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DASTOW GAMES

MONSTER MAUSOLEUM

Seventeen undead horrors—old and new—for 5th edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



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for 5th edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS*

by DASTOW Games

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Introduction

The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game has more than 40 years of great monsters, spread out across multiple editions and hundreds of sourcebooks and adventures. No single-volume *Monster Manual* could hope to capture them all. In this volume, *Monster Mausoleum*, you'll find some of our favorite undead creatures, both old (like the penanggalan and huecuva from the 1981 *Fiend Folio*) and new (like the gaslight and the draugr, appearing here for the first time).

When we recently converted an adventure to the latest edition of D&D, we noticed something peculiar: a gap in the challenge ratings for existing undead. The 5th edition *Monster Manual* has no undead between CR 5 and CR 13, so when we created conversions of fan-favorite undead monsters, we focused on that range. Anyone who has spent time with the encounter-design math knows how important it is to have a wide spectrum of available challenge ratings.

Beyond that, we've endeavored to create monsters of moderate complexity—often more complex than their first-edition forebears, but simpler than the third- and fourth-edition versions. In general, it's straightforward for Dungeon Masters (DMs) to add complexity—and no one behind the DM's screen likes a monster with a lot of fiddly bits.

We weren't slavish devotees to the exact text of prior designs. We gave the devourer *locate creature* as a spell-like ability even though the version in the *Monster Manual* v3.5 doesn't have it, because we liked the idea of the devourer consuming one victim as it used magical means to stalk its next prey.

Be Grateful for Undead

From the very earliest days of D&D, undead monsters have been the go-to choice for tomb guardians, necromancer retainers, and ancient armies once again on the march. When the players find a thousand-year-old crypt or a buried dwarven city, the undead are there to provide them with an unfriendly greeting. Whenever you have an environment where more ordinary living creatures can't survive (like a sealed tomb), undead are a strong choice.

Challenge Your Cleric. Clerics have always had a special connection to the undead, too—no other class gets an ability aimed so squarely at a single creature type. If the cleric at your table hasn't had a chance to fire up the Channel Divinity ability lately, throw some undead into the mix and watch the divine energy fly.

Eternity Is a Long Time. Undead live forever,

and it's not necessarily clear how long that crypt thing has been guarding the tomb you're exploring. You can use the undead monsters of *Monster Mausoleum* and other books to reveal details of your game world's history. Even a by-the-numbers draugr may know things from its former life that are beyond the ken of the wisest present-day sages.

Unlife Stories. Finally, one of the things that make undead monsters special is how they were all once alive. Some (like some penanggalans) sought the immortality of undeath intentionally, while others (such as the bodak) were victims of tragic circumstance. Every undead monster comes with a story—and as the DM, you have the power to express that story to your players and bring your world to life...or unlife, as the case may be.

Modifying These Monsters

These monsters adhere rather closely to the monster creation guidelines set out in Chapter 9 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, so the advice for modifying monsters there applies here as well. As mentioned above, these monsters are mostly in the mid-range of challenge ratings, so you're as likely to shift them upward as downward. The Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table in that chapter should be the first place you look.

Perhaps the best way you can modify these monsters, though, is by grounding them in the sites and adventures you run. For example, maybe a particular crypt thing always teleports PCs to a specific trap-filled room or a purpose-built prison. Perhaps a particular tragedy created a caller in darkness—and defeating the caller leads the players to investigate the tragedy and somehow make amends.

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“Oh, monsters are scared,” said Lettie.
“That’s why they’re monsters.”

—Neil Gaiman

ALLIP

The allip doesn’t always seem to be aware of its current non-living status, but it has certainly come to terms with it’s own madness. Its constant stream of babbling may relate to the life it once led or it may not, but it rarely passes up a chance to reach out and get just a small taste of someone else’s sanity.

Stunning Conversationalist. The allip never stops muttering to itself. Some who have faced them and lived claim that if you get close enough, you can make out some of the words it’s saying, though exactly what those words are differs from account to account. Some say the allips mutter elaborate stories of heroism from their lives, while others claim they merely state a collection of random words, as though trying to jog their own memories of who they once were.

Psychically Unstable. Often thought to be the souls of those driven to suicide by madness, allips are particularly unstable when psychic abilities are used against them. Though immune to any psychic damage, they recognize when a creature psychically targets them, and they lash out swiftly. After a few rounds of combat, some have been known to reach deep into a combatant’s mind, latching on to the target’s psyche in hopes they might once again know the touch of sanity.

Incorporeal Form. From the waist up, it appears nearly as it did in life, though many features are stretched, skewed, or otherwise distorted. Below that, however, the rest of the body begins to fade away to nothingness—a simple ethereal cloud tapering off into vapor.

Undead Nature. An allip doesn’t require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ALLIP

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110 (20d8+20)

Speed 0 ft.; fly 30 ft.

Str 12 (+1) **Dex** 14 (+2) **Con** 12 (+1)

Int 14 (+2) **Wis** 13 (+1) **Cha** 18 (+4)

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, prone, restrained, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Aklo, Common

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The allip can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Mutter. The allip mutters to itself non-stop, creating a hypnotic effect. Creatures within 60 feet must make a saving throw (DC 15 Charisma) or be incapacitated for 1d4 rounds

(the DM hides this roll and keeps it secret from the player). Creatures that make the save cannot be affected by the same allip’s mutter for 24 hours.

Madness. A creature attempting to target the allip with any psychic attack or ability touches the allip’s misshapen mind, immediately taking 2d6 psychic damage.

Mind Grab. Once per day, when the allip attacks with incorporeal touch, it grabs hold of the target’s psyche, dealing an additional 19 (4d8+1) psychic damage, and target is frightened until the end of combat.

Actions

Incorporeal Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (4d4+1) necrotic damage.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

BODAK

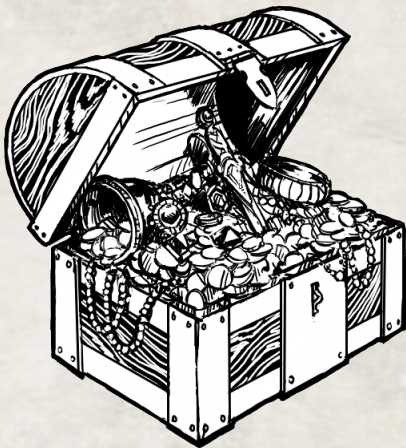
When the necromantic power of the undead meets the demonic energy of the Abyss, the result is a bodak: a mortal creature who has succumbed to death after torture in the Abyss. A bodak rises to inflict undead horror and demonic terror on mortals everywhere.

