



# KAZERABET'S ART OF NECROMANCY

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## VOLUME II: CYSTS AND GRAFTS



EXPLORE THE FORBIDDEN ARTS IN THIS SUPPLEMENT FOR  
THE WORLD'S GREATEST ROLEPLAYING GAME



# KAZERABET'S ART OF NECROMANCY

## VOLUME II: CYSTS AND GRAFTS

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### SOURCES AND INSPIRATION

Collins, Andy & Cordel, Bruce. *Libris Mortis: The Book of Undead*. 2004.  
Cordel, Bruce. *Open Grave: Secrets of the Undead*. 2009.

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IN MY TRAVELS IN FAERÛN, I'VE ENCOUNTERED A FEW THINGS I HAD never encountered nor even read about in my youth in Zakhara, leading me to think there is some cultural reason why the ancient Kadari never developed these strange curiosities. Perhaps they did discover the secrets of blending the living and the dead and that knowledge has yet to be unearthed, but none of the shades of the great geomancers, high priests, or necromancer-kings that I interrogated had any knowledge of such practices.

Two of the oddest are undead cysts and grafts. Whether willingly or not, undead flesh or bone can be melded with the mortal frame. Why would anyone do this willingly? Some misguided urge for power, I suspect, would be the most common reason other than, perhaps, as a prosthetic for a limb or other part damaged or lost to violence or happenstance.

Either way, the results shocked even me when I learned that there are those who would hunt down undead creatures to harvest their parts and implant them in the living, or those who could access arcane power from a seemingly inert lump of undead flesh growing within their bodies. I've even seen the results of that lump of flesh gestating, and being born into this world as a strange and deadly beast. Truly these are aspects of the Art which warrant further study and much caution.

—Kazarabet, *Philosopher-Queen of Ysawis*

### INTRODUCTION



THE BLENDING OF LIVING AND UNDEAD FLESH DOESN'T appeal to many, but some necromancers or other villains pursue power and there is power in this horrific commingling of the living and the dead. This volume focuses on two options for doing so: the necrotic cyst and undead grafts.

Necrotic cysts sometimes grow in the living, and the Mother Cyst feat allows one to gain its power symbiotically. The corrupt feat mechanic allows characters to gain access to this feat easily. Occasionally, these cysts grow a mind of their own, and emerge as skulking cysts.

Undead grafts must be harvested from fallen enemies and surgically applied. Once done, however, they can replace missing or damaged limbs and organs and provide other benefits (and sometimes complications).

### NECROTIC CYSTS

Necrotic cysts are strange bits of undead flesh that feast on the living. They can spawn spontaneously when an undead creature uses natural or unarmed attacks on the living, or be created by necromantic magic. Undead grafts (see below) can also spawn necrotic cysts. Shockingly, some individuals can control this rare condition, communing with their own necrotic cysts and gaining magical power to manipulate their own cyst and spread the disease to others.

Even more shocking is that occasionally cysts develop a dark sentience after consuming a host. These free-willed skulking cysts feed off the living and implant their spawn in those they attack, ensuring that necrotic cysts slowly spread if not combated.

### CORRUPT FEATS

Feats are an optional addition to the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS rules; the standard means of acquiring them (if the Dungeon Master allows feats) is in place of an Ability Score Increase from your class. Corrupted feats are a new kind of feat: they can be selected as usual,

or taken for free by applying their corruption (assuming prerequisites are met). A corrupt feat can later be selected as normal, in which case its corruption is ignored. Mother Cyst is one example of a corrupt feat.

## MOTHER CYST

*Prerequisites:* Afflicted with a necrotic cyst, possessing an undead graft, or suffering from an undead disease such as mummy rot

*Corruption:* Your Constitution score is reduced by 2 points.

You gain control of the necrotic tissue growing inside you and host a mother cyst. You add the following spells to your class list (or each class list if you have multiple classes), even if you don't ordinarily have a spell list. You may use Charisma as your spellcasting ability for these spells or any spellcasting ability granted by your race or class.

As a bonus action, you can create a mother cyst spell slot equal to the number of hit dice you expend (to a maximum equal to your proficiency bonus). This mother cyst spell slot can only be used to cast a mother cyst spell, and is lost when you finish a short or long rest.

