 3 Royals. Killed for knowing too much. Heading to the Citadel of Scrap for vengeance.
- 3 Searching for a stolen daughter and the fiends that took her. Will hunt the fiends down one by one until she is freed.
- 4 Killed by a local community for a crime they did not commit. Wants to expose the real culprit while hunting down those that set them up.
- 5 Killed by one of the characters during a previous adventure. It is now looking for revenge.

Coming Next Issue!

- ▶ An Interesting Place to Die: The Necromancers of the Space Needle and the Lands of the Reanimatronic Dead
- ▶ Nexoskeleton - Biological power armor crafted from reanimated flesh
- ▶ Other pieces of abominable Necrotech
- ▶ And much, much more!

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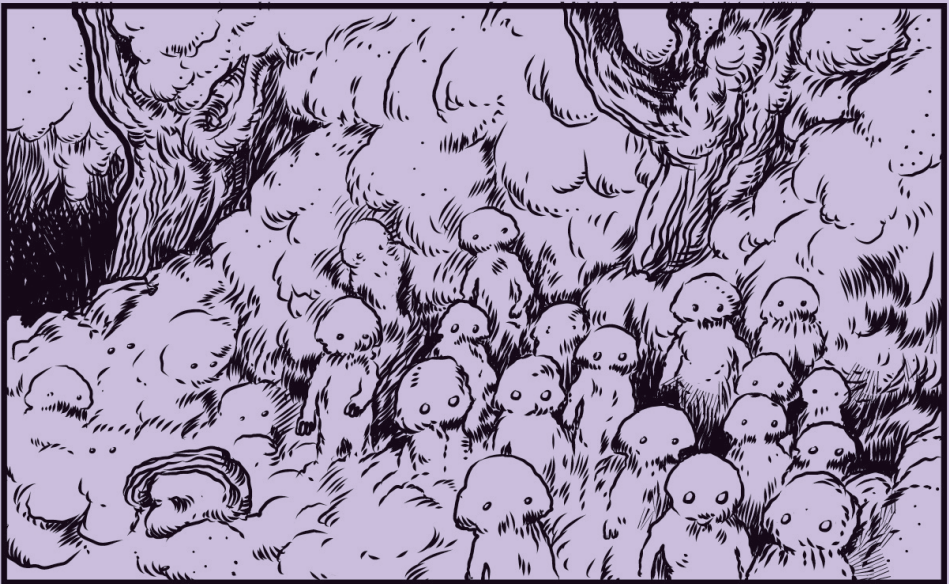
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In this issue:

MONSTERS!!!

Another whole issue dedicated to a slew of wild and weird creatures for players to encounter in the strange and twisted lands of Umerica!



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