Most bodaks wander the Abyss, but rifts and portals sometimes take them elsewhere. A bodak that leaves the Abyss tends to live a solitary existence for one simple reason: Living things die when a bodak looks at them.

Gaze Upon Your Doom. The bodak's most fearsome ability is death gaze. Merely by looking at nearby creatures with its milky, alien eyes, the bodak can infuse the subject of its gaze with necrotic energy that weakens the connection between soul and body. For a bodak, this is one of the few pleasures in unlife: watching the last moments of a mortal's existence...until it rises as another bodak.

Alien Appearance. Bodaks bear only a vague resemblance to the humanoid creatures they once were. They are gray-skinned, sexless bipeds with elongated skulls, thin limbs, and only the most basic features: wide, white eyes, a vertical mouth, and long fingers. Every gesture is languid unless they're roused to combat. When they deign to speak, their voices are clipped and emotionless. To a bodak, emotion is just another trait of the living that cannot withstand the bodak's death gaze.

Demonic Curiosities. Bodaks haunt the evil lairs of the Abyss in much the same way that ghosts haunt places familiar to them in life. Most demons, immune to the death gaze, are content to let bodaks wander about their demonic lairs. Bodaks rarely speak, but they seem to understand Abyssal



just fine, so powerful demon lords can order them about as servants. Bodaks make ambivalent workers, though—the only thing that motivates them is their hatred for mortals and the desire to watch mortals perish, expunged by necrotic and demonic energy.

Undead Nature. A bodak doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

BODAK

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 170 (20d8 + 80)

Speed 30 ft.

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Str 14 (+2) | Dex 15 (+2) | Con 18 (+4) |
| Int 10 (+0) | Wis 14 (+2) | Cha 17 (+3) |

Skills Intimidation +7, Perception +6

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances cold, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Abyssal, Common

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Death Gaze. When the bodak starts its turn within 30 feet of other creatures, those creatures must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) necrotic damage and have their hit point maximum reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. Targets cannot avoid looking at the bodak or close their eyes to counter the gaze, because (unlike a medusa's gaze) it doesn't rely on them seeing the bodak, but on the bodak seeing them.

A humanoid slain by this attack while in the Abyss rises 24 hours later as a bodak, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed or removed from the Abyss.

Demons and undead are immune to the bodak's death gaze.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the bodak has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight. The range of its death gaze is reduced to 10 feet because it can't see as well.

Actions

Multiattack. The bodak makes two slam attacks with its fists.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 11 (2d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

BONECLAW

Misery may love company, but few things love company more than death—or, more specifically, the undead. Boneclaws especially love to use their particular gift to grant a false sense of security before skewering their prey. Though their origin story is shrouded in uncertainty—whether a dark creation or a mutacious evolution, we may never know—their size is anything but. Often standing over 8 feet tall, boneclaws may use guile, but they don't use stealth.

Extendable Claws. Perhaps the boneclaw's most noticeable features are its long, extendable claws. When the boneclaw is at rest, they grow and retract as they please, but when the boneclaw chooses, it can take full control, often surprising enemies who believe they are out of range. Without warning, it can extend the claws out beyond 15 feet at lightning speed, eviscerating its target in moments.

Terrifyingly Tall. While certainly not as big as

some monsters, the boneclaw is much bigger than most other undead. It towers over medium- and small-sized creatures, and even when it hunches over, it's about as tall as a human. It usually finds hiding difficult, and so dispenses with it all together—it has other ways to trick its prey than pretending not to be in the room.

Unknown Origin. Some say a necromancer created the boneclaws to fulfill a myriad of mythic purposes. Others say they simply evolved from lesser undead creatures. Maybe they were always part of the world, hiding deep underneath the ground—deeper than even dwarves dare to go—and used their immense claws to fight their way to the surface after running out of whatever sustained them. Perhaps they were the oldest inhabitants of the world or the original deities.

Anyone can speculate, but who can say for sure?

Undead Nature. A boneclaw doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

BONECLAW

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 190 (20d10+80)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 18 (+4) **Dex** 21 (+5) **Con** 18 (+4)

Int 12 (+2) **Wis** 12 (+1) **Cha** 16 (+3)

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Abyssal

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Necrotic Pulse. Once per day as a standard action, the boneclaw may release a pulse of necrotic energy, emanating out to 25 feet and centered on itself. Undead allies in the burst regain 20 hit points, and enemies in the burst take 20 necrotic damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The boneclaw can use its claws twice per turn.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 36 (5d12+4) slashing damage.

Reactions

Relentless Opportunist. If the boneclaw hits with an opportunity attack, it immediately makes another attack against the same target.

CALLER IN DARKNESS

A creature of distilled anguish, the caller in darkness is a black cloud containing the tortured souls of dozens of people who died together in darkness and terror. Winding its way among the ruins and dungeons of the world, it seeks to teach others to fear the dark as it did in life. At turns both clever and fearsome, the caller uses its psionic powers to mentally control underlings to act as servants and guardians—and fuel for its fearmongering when the caller in darkness feels threatened.

Psionic Cloud. The caller in darkness appears as an incorporeal black cloud, ever wavering and roiling. Creatures within 30 feet of it can see the faces of the creatures who died when the caller in darkness was born, as well as those minds it has absorbed since. The cloud moves and coalesces around nearby objects regardless of the wind's direction, and it can't be dispersed by strong wind.

The caller in darkness prefers to use telepathy to communicate, and it's capable of holding multiple conversations simultaneously. When it vocalizes anything, it's often just an inchoate roar. Additionally, because it's made of multiple consciousnesses, it tends to use plural pronouns like "we" when it talks about itself.

Be Afraid of the Dark. The caller in darkness's primary motivation is to spread fear and darkness throughout the world. It often lies at the center of a dungeon, sending its minions out to terrorize nearby communities and reveling in the fear and suffering those raids cause. Ideally, the raids initiate the conditions—multiple victims simulta-

neously dying in terror—that create a new caller in darkness. A caller thus tries to lure enemies into a trap or prison, and it directs its minions to kidnap victims rather than killing them individually.

Consuming Essence. The caller in darkness has many psionic powers, but several of them (including clairvoyance, darkness, phantasmal killer, suggestion, telekinesis, and dominate monster) have a duration of concentration. Ordinarily, a spellcaster

can concentrate on only one spell at a time, but the caller can temporarily overcome that limitation by absorbing the essence of a creature and using the Split Concentration legendary action. Some callers in darkness keep a ready supply of sacrificial victims for such a purpose, killing them with a psionic touch to steal their essence.