## MOTHER CYST SPELLS

### Spell

Level	Spell
1	<i>necrotic awareness</i>
2	<i>necrotic cyst</i>
3	<i>necrotic burst, necrotic influence, necrotic scrying</i>
4	<i>necrotic domination</i>
5	<i>necrotic empowerment</i>

## UNDEAD GRAFTS

The mortal body wasn't meant to fuse with undead parts, but that hasn't stopped necromancers and death priests—both malevolent and benevolent—from doing just that. Grafting an eye or hand or more to a mortal body requires a lot of skill and often a little magic as well.

## HARVESTING UNDEAD PARTS

Finding suitable undead grafts can be difficult. After a typical combat, the chance that the required parts can be found is about 20% per creature. Successfully harvesting the parts requires a Wisdom (Medicine) check. The difficulty for this check is 18 or 20 for legendary creatures. If the check fails, the potential parts are ruined. At the Dungeon Master's option, the check can be rolled in secret. If the check fails by 5 or more, the graft appears to have been harvested correctly, but also grants a complication. Roll on the Complication table if the imperfect graft is successfully attached.

## ATTACHING A GRAFT

The easiest method of attaching the graft is via the *graft flesh* spell (see below). With this spell, the graft always holds for 24 hours. The caster must still roll to attempt to permanently graft the undead flesh onto the host, but may roll Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) in lieu of Wisdom (Medicine) with this spell.

Surgically attaching an undead graft is also possible. Attaching an undead graft requires the surgeon to spend an hour to make a DC 18 Wisdom (Medicine) check; anyone without proficiency makes the check with disadvantage. A surgeon cannot be aided by anyone who isn't proficient in Medicine, the Herbalist's Kit, or the Poisoner's kit.

If the check fails, the materials for the graft are destroyed and the potential host loses half their remaining hit dice and suffers 1d4+2 levels of exhaustion.

Attaching multiple grafts always involves a complication, roll on the Complication table for each graft after the first.

## HARVESTING AND ATTACHING

Rarity	Harvesting DC	Attaching DC
Common	12	16
Uncommon	14	18
Rare	16	20
Very Rare	18	22
Legendary	20	24

## COMPLICATIONS

d20	Complication
1	<b>Spreading disease.</b> You develop a necrotic cyst.
2	<b>Mind of its own.</b> The first time you roll a 1 on an attack roll, saving throw, or skill check on your turn, your grafts cease to function until the end of your next turn.
3	<b>Vile appearance.</b> You suffer disadvantage on all Charisma checks unless your graft is hidden or disguised.
4	<b>Exhausting.</b> You suffer disadvantage on Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution checks. You can gain one level of exhaustion to ignore this complication for one hour.
5	<b>Vitality sap.</b> When you finish a long rest, you only regain half as many hit dice as normal. Any hit die rolled for healing that rolls above half its potential is reduced to half (e.g. a roll of a 5 on a d8 is considered a 4).
6	<b>Reject healing.</b> Magical healing always restores the minimum value, rather than rolling.

## UNDEAD GRAFTS

ONE THING I CANNOT YET UNDERSTAND IS THE FACT THAT AN UNDEAD graft does not always grant the recipient the same power as the donor itself had. The undead animus reacts in strange ways to the flesh of the host. I would inquire with my old colleague Doctor Tolbert, but she has long since passed from this plane to join her husband in another life. My inquiries to the Anatomical Academy, of which Doctor Tolbert was a member, have gone unanswered, leaving me to suspect that society may be defunct. I suppose I shall have to venture out into the world to examine this further, or perhaps simply craft my own undead and harvest some parts for grafting.

—Kazerabet, Philosopher-Queen of Ysawis

The following undead grafts are suggestions for use, the Dungeon Master may develop others for a campaign as well. There is no *a priori* reason that these options must be available to player characters unless the Dungeon Master and players all want to use undead grafts.