Undead Nature. A caller in darkness doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

CALLER IN DARKNESS

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 252 (24d10 + 120)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

Str 1 (–5) **Dex** 13 (+1) **Con** 20 (+5)

Int 14 (+2) **Wis** 15 (+2) **Cha** 18 (+4)

Skills Arcana +7, Intimidation +9

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Aura of Foreboding. Beasts can sense the unnatural presence of a caller in darkness. Beasts within 60 feet of the caller must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this caller's Aura of Foreboding for the next 24 hours.

Incorporeal Movement. The caller in darkness can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The caller in darkness's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will—*clairvoyance, darkness, detect magic, ray of sickness*

3/day each: *phantasmal killer, suggestion, telekinesis*

1/day: *dominate monster*

Steal Essence. When the caller in darkness's psionic touch

attack or *phantasmal killer* kills a living creature, the caller absorbs the victim's consciousness. Doing so grants the caller 25 temporary hit points for the next hour, and the victim's face appears in the roiling cloud of the caller, captured in a silent scream.

Each use of Steal Essence also powers one of the caller in darkness's legendary actions, as described below.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the caller in darkness has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The caller in darkness makes four psionic attacks, extruding wispy tentacles from its cloudlike body.

Psionic Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d10) necrotic damage.

Legendary Actions

The caller in darkness can take 1 legendary action for each essence it has stolen, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Each use of the Steal Essence ability allows the caller to take a legendary action once; its legendary actions don't automatically refresh the way a dragon's legendary actions would.

Split Concentration. For 1 minute, the caller in darkness can maintain concentration on one more spell than it previously could. This enables the caller to simultaneously dominate one creature while maintaining *suggestion* on another, for example. (The actual spellcasting happens during the caller's turn, but it now has the capacity for greater concentration.) The caller can take this action multiple times to concentrate on three or more spells simultaneously.

Delve into the Mind. The caller in darkness can cast one of the following spells as if they were part of the caller's innate spellcasting ability: *dream, geas, or modify memory*.

Spread of Darkness. The caller in darkness can likewise cast *blight* or *Evard's black tentacles*.

CRYPT THING

Appearing as nothing more than an animated skeleton wearing a flowing robe, the crypt thing remains one of the most easily identifiable undead to those who would use their spare time scouring tombs and unearthing graves. The profiteers who encounter crypt things often fill the taverns with stories of deeply embellished exploits—how they survived being teleported over a huge chasm or how the crypt thing fell victim to their unwitting charm.

Don't believe everything you hear at the pub.

Guardian of the Dead. A crypt thing can stand guard for anything housing the dead—a tomb, a grave, a mausoleum, or even a corpse. It rarely if ever moves from its guard spot unless faced with trouble. Occasionally, it may patrol to be sure all who are laid to rest are still doing so peacefully, but most of the time it appears almost inanimate.

Should trouble come to call, however, the crypt thing springs into action, ready to defend its lair against vandals, dungeoneers, and grave robbers.

Summoned into the World. Though some people claim crypt things can come into the world naturally, most are summoned by powerful wizards or priests explicitly to watch over the dead. These wizards and priests are not always aligned with the ways of evil—sometimes there is no better way to protect a fallen ally until proper arrangements can be made—but most often, they summon the crypt thing with exclusively nefarious purpose.

Teleportation. When the crypt thing springs to life, its first defensive action is always teleportation. It wants the intruders as far away from its lair as it can get them. It fights when it needs to and is capable in melee, but physically moving people away from what it's guarding is the first step toward getting them to leave.

Undead Nature. A crypt thing doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.



A Crypt Thing's Lair

As you might expect, a crypt thing's lair is a crypt—but not for the crypt thing alone. The crypt thing is rarely the most prominent denizen of a tomb; it is merely the guardian for the monarch, high priest, archmage, or other persona whose crypt it is. But as the undead guardian, the crypt thing has access to the crypt's many defenses as well as its own abilities.

When you construct a lair for the crypt thing, give it interesting traps and hazards within its chamber—preferably ones that stymie player movement and let the crypt thing rely on its *dimension door* spell. Place other monsters nearby (roughly half an ordinary encounter's worth) who can march into the crypt thing's lair as reinforcements. Give the crypt thing the means to make its defense against the intruding PCs a memorable one.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside its lair, a crypt thing can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the crypt thing takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- The crypt thing activates its Reposition ability, freeing it to attack or take another action on its turn.
- The crypt thing triggers a trap, hazard, or obstacle within 90 feet of it.
- The crypt thing calls in reinforcements (see above) from nearby.
- The crypt thing activates a ward that prevents easy escape for the rest of the round. Creatures can't teleport out of the crypt's area or use planar travel to leave it. The crypt thing's Reposition ability is unaffected.
- The crypt thing shakes violently for a moment and seems like it might collapse. Each creature other than the crypt thing on the floor of the crypt must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

CRYPT THING

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 132 (24d8+24)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 19 (+4) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Con** 12 (+1)

Int 14 (+2) **Wis** 14 (+2) **Cha** 16 (+3)

Skills Stealth +10, Perception + 6

Damage Immunities necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Resistances cold

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion, charmed

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The crypt thing's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *blight*, *hold person*

3/day: *dimension door*

Actions

Multiattack. The crypt thing can use claws twice each turn.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d8+4) slashing damage.

Reposition. As a standard action (or with a lair action; see p. 8), the crypt thing can teleport one target within 100 ft. to another random position within 400 feet of itself in any direction (DC 14 Wisdom save). Target cannot end in midair or inside solid matter; choose the nearest safe destination if this would otherwise occur. Roll 1d8 and use the following table to determine the target's final location.

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1 | 1d4 x 100 ft. north |
| 2 | 1d4 x 100 ft. northwest |
| 3 | 1d4 x 100 ft. west |
| 4 | 1d4 x 100 ft. southwest |
| 5 | 1d4 x 100 ft. south |
| 6 | 1d4 x 100 ft. southeast |
| 7 | 1d4 x 100 ft. east |
| 8 | 1d4 x 100 ft. northeast |

Legendary Actions

The crypt thing can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only 1 legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The crypt thing regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Move. The crypt thing moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Detect. The crypt thing makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Vile Curse (Costs 3 Actions). The crypt thing targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically cursed. Until the curse ends, the target has disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the curse on a success.