Any saving throw from an undead graft is based on your Constitution score:

**Graft save DC** = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier

**Graft attack modifier** = your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier

## UNDEAD GRAFT RARITY

Rarity	Grafts
Common	ghostly hair, skeletal hand, spirit eye
Uncommon	bonemail, dead heart, necromantic brain
Rare	energating arm, necromantic brain, tenebrous arm, vampiric palms & soles
Very Rare	necromantic brain, paralyzing arm, vampiric teeth, wailing tongue, withered eye
Legendary	necromantic brain

## BONEMAIL

*Uncommon Undead Graft*

*Component: Pieces of bone from any corporeal undead*

Shards of bone are implanted under your skin. Regardless of the armor you are wearing, your Armor Class cannot be reduced below 16.

## DEAD HEART

*Common Undead Graft*

*Component: a rotting heart of a zombie*

You replace your still-beating heart with the stubborn heart of a zombie. When an attack would reduce you to 0 hit points, you make a Constitution saving throw. The difficulty is 5 plus the damage inflicted. If you succeed, you are instead reduced to 1 hit point. Once you use this feature, you cannot do so again until you finish a long rest.

## ENERVATING ARM

*Rare Undead Graft*

*Component: The intact arm from a deathlock or wight*

A withered arm replaces one of your usual limbs. You can make an unarmed attack with the withered limb, adding your proficiency modifier to your Strength modifier to hit and the attack deals 1d10 + your Strength modifier damage. Those who are struck by your unarmed attack must make a Constitution saving throw or their hit point maximum is reduced by the same amount as the damage and they cannot benefit from healing magic until the end of your next turn. The maximum hit point reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

If you can make multiple attacks in one round, you can only make one attack with an Enervating Arm each round.

Some variants of this arm have been described as an incorporeal version drawn from a wraith.

## GHOSTLY HAIR

*Common Undead Graft*

*Component: the scalp of an incorporeal undead creature with hair.*

Your hair is luxurious and thick, sometimes waving in a breeze none can feel. Should anyone attempt to touch or cut your hair, they cannot feel anything other than a scabrous scalp. In the light of a full moon, however, the hair appears thin and wispy, flowing wildly as though you were in a storm.

*The necromancer Nelt Bhakau once was the advisor to the Mad Padisha of Afjal. I wonder how many necromancers earn their high positions by promising the king a full head of hair...*

-K

## NECROMANTIC BRAIN

*Rarity Varies Undead Graft*

*Component: brain tissue from a lich, mummy lord, or brain in a jar*

By implanting bits of brain from an undead spellcaster, you gain some of their knowledge. Consult the Necromancy Spells Known table based on the rarity of the item to see how many additional spells you know for having this graft, and the die to roll on the Necromantic Brain Spells table. You know these spells and can cast one spell of 1st level or higher without expending a spell slot via this graft. After you do that, you cannot do so again until you complete a long rest: you can, however, still expend any spell slots you may have from your class to cast these spells as normal. You can use your Constitution or any spellcasting ability you might have from your race or class to cast these spells.

## NECROMANCY SPELLS KNOWN

Rarity	Number of Spells	Roll
Uncommon	1, cantrip	d3*
Rare	2, up to 1st level	d6
Very Rare	3, up to 2nd level	d10
Legendary	4, up to 3rd level	d20

\*Roll a d3 by rolling a d6 and dividing by 2, round up.

## NECROMANTIC BRAIN SPELLS

Roll	Spell
1	DM's choice*
2	chill touch
3	spare the dying
4	false life
5	inflict wounds
6	ray of sickness
7	blindness/deafness
8	gentle repose
9	ray of enfeeblement
10	DM's choice*
11	animate dead
12	bestow curse
13	feign death
14	speak with dead
15	vampiric touch

16–20 DM's choice\*

\*For more options, see Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes or Kazerabet's Art of Necromancy Volume I: Spells

## PARALYZING ARM

*Rare Undead Graft*

*Component: an arm of a ghoul, ghost, or lich*

A ghoulish arm replaces yours. You can make an unarmed attack with the withered limb, adding your proficiency modifier to your Strength modifier to hit and the attack deals 1d10 + your Strength modifier damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. Once you paralyze a creature in this way, you cannot do so until you complete a short or long rest.

If you can make multiple attacks in one round, you can only make one attack with a Paralyzing Arm each round.