DEVOURER

Some undead creatures eat their prey (braaaaa-ins!), while others consume souls and life energy. The devourer does both, consuming a victim's mind, body, and soul to power its fell spellcasting and sinister life. As you might imagine from the devourer's name, hunger is its prime motivator. As the devourer stalks the pathways between the planes, there's usually a creature trapped within it, its lifeforce dwindling as the devourer seeks new prey.

You're Trapped Inside! The most powerful attack in the devourer's arsenal, Trap Essence is also the key to the devourer's other abilities. When the devourer traps a creature's essence, an emaciated, smaller version of the victim appears within the devourer's open ribcage, its features contorted in pain. The victim's allies have only a few rounds to

slay the devourer and rescue their friend, because the devourer will use essence from the victim to power its spellcasting.

Always Starving. No matter how many creatures it traps and consumes, the devourer always appears emaciated, with withered flesh clinging to grayish-green bones. Standing 9 feet tall, the typical devourer is a hunched-over biped with clawed hands and feet, and a mouth full of sharp teeth. It moves like a stealthy predator, loping across the terrain and giving little regard to anything other than where its next meal is coming from. It speaks with a tired, distant voice, as if it barely remembers how to talk or why it should.

Extraplanar Stalkers. Devourers are relatively rare on the Material Plane, though every time a portal or rift opens between the Material and the Ethereal or Astral Planes, devourers seek it out because the Material Plane is someplace they

DEVOURER

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 220 (21d10 + 105)

Speed 40 ft.

Str 18 (+4) **Dex** 12 (+1) **Con** 18 (+5)

Int 13 (+1) **Wis** 16 (+3) **Cha** 21 (+5)

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +5

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Common

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Magic Resistance. The devourer has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spell Diversion. If the devourer makes two saving throws against a spell or other magical effect (presumably because of its magic resistance) and both saving throws are successful, it can choose to have the spell target the creature within its ribcage, if it has one trapped there. That creature makes its own saving throw with disadvantage, and it is subject to the effect if the victim is a legal target for the spell.

Consume Essence. To power its spellcasting, the devourer consumes the life-force of a creature within its ribcage, captured there with the Trap Essence action described below. Once a victim is so trapped, the devourer can cast spells using the hit points of the trapped creature. The spellcasting section below lists the cost in hit points for each spell.

Innate Spellcasting. The devourer's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will (essence cost 10 hit points)—*ray of enfeeblement, suggestion*

At will (essence cost 20 hit points)—*confusion, locate creature*

At will (essence cost 40 hit points)—*planar ally, true seeing*

Ongoing Consumption. Even when it isn't fighting or casting spells, the devourer fuels itself with the essence of the creature it has trapped. Its victim loses 10 hit points per day it spends within the devourer's ribcage.

Actions

Multiattack. The devourer makes two claw attacks.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack may rise 24 hours later as a new devourer, though this is rare. The humanoid can't become a devourer if it is restored to life or its body is destroyed.

Trap Essence. The devourer targets one living creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be magically entrapped within the devourer's ribcage. The entrapped creature is stunned and can take no actions, though it writhes in pain and can perceive its surroundings normally. The creature is entrapped until either it dies or the devourer dies.

can feast. Among the mists of the Ethereal Plane or silvery haze of the Astral, devourers are more common. They stalk and attack anything that might provide even momentary power for them. If potential victims aren't immediately at hand, a quick casting of the *locate creature* spell will point the way to the devourer's next target.

Undead Nature. A devourer doesn't require air, food (normal food, anyway), drink, or sleep. Unlike most other undead, however, it does require sustenance in the form of essence obtained from its trapped victims.



DRAUGR

Fog, mist, darkness...then you see it: the horned helm, the greataxe, the stilted stagger. The draugr has come for you. The stories from taverns and travellers seem both overblown and diminishing at the same time: It doesn't *look* overly impressive, but the *feeling* it gives off is enough to make you consider turning back and abandoning your quest.

Desperate for Life. Draugr are born of the sea, insofar as they are born at all. Most commonly the result of violent deaths at sea, draugr reek of the ocean mixed with death and rot. Sailors, fishers, and raiders in life, they are most commonly found on abandoned or sunken ships or nearby a coast. Draugr cling to unlife, desperate to keep their own bodies animated—they want what they had before, and they're ready to take it.

Chill of the Grave. If you're standing in the way when the draugr swings its greataxe, that might just be the end for you. Besides the slashing damage, this blow also delivers necrotic and cold damage. One way to handle this is to be sure you're not in the path of the axe; another is to catch wise to its weakness. Dealing fire damage to the draugr temporarily stops its ability to deal cold damage, and radiant damage temporarily stops its ability to deal necrotic damage.

Raiders Beyond Death. The desire to pillage and plunder motivates most draugr, much as it did in life. Hordes of draugr leave a swath of destruction up and down northern coastlines, claiming blood and treasure...though they have no use for either. The instinct to plunder is a draugr's tenuous link to its former life; they pillage because taking from others reminds them of life. Perhaps if they plunder enough, the gods will see fit to end their



DRAUGR

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (mail armor, shield)

Hit Points 121 (22d8+22)

Speed 30 ft.; swim 30 ft.

Str 20 (+5) **Dex** 14 (+2) **Con** 12 (+1)

Int 10 (+0) **Wis** 11 (+0) **Cha** 14 (+2)

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common, but cannot speak

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Chill of the Grave. Creatures of cold and death, draugr hate and fear warmth and light. If a draugr takes fire damage, it can't deal cold damage for 1 minute (it attacks normally, but the cold component of its damage is ignored). If a draugr takes radiant damage, it can't deal necrotic damage for 1 minute.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (3d12+5) slashing damage, plus 25 (3d12+5) cold damage and 25 (3d12+5) necrotic damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (4d6+5) bludgeoning damage, and target must succeed on a DC 12 Con save or be disoriented, rolling with disadvantage for 1d4 rounds.

DRAUGR SKALD

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (hide armor, shield)

Hit Points 150 (20d8+60)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 17 (+3) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Con** 17 (+3)

Int 11 (+0) **Wis** 12 (+1) **Cha** 18 (+4)

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Chill of the Grave. Creatures of cold and death, draugr hate and fear warmth and light. If a draugr takes fire damage, it can't deal cold damage for 1 minute (it attacks normally, but the cold component of its damage is ignored). If a draugr takes radiant damage, it can't deal necrotic damage for 1 minute.