## ROTTING FIST

*Very Rare Undead Graft*

*Component: a hand from a mummy or mummy lord*

Your hand is now a desiccated husk. When you make an unarmed attack with your rotting fist, it deals 1d4 bludgeoning damage plus an additional 2d6 necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be cursed with mummy rot. The cursed target can't regain Hit Points, and its hit point maximum decreases by 2d6 for every 24 hours that elapse. If the curse reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and its body turns to dust. The curse lasts until removed by the Remove Curse spell or other magic.

Once you curse a creature with your Rotting Fist, you cannot do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

## SKELETAL HAND

*Common Undead Graft*

*Component: a hand from any corporeal undead*

Your hand now has no flesh, only bone that didn't belong to you. This hand functions like a normal hand for you. Additionally, it can be used for unarmed strikes. When you do this, the skeletal hand



uses your proficiency bonus, deals 1d4 slashing damage, and has the light and finesse properties.

### SKELETAL LEG

*Common Undead Graft*

*Component: a hand from any corporeal undead*

One of your legs is just dry bones. The leg functions normally.

### SPIRIT EYE

*Common Undead Graft*

*Component: an eye from an incorporeal undead.*

Your eye socket lies empty, save for a dim spark of light which allows you to see. You also have darkvision out to 10 feet, or 10 additional feet if you already possessed darkvision.

### TENEBOUS ARM

*Rare Undead Graft*

*Component: an arm of a shadow*

Your arm ends in inky blackness, which is only vaguely arm-shaped. You cannot manipulate physical items or creatures with your arm unless you are in total darkness, but it can be used for an unarmed strike. When you do so, you are proficient in your unarmed strike, it deals 1d12 necrotic damage, and has the light and finesse properties. You have advantage with this attack as long as you are not in bright light. Any target hit by your unarmed strike must make a Strength saving throw or have their Strength score reduced by 1d4 until they finish a long or short rest. A creature with a Strength score of 0 dies.

If you can make multiple attacks in one round, you can only make one attack with a Tenebrous Arm each round.

### VAMPIRIC PALMS AND SOLES

*Uncommon Undead Graft*

*Component: palms and soles from a vampire or vampire spawn*

Your hands and feet gain the mystical ability to climb difficult surfaces. You gain a climb speed equal to half your speed. You can even climb upside down on ceilings without making a check.

### VAMPIRIC TEETH

*Rare Undead Graft*

*Component: teeth and jawbone of a vampire*

The mouth of a vampire replaces yours, allowing you to take sustenance from the blood of the living. You may make a bite attack that you are proficient with and deals 1d6 points of damage. On a hit, you reduce the target's hit point maximum by the amount of damage you dealt and regain hit points equal to the amount of damage you dealt. The target's hit point maximum remains reduced until they finish a long rest. A target whose hit point maximum is reduced to 0 dies.

You can only make one bite attack per round, even if you are allowed multiple attacks.

### WAILING TONGUE

*Rare Undead Graft*

*Component: a tongue of an allip or banshee*

An incorporeal tongue replaces your tongue. As part of an Attack action, you can release a mournful wail in lieu of an attack, provided that you aren't in sunlight. This wail has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of you that can hear you must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 3d6 psychic damage. On a success, a creature takes half damage.

Once you use this power, you cannot do so again until you finish a long rest.

Flaw: You cannot speak above a whisper, and those more than 10 feet away from you cannot understand your speech without enhanced hearing.

### WITHERED EYE

*Rare Undead Graft*

*Component: an eye from a bodak, mummy or mummy lord*

You replace an eye with a desiccated eye. As an Attack action, you can target one creature you can see within 60 feet. If the target can see you, it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or take 2d6 psychic damage and become frightened until the end of your next turn. If the target fails its saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on this saving throw is immune to gaze attacks of all undead with CR 4 or less for the next 24 hours.

If you can make multiple attacks with a single Attack action, you can use this attack once.