Spellcasting. The skald is an 8th-level spellcaster. its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The skald has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mending, message, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, dissonant whispers, faerie fire, longstrider, thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *enthral, shatter*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, fear*

4th level (2 slots): *compulsion, hallucinatory terrain*

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) piercing damage or 16 (3d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus 18 (4d10) cold damage and 18 (4d10) necrotic damage.

Dread Inspiration (4/day). As a bonus action, this ability functions like bardic inspiration with a d8.

DRAUGR CHIEFTAIN

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (mail armor, shield)

Hit Points 143 (22d8+44)

Speed 35 ft.

Str 20 (+5) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Con** 14 (+2)

Int 12 (+1) **Wis** 12 (+1) **Cha** 16 (+3)

Skills Athletics +13

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the draugr chieftain's choice that is within 60 feet of the chieftain and aware of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. Creatures who succeed on the

saving throw cannot be affected by the same draugr chieftain's imposing presence for 24 hours.

Chill of the Grave. Creatures of cold and death, draugr hate and fear warmth and light. If a draugr takes fire damage, it can't deal cold damage for 1 minute (it attacks normally, but the cold component of its damage is ignored). If a draugr takes radiant damage, it can't deal necrotic damage for 1 minute.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 31 (4d12 + 5) slashing damage, plus 31 (4d12 + 5) cold damage and 31 (4d12 + 5) necrotic damage.

Charge. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (4d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and as a bonus action the chieftain can try to shove the target with its shield. If successful, the target is either knocked prone or pushed 10 feet away from the chieftain.

“eternal sea-raid” and welcome them into the hall of heroes they were promised in life.

Not all draugr are raiders, however. Some were entombed while alive, buried with armor and weapons to act as an honor-guard for chieftains bound for Valhalla. But along the way, something went wrong: a flaw in the burial ritual, unhallowed

ground, or a curse that was never lifted. These draugr guard their masters' tombs and temples, waiting for a divine reward that will never come—and taking out their frustration and fury on interlopers who dare to disturb their slumber.

Undead Nature. A draugr doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

GASLIGHT

Travelling through swamplands is difficult for the most savvy of explorers, but many of those who venture into the bogs unprepared never venture back out. A body that decomposes in these swampy areas often putrefies faster than one in another setting, and when the body starts to emit gas, the life of the person inside leaks out with it, and they meld into one being. The gaslight takes the form of a gaseous skull. Mostly transparent, it glows a very faint green color as the gas flows around its shape.

GASLIGHT

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 36 (8d4+16)

Speed 0 ft.; fly 35 ft.

Str 5 (−3) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Con** 14 (+2)

Int 15 (+2) **Wis** 10 (+0) **Cha** 11 (+0)

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities prone, exhaustion, poisoned, grappled

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The gaslight can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Innate Spellcasting. The gaslight's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *blink*, *dissonant whispers*

Actions

Disorienting Fog. As a free action, the gaslight emits a thick fog, which billows out to a radius of 20 feet. Any creatures within the fogged area inhale and become confused (as the *confusion* spell) for 1d4 rounds.

Mislight. As a standard action, the gaslight can project a magical illusion that makes a light appear near its actual location, causing attack rolls to have disadvantage. If it is hit by an attack, this trait is disrupted until the end of its next turn.



Gaseous Form. Being composed of gas, the gaslight can travel as though incorporeal. It uses this to its advantage whenever possible; if pursuing an enemy, it takes the most direct path, even if that path is through a wall, ceiling, or floor. This form also allows it to hide more easily should it ever want to, whether for a surprise attack or because something much more powerful is chasing it.

Confuse and Disorient. Lost, confused, and disoriented upon the moment of its death, a gaslight seeks to make others feel that same loss of control. It whispers and flickers and tries to make its targets feel as though they are losing their minds.

GREATER GASLIGHT

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 90 (20d4+40)

Speed 0 ft.; fly 40 ft.

Str 8 (–1) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Con** 14 (+2)

Int 16 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1) **Cha** 11 (+0)

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities prone, exhaustion, poisoned, grappled

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The greater gaslight can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Innate Spellcasting. The greater gaslight's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *blink*, *dissonant whispers*

3/day: *suggestion*

Actions

Disorienting Fog. As a free action, the greater gaslight emits a thick fog, which billows out to a radius of 20 feet. Any creatures within the fogged area inhale and become confused (as the *confusion* spell) for 2d4 rounds.

Flicker. As a standard action, the greater gaslight can cause all nearby lights, whether flame or magical, to flicker rapidly and erratically. Creatures with standard vision up to 60 feet from the greater gaslight must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or suffer seizures, giving them disadvantage on Dexterity checks, Dexterity saving throws, and attack rolls that use Dexterity (as described in the *contagion* spell) for 2 rounds.

Then it suggests what they should do, and they feel compelled to follow its advice. It probably has their best interest at heart, anyway...

Light Interference. Most gaslights have at least some control over light sources. Some create a light to distract enemies from their true location, while others cause all the lights in a room or on a street to flicker to the point of causing seizures. There are many kinds of gaslight, and each one's control of light is a little different; no one has yet to compile a compendium of all the different things they can do.

Undead Nature. A gaslight doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

HUECUVA

Vows are serious business, but even more so to a deity. Clerics, druids, paladins, monks...they all make vows to their various deities, but not all intend to keep them. Like any endeavour with pomp or circumstance, some people are just in it for the show. Unfortunately, while no one loves having a promise broken, deities tend to take it particularly hard.

A huecuva was once a servant to the deities, but for whatever reason, broke its sacred vow and was cursed to walk forever as an undead creature. Unlike most undead, huecuvas were often good and just in life—or they appeared so to others. Though evil today, many were pillars of their faith communities and are spoken of with reverence by followers who don't know the whole truth.

Former Self. Huecuvas hold dim memories of their former lives, recalling certain aspects with particular clarity. They recall whichever order they belonged to or deity they served, though that reverence they felt in life has been twisted into a perverted hatred. During the day, they appear visibly like their old selves, but this illusion falls when night does. Its true form is a skeleton in tattered clerical vestments or robes, most often the same vestments of the deity they served in life.

Aura of Death. The huecuva revels in death. The energy it emits increases death wherever it goes, as combat scenes quickly turn into bloodbaths; creatures feel a momentary rush as their heart rates increase and they're flooded with a boost of energy, but they quickly realize they can't control themselves. They can't hold back, and they become overtired and irritable once combat ends.

The huecuva rarely cares if the victims are friends or foes; it thrives on creatures falling down around it, regardless of whose "side" they were on.

Punished by Plague. As part of their divine punishment, huecuvas carry a virulent disease within their dessicated bodies—usually sight rot, though some huecuvas carry other strains. The disease doesn't trouble the huecuva directly, but it's a reminder from the gods that even when they appear like their old selves, their very touch will infect the living and bring woe to those who pity the huecuva.

Undead Nature. A huecuva doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

HUECUVA

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 117 (18d8+36)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 15 (+2) **Dex** 14 (+2) **Con** 14 (+2)

Int 7 (–2) **Wis** 13 (+1) **Cha** 14 (+2)

Damage Resistances necrotic, cold

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Façade. During the day, the huecuva hides behind a perfect image of its old self, functioning similarly to the *disguise self* spell. Though the huecuva may look and sound exactly as it did in life, the scent of rot and decay is unmistakable. Any creature who interacts with the huecuva or notices the smell make make a Perception roll to see through the disguise. The illusion drops at night and is not contingent on the huecuva's awareness of time of day.

Aura of Death. Life-draining energy constantly radiates from the huecuva in an aura with a 30-foot radius. The aura moves with the huecuva, centered on it. All creatures within range, hostile or friendly, gain advantage on attack rolls.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d8+2) slashing damage, and target is infected with sight rot. Each time this attack hits someone who is already infected, the onset time of sight rot (usually 24 hours) is cut in half.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (4d6+2) bludgeoning damage, and target is knocked back 5 ft.

Variant: Rapid-Onset Huecuvas

Part of the drama of a huecuva battle is deferred, because the PCs won't deal with the sight rot disease (or know they've been infected) for several hours after they encounter the huecuva. If you need a more immediate threat, change the huecuva's attack line as follows:

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d8+2) slashing damage, and target must

MOHRG

Mass murderers who die before justice reaches them sometimes rise from the grave as mohrgs, as vicious in death as they were in life. A skeleton with a torso full of glistening viscera, the mohrg has an elongated, spiked tongue that paralyzes its prey.

Gaunt Grappler. The mohrg is a stealthy creature, stalking its prey from the shadows, and it has the patience of the undead, sometimes lying in wait for hours or days. More cunning than actually smart, it lacks the ability to track footprints or set up elaborate ambushes. It is single-minded in pursuit of its goal: getting within a bony arm's reach of its prey.

Slips You Some Tongue. Moreso than most melee combatants, the mohrg likes to get up close and personal with its victims. Ideally, it first uses its tongue to render a victim paralyzed and helpless. It then puts the victim in a bony embrace and squeezes until the enemy is dead.

If the enemy proves resistant to paralysis, the mohrg grapples anyway, and it's an effective wrestler. It's willing to grapple even a larger creature if it thinks it has a chance to win. Once the mohrg starts this move, it uses its tongue to fend off other combatants who would interrupt the scrap. Only if its unlife is in danger will it try to paralyze a foe it has already started to grapple.

Serial Killer. Mohrgs hate the living, yet they're desperate to return to life themselves. They were all serial killers or other villains who "got away with it," and they remember their crimes in chilling detail. Many reenact those crimes on new victims, but they don't get the sense of satisfaction they once did. A mohrg knows it'll never truly feel satisfied until it can somehow return to life and start its reign of terror anew. Mohrgs sometimes work for necromancers and liches who have promised them an eventual return to life...if such a necromantic ritual exists.

Undead Nature. A mohrg doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

succeed at a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be afflicted with a disease as described in the *contagion* spell.

When you choose from among the disease options for contagion, use whatever infection is most troublesome for a particular target: filth fever for a fighter, mindfire for a wizard, seizure for a rogue, and so on. If you can't decide, slimy doom is troublesome for any PC.

A rapid-onset huecuva has a challenge rating of 8.

MOHRG

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Con** 18 (+4)

Int 11 (+0) **Wis** 13 (+1) **Cha** 10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Stealth +9

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: The creature is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the mohrg can't slam another target (but it can use the paralyzing touch attack from its tongue). In addition, at the start of each of the target's turns, the target takes 20 (4d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Paralyzing Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw on the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

NIGHTSHADE

Nightshades—thankfully rare on the Material Plane—are coalesced darkness given evil purpose and great power. Native to the Shadowfell but drawing energy from the Negative Plane, nightshades lurk in the supernatural shadows, waiting to surprise the unwary.

Lesser undead tend to travel in a nightshade's wake, drawn by the necrotic energy they exude. The nightshade generally considers them to be miniscule pests and ignores them as best it can.

Solid Darkness. Nightshades are dark energy given a coherent form, but the necrotic energy cascades off them in waves. This Desecrating Aura weakens living creatures and renders them vulnerable to necrotic attacks from the nightshades themselves or other undead nearby.

Fell Spellcasters. Every nightshade is an accomplished spellcaster, capable of powerful magic—especially necromancy. They have an instinctive understanding of their spells and deploy them with cunning tactics. A typical nightshade will resort to

spells only if doing so gives it a significant advantage over using its prodigious natural attacks.

Experimental Creations? Sages and necromancers have long noted how the nightcrawler bears more than a passing resemblance to the purple worm, and the nightwalker is the same size and build as a cloud giant. Someone out there knows how to create more nightshades, but so far they've been able to keep the secret to themselves. For their part, the nightcrawlers and nightwalkers claim to not remember their former lives, and they exhibit a casual disinterest on the rare occasions when someone inquires about it. But are they truly incurious about their pasts, or is there something sinister at work?

Undead Nature. A nightshade doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

Nightcrawler

Resembling nothing so much as a chitinous worm of glossy black, the nightcrawler ambushes its prey by burrowing underneath, then emerging above the surface with a sharp tremor and a fearsome roar. Other undead sometimes follow in the nightcrawler's tunnel, arriving in the battle the round after the nightcrawler engages its next victims.

Nightwalker

A 20-foot-tall, slightly hunched biped, the nightwalker is a coal-black creature that wears no clothing and has few identifying features—no hair, no imperfections on its smooth skin, and no sign of sex organs. Only its gray, glowing eyes vary from its ebon frame.

The nightwalker is almost always on the move, perpetually wandering the wild places of the Shadowfell in search of battle. Only on the Material Plane will it cease its striding—and only because it hates sunlight and will seek refuge until nightfall.



NIGHTCRAWLER

Gargantuan undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 297 (18d20 + 108)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 60 ft.

Str 28 (+9) **Dex** 9 (–1) **Con** 23 (+6)

Int 18 (+4) **Wis** 20 (+5) **Cha** 18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +11

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Desecrating Aura. Any living creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the nightcrawler must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw, unless the nightcrawler is incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature has disadvantage on all attacks against the nightcrawler, and the creature gains damage vulnerability necrotic. Both effects last until the start of its next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the nightcrawler's Desecrating Aura for the next 24 hours.