After

you use this attack, you cannot do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

*That some necromancers might craft spells to take advantage of undead flesh feeding off their own bodies is fantastic! What a wondrous time for the Art.*

-K

## NEW SPELLS

These spells provide support for undead grafts and necrotic cysts. Many require a mother cyst, which is a curious type of necrotic cyst gained via the Mother Cyst feat. Such a cyst, when removed from the host, is a curiosity worth 1 gp to an interested buyer, but no longer is capable of functioning as a material component when removed from the host.

Graft flesh and necrotic awareness are found on the sorcerer, warlock, and wizard spell lists and accessible to bards via their Magical Secrets class feature. The Dungeon Master may substitute either graft flesh or necrotic awareness for a spell of equivalent level when thematically appropriate to other spellcasters, or grant access to the spell via a boon. The other spells presented here are, in practice, only usable via the Mother Cyst corrupt feat.

### GRAFT FLESH

*4th-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (the flesh to be grafted)

**Duration:** 24 hours or Instantaneous

Your necromantic powers allow you to knit flesh back together. You can reattach one severed or detached body part to its original owner. Any hit point loss is not restored, but lingering effects of an injury (such as blindness from the loss of an eye) are alleviated and hit points can be regained normally.

If the original body part is not available, you can graft flesh from a member of the same species as the target, such as a different severed limb. The graft can also include a cosmetic change, such as covering scars or even completely fashioning a new face for the recipient. If the grafted flesh is not from the same individual, however, the duration is only 24 hours. After the duration expires, the grafted flesh withers and decays and cannot be used again. Grafted flesh cannot benefit from spells like gentle repose. True seeing and similar means cannot penetrate disguises made from this use of the spell because it is not an illusion, though the graft can be dispelled as normal.

When using this spell to attach a properly harvested undead graft, the caster may substitute an Intelligence (Arcane or Religion) check for the Wisdom (Medicine) check to permanently attach the graft.

**At Higher Levels.** If you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, the duration for grafting flesh from another individual increases by 24 hours per slot level higher than 4th and any check to permanently attach an undead graft gains a +1 bonus per slot level higher than 4th.

## NECROTIC AWARENESS

*1st-level divination*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

For the duration, you sense the presence of necrotic cysts and undead grafts within 30 feet of you. If you sense a necrotic cyst or undead graft in this way, you can use your action to locate it.

The spell can penetrate most barriers, but it is blocked by 2 feet of stone, 2 inches of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 6 feet of wood or dirt.

## NECROTIC CYST

*2nd-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (an implanted mother cyst, worth 1 gp)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You infect the target with a necrotic cyst unless they succeed on a Constitution saving throw. While the target is infected with a mother cyst, they suffer disadvantage on saving throws against necromancy spells and attacks from undead or which would deal necrotic damage have advantage against the target.

A necrotic cyst can be cured as a disease, either via a paladin's lay on hands feature or a greater restoration spell. It counts as an undead disease that possesses its host for other effects, such as detect poison or disease or protection from good and evil.

A character proficient in medicine can attempt to remove the necrotic cyst by taking an hour and making a healing check against your spell save DC with disadvantage. They can only be aided by one other character who must be proficient in medicine, the herbalism kit, or the poisoner's kit. Each unsuccessful attempt inflicts 1d4 + 2 levels of exhaustion on the victim.

## NECROTIC SCRYING

*3rd-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Infinite

**Components:** V, S, M (an implanted mother cyst, worth 1 gp)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You activate another necrotic cyst that you are aware of which functions as a scrying sensor for you. When you cast the spell, you choose seeing or hearing. You can use the chosen sense through the sensor as if you were in its space. As your action, you can switch between seeing and hearing.

A thin layer of lead blocks the spell, as can magical protection. The spell is also blocked if you and the target cyst are not on the same plane of existence. If this spell is blocked, you learn that fact but not the cause of the block.

## NECROTIC BLOAT

*3rd-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 600 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (an implanted mother cyst, worth 1 gp)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You activate another necrotic cyst that you are aware of, causing rapid growth. The target creature within range that is afflicted by a necrotic cyst must make a Constitution saving throw or suffer 5d12 points of necrotic damage, or half that damage if the saving throw is successful.

If a creature dies as a result of this spell, it cannot be raised or resurrected by magic of a lower level than the slot used to cast this spell.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th-level or higher, increase the damage by 2d12 per slot level used above 3rd.