Magic Resistance. The nightcrawler has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The nightcrawler's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will—*darkness, detect magic, dispel magic* (as 5th level)
3/day each: *blight, cone of cold, contagion*
1/day each: *finger of death, plane shift*

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the nightcrawler has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The nightcrawler makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d8 + 9) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the nightcrawler. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, and it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the nightcrawler. At the start of each of the nightcrawler's turns, creatures inside it take 10 (3d6) necrotic damage, and their hit point maximums are reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

If the nightcrawler takes 40 or more damage on a single turn from a creature inside it, the nightcrawler must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the nightcrawler. If the nightcrawler dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape one round later when the corpse dissipates into inky mist.

Tail Stinger. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 39 (6d12) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

“It looked as if a night of dark intent was coming, and not only a night, an age. Someone had better be prepared for rage...”

—Robert Frost

NIGHTWALKER

Huge undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 241 (21d12 + 105)

Speed 40 ft., fly 20 ft.

Str 22 (+6) **Dex** 14 (+2) **Con** 20 (+5)

Int 21 (+5) **Wis** 17 (+3) **Cha** 17 (+3)

Skills Athletics +10

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Desecrating Aura. Any living creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the nightwalker must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw, unless the nightwalker is incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature has disadvantage on all attacks against the nightwalker, and the creature gains damage vulnerability necrotic. Both effects last until the start of its next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the nightwalker's Desecrating Aura for the next 24 hours.

Evil Gaze. When a living creature that can see the nightwalker's eyes starts its turn within 60 feet of the nightwalker, the nightwalker can force it to make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw if the nightwalker isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. A creature that fails the save is paralyzed, and it can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success. The paralysis otherwise lasts for 1 minute. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the nightwalker's Evil Gaze for the next 24 hours.

The nightwalker's Evil Gaze relies on both creatures seeing each other, so the living creature can avert its eyes in much the same way that one does when encountering

a medusa (described in the *Monster Manual*). Unlike a medusa, a nightwalker is not affected by the reflection of its own gaze.

Magic Resistance. The nightwalker has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The nightcrawler's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will—*darkness, detect magic, dispel magic* (4th level)

3/day each: *blight, cone of cold, contagion*

1/day each: *finger of death, plane shift*

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the nightwalker has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The nightwalker makes two slam attacks with its fists.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Disarm and Destroy. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* The nightwalker grasps a weapon or other object held by the target. The nightwalker then makes a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) check. If the nightwalker wins the contest, it wrests control of the weapon or object from the target.

On its turn, the target can try to get the weapon or object back by winning the same contest.

If the nightwalker starts its turn with an enemy's weapon or object, it can use its action to crush it, succeeding on a Strength check of 20 or higher. The DM can impose disadvantage on the Strength check if the weapon or object is magical or particularly sturdy.

“The world's gone mad, he thought.

The dead walk about and I think nothing of it...

*How quickly one accepts the incredible
if only one sees it enough!”*

—Richard Matheson

PENANGGALAN

The penanggalan is a disembodied head that attaches itself to a headless corpse to walk around ordinary society in disguise. (Really.) When so disguised, only the most powerful magic can reveal the penanggalan. In its true form, it's a floating head, face twisted in anger, with lungs, heart, and guts hanging beneath and dripping caustic blood.

Free-Floating Gore. The penanggalan's true form is disquieting to gaze upon—and it's as dangerous as it is disgusting. The penanggalan's bite rivals that of a vampire, and the blood that drips from its viscera is a potent acid. While the penanggalan flies through the night on a hunt, those dangling organs swell until they're about to burst, and the penanggalan must soak them in vinegar before they'll shrink enough to fit back into the husk of a body it uses as disguise.

Hidden Among Us. The disguise a penanggalan wears on a daily basis lets it walk safely in the otherwise-lethal sunlight, and even the magic of most paladins and clerics won't reveal the penanggalan's undead nature. No undead creature is as effective at hiding its true nature as a penanggalan. Some maintain the same disguise for years, only changing bodies when the surrounding mortals notice that the disguised penanggalan doesn't seem to be aging as an ordinary humanoid would.

Willing or Unwilling? Some pen-

anggalans became undead by choice, undergoing a lengthy and horrid ritual to essentially behead themselves and rise to unlife. Others didn't have a choice in the matter—they became penanggalans when another penanggalan killed them and ritually raised

them as servants. The latter penanggalans gained their freedom only when their master was destroyed. Regardless of how they became penanggalans, they're all motivated by a nigh-insatiable urge to hunt.

The urge to hunt is so strong that even the most cautious penanggalan can resist the lure for only so long (generally a few weeks to a month). Sooner or later, the penanggalan feels compelled to cast off its husk of a body and fly through the night air, feeding on living creatures—and humanoids taste best. Before sunrise, the penanggalan flies back to its body, soaks its entrails in vinegar, then reattaches itself to its body. A quick wipe of the chin to clear away the blood spatters, and the penanggalan's unsuspecting friends and

family remain none the wiser.

Living Disguise. Most of the time, a penanggalan lives incognito in humanoid communi-



PENANGGALAN

Medium undead (Small when head is detached), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 212 (25d8 + 100)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (detached head only)

Str 20 (+5) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Con** 19 (+4)

Int 16 (+3) **Wis** 15 (+2) **Cha** 18 (+4)

Skills Deception +8, Insight +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +8

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Regeneration. The penanggalan regains 30 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight. If the penanggalan takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the penanggalan's next turn.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity (Detached Head Only). While a detached head, the penanggalan takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. It also has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Actions

Multiattack (Living Disguise Only). The penanggalan makes two attacks with its longsword (or another weapon if it's available).

Longsword (Living Disguise Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Detach Head (Living Disguise Only). As its action, the penanggalan can detach its head and internal organs from the rest of its body, leaving behind a headless husk of a humanoid body and floating in midair as a disembodied head with bloody entrails dangling beneath it. Once the head is detached, the penanggalan's available attacks change, it

can fly, and its Living Disguise no longer functions (obviously). The detached head is also susceptible to damage from sunlight.

Even for characters accustomed to a life of violence and gore, witnessing a penanggalan detach head from body is a disgusting experience. Living creatures within 30 feet of the penanggalan when it detaches must succeed at a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be nauseated for 1 round.

Multiattack (Detached Head Only). The penanggalan makes one bite attack and one slam attack by whipping its entrails about.

Bite (Detached Head Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage plus 18 (4d8) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the penanggalan regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way and then ritually decapitated rises the following night as a penanggalan under the original penanggalan's control. A penanggalan can have up to four enslaved penanggalans in this manner.

Slam (Detached Head Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 22 (4d10) acid damage from the caustic gore dripping from the entrails.

Legendary Actions

The penanggalan can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The penanggalan regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Move. The penanggalan moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Longsword (Living Disguise Only). The penanggalan makes one attack with its longsword or other melee weapon.

Bite (Detached Head Only; Costs 2 Actions). The penanggalan makes one bite attack.

Slam (Detached Head Only). The penanggalan makes one slam attack.

ties, appearing as a normal humanoid (usually a human and usually female, but exceptions exist). While disguised in this way, the penanggalan can't use attacks and abilities marked "Detached Head Only," but it doesn't register for *detect evil and good* spells, it isn't affected by *magic circle* and *protection from evil and good* spells attuned to undead, and divination spells of less than 6th level don't

reveal its true nature. The disguised penanggalan can also travel freely in broad daylight.

Once the penanggalan leaves its Living Disguise (using the Detach Head action described in the stat block), it can't return to its body unless it first soaks its exposed entrails in vinegar for at least 1 hour. Most penanggalans keep vinegar jars in their lairs and have several spares stashed in out-of-the-

Variants: Penanggalan Rogues and Sorcerers

Some penanggalans have spent several mortal lifetimes engaged in cloak-and-dagger activities. A rogue penanggalan wearing leather armor (AC 18) and wielding a rapier has a challenge rating of 13 (10,000 XP), Acrobatics +7, Athletics +9, Stealth +7, and the following additional action options:

Multiattack (Living Disguise Only). The penanggalan makes two rapier attacks.

Rapier (Living Disguise Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage, plus 21 (6d6) extra damage if the penanggalan has advantage on the attack roll or otherwise qualifies for sneak attack damage as a rogue would.

Some other penanggalans have developed an instinctive understanding of sorcerous magic. A sorcerer penanggalan has a challenge rating of 13 (10,000 XP) and has the following trait:

Spellcasting (Living Disguise Only). The penanggalan is a 8th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The penanggalan has the following sorcerer spells known:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward, mage hand, message, minor illusion, prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *charm person, detect magic, sleep*
2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility, scorching ray*
3rd level (3 slots): *haste, hypnotic pattern*
4th level (2 slots): *confusion, dimension door*

way places.

The penanggalan's headless husk of a body has as many hit points as the penanggalan has. If it's destroyed, the penanggalan can create a new Living Disguise by killing a suitable victim with its bite attack, then beheading and scooping out the existing internal organs in a ritual that takes all night. By dawn, the penanggalan has a new Living Disguise and can walk in daylight again, and over the course of a week, the head's features change to match those of the victim. If the penanggalan can spend that week in seclusion, others may be unaware that anything happened to the victim at all.

Undead Nature. A penanggalan doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

SKULL LORD

Sentinels and leaders among the armies of the undead, the skull lords bolster lesser troops while bringing potent spell attacks to the battle. A skull lord is calculating and ruthless, choosing the spell that will most frustrate and dismay its enemies—and advance the cause of its dark masters.

Three-Headed Menace. The skull lord is a skeleton dressed in finery, but with one key difference: It has three skulls arranged in a row atop its shoulders. All three heads can speak in harsh, sibilant voices, and they occasionally argue or cajole one another. The three heads are capable of independent thought, but they're united and loyal to one another. When a skull lord would be destroyed in battle, one of the skulls will sacrifice itself so the other two can carry on the fight. (Replacing a skull that sacrifices itself requires a costly ritual on the skull lord's part, so it's not a decision they make lightly.)

The skull lord dresses in whatever passed for

finery when it was alive, and it traditionally wields a staff of bone, through which it can channel necrotic energy.

Skeletal Commanders. Skull lords generally have a retinue of lesser undead, often wights or skeletons drawn to the skull lord's gift for strategem. A solitary skull lord is rare indeed—and probably scheming for a way to recreate a force of undead.

Because the skull lord is most effective at ranged combat, it will generally array its forces in front of it, then bombard enemies with skull attacks from behind the undead lines. The skull lord is capable in melee as well, however, and those who expect a frail spellcaster discover at their peril that the skull lord's bone staff is both accurate and lethal.

Spawn of Vumerion. The legendary human necromancer Vumerion created the first skull lords shortly after the collapse of his Black Tower—or the skull lords spontaneously rose to sentience in the aftermath of the tower's destruction (no one is sure which is true). Various rituals credited to Vumerion exist, each claiming the secret of creating the skull lords from a full skeleton and two extra skulls.

For their part, skull lords have a keen interest in the necromantic arts. Vumerion is no more, but some skull lords search for a way to bring him back to life...or unlife.

Undead Nature. A skull lord doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

SKULL LORD

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 18 (+4) **Dex** 15 (+2) **Con** 12 (+1)

Int 16 (+3) **Wis** 15 (+2) **Cha** 20 (+5)

Skills Intimidation +9, Perception +6

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Master of the Grave. At the start of each of the skull lord's turns, all other undead within 20 feet of it regain 5 hit points. This aura ends when the Skull of Death's Command is destroyed.

Actions

Multiattack. The skull lord attacks once with its bone staff and once with one of its available skull attacks. Alternatively, it can make two different skull attacks if it has at least two skulls remaining.

Bone Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 27 (5d10) necrotic damage.

Skull of Bonechilling Fear. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d10) cold damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the Skull of Bonechilling Fear's frighten effect (but not the cold damage) for the next 24 hours.

Skull of Death's Command. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 100 ft., one target. *Hit:* A telepathic connection is made between the target and the skull lord, and the skull lord can issue a simple and general command that the target will do its best to obey on its next turn, such as "Attack that creature," "Run over there," or "Fetch that object." If the creature completes the order or doesn't receive instruction from you, it defends and preserves itself to the best of its ability. The action can be dangerous, but it cannot be obviously suicidal.

Skull of Withering Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) fire damage plus 22 (4d10) necrotic damage.

Reactions

Triple Skulls. When a skull lord takes damage that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it instead destroys one of its skulls (its choice which) and loses access to the corresponding ranged attack (see above). If it has any skulls remaining, it instantly heals to full hit points. When all three skulls are destroyed, so is the skull lord itself.

Monsters by Size

Tiny

gaslight, greater gaslight

Small

penanggalan