## NECROTIC INFLUENCE

*3rd-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 600 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (an implanted mother cyst, worth 1 gp)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 10 minutes

You take control of a necrotic cyst to influence its host. Target one creature within range that is afflicted with a necrotic cyst. The target creature must make a Wisdom saving throw. If it fails, you choose whether the creature is frightened of you, poisoned, or paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turn.

## NECROTIC DOMINATION

*4th-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 600 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (an implanted mother cyst, worth 1 gp)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 10 minutes

You take control of a necrotic cyst to influence its host. Target one creature within range that is afflicted with a necrotic cyst. The target creature must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by you for the duration. If you or creatures that are friendly to you are fighting it, it has advantage on the saving throw.

While the creature is charmed, you have a telepathic link with it as long as the two of you are on the same plane of existence. You can use this telepathic link to issue commands to the creature while you are conscious (no action required), which it does its best to obey. You can specify a simple and general course of action, such as "Attack that creature," "Run over there," or "Fetch that object." If the creature completes the order and doesn't receive further direction from you, it defends and preserves itself to the best of its ability.

You can use your action to take total and precise control of the target. Until the end of your next turn, the creature takes only the actions you choose, and doesn't do anything that you don't allow it to do.

During this time, you can also cause the creature to use a reaction, but this requires you to use your own reaction as well.

Each time the target takes damage, it makes a new Wisdom saving throw against the spell. If the saving throw succeeds, the spell ends.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a 5th-level spell slot, the duration is concentration, up to 1 hour. When you cast this spell using a 6th-level spell slot, the duration is concentration up to 8 hours.

## NECROTIC EMPOWERMENT

*5th-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self

**Components:** V, S, M (an implanted mother cyst, worth 1 gp)

**Duration:** 10 minutes (D)

You take advantage of your mother cyst, letting it fortify you. You gain 50 temporary hit points. While you have these temporary hit points, your armor class becomes 18 unless it is already higher, and you gain advantage on all saving throws.

While this spell is active, your mother cyst lies dormant and you cannot cast another spell which requires a mother cyst as a material component. If you end this spell, you lose all temporary hit points.

## NEW ADVERSARIES

The following new monsters may find a place in any campaign. They can serve as a terrible threat to contain or a catalyst for access to the Mother Cyst feat.

### SKULKING CYST

*Small undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 13 (4d6 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

**Saving Throws** Constitution +5

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +7

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** understands all languages its host knew in life but can't speak

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Attach.** A skulking cyst that attaches to a target enters the target's space and moves with the target. The target may attempt to dislodge the cyst by spending an action to attempt to escape, using the same rules for escaping a grapple.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The skulking cyst's spellcasting ability is Constitution (spell save DC 13). The cyst can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

*3/day. darkness*

*1/day. necrotic cyst\**

\*New Mother Cyst spell described in this volume or Kazerabet's Art of Necromancy Volume I: Spells.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The cyst makes two viscera lash attacks or a viscera lash and a blood drain attack.

**Viscera Lash. Melee Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage. If the attack hits, the cyst may attach to the target.

**Blood Drain.** A grappled target takes 9 (2d6+2) necrotic damage and must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 13). On a failed save, the target's maximum hit points are reduced by the amount of damage this attack inflicted and the cyst may cast its necrotic cyst spell as a bonus action without expending a daily use.

#### REACTIONS

**Human Shield.** When attacked while attached to another creature, the cyst can use its reaction to force the attached creature to make a Dexterity saving throw (DC 13). If the save fails, the attached creature becomes the target of the attack instead of the cyst.

#### SIDEBAR: GROWING CYSTS

At the DM's option, whenever anyone hosting a cyst completes a long rest, there is a 1% chance the cyst grows. If the cyst grows, the target is affected with the necrotic bloat spell cast with a 5th-level spell slot and a save DC of 14. If the host dies because of this, a skulking cyst is born. Characters with the Mother Cyst feat do not suffer disadvantage on this saving throw.

## SKULKING CYST

A skulking cyst is a sentient bit of necrotic tissue that exists only to propagate. They lurk in the darkness on the margins of the world, seeking out blood to sustain themselves and victims to host their foul spawn. After infecting a living creature with a necrotic cyst, they often flee rather than fight to the death.

## NPCs

Cyst-hosts walk among the cities and villages of the world, blending in with wherever they go. These can be particularly dangerous when they are accomplished spellcasters in their own right, with the ability to quickly spread necrotic cysts through the population and sometimes little sense of self-preservation. Some cyst-hosts belong to undead worshipping cults, but some others are simply victims driven mad by their necrotic cysts.

### CYST-HOST ACOLYTE

*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment*

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 14 (3d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

**Skills** Medicine +4, Religion +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Any One Language (Usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Necrotic Cyst.** The cyst-host acolyte can cast one mother cyst spell per day without expending a spell slot as a bonus action.

**Spellcasting.** The acolyte is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The acolyte has following cleric spells prepared:

**Cantrips (at will).** *chill touch, light, thaumaturgy*

**1st level (3 slots).** *bless, inflict wounds, necrotic awareness\**

**2nd level (0 slots).** *necrotic cyst\**

\*New Mother Cyst spell described in this volume or Kazerabet's Art of Necromancy Volume I: Spells.

#### ACTIONS

**Club. Melee Weapon Attack:** +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

## CYST-HOST COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 10  
**Hit Points** 4 (1d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Senses** passive Perception 10  
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)  
**Challenge** 0 (10 XP)

**Spellcasting (innate).** The cyst-host commoner's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 10, +2 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

**1st level (at will).** *necrotic awareness\**

**2nd level (3/day).** *necrotic cyst\**

\*New Mother Cyst spell described in this volume or Kazerabet's Art of Necromancy Volume I: Spells.

### ACTIONS

**Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

## CYST-HOST MAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 12 (15 with mage armor)  
**Hit Points** 40 (9d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Int +6, Wis +4  
**Skills** Arcana +6, History +6  
**Senses:** passive Perception 11  
**Languages** any four languages  
**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Necrotic Cyst.** The cyst-host mage can cast one mother cyst spell per day without expending a spell slot as a bonus action.

**Spellcasting.** The cyst-host mage is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The cyst-host mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

**Cantrips (at will).** *chill touch, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*

**1st level (4 slots).** *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, necrotic awareness\*, shield*

**2nd level (3 slots).** *blindness/deafness, misty step, necrotic cyst\**

**3rd level (3 slots).** *counterspell, fireball, necrotic burst\*, necrotic influence\*, necrotic scrying\**

**4th level (3 slots).** *greater invisibility, ice storm, necrotic domination\**

**5th level (1 slot).** *cone of cold, necrotic empowerment\**

\*New Mother Cyst spell described in this volume or Kazerabet's Art of Necromancy Volume I: Spells.

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + piercing damage).

## CYST-HOST PRIEST

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 13 (chain shirt)  
**Hit Points** 27 (5d8 + 5)  
**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

**Skills** Medicine +7, Persuasion +3, Religion +4  
**Senses** passive Perception 13  
**Languages** any two languages  
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Necrotic Cyst.** The cyst-host priest can cast one mother cyst spell per day without expending a spell slot as a bonus action.

**Divine Eminence.** As a bonus action, the cyst-host priest can expend a spell slot to cause its melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 10 (3d6) necrotic damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the turn. If the priest expends a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the extra damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 1st.

**Spellcasting.** The cyst-host priest is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The cyst-host priest has the following cleric spells prepared:

**Cantrips (at will).** *chill touch, light, thaumaturgy*

**1st level (4 slots).** *cure wounds, guiding bolt, necrotic awareness\*, sanctuary*

**2nd level (3 slots).** *necrotic cyst\*, lesser restoration, spiritual weapon*

**3rd level (2 slots).** *dispel magic, necrotic burst\*, necrotic influence\*, necrotic scrying\*, spirit guardians*

\*New Mother Cyst spell described in this volume or Kazerabet's Art of Necromancy Volume I: Spells.

### ACTIONS

**Mace.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

*Many might bear a necrotic cyst their whole lives, without even knowing it. Sometimes they don't even realize the cyst has grown a mind of its own.*

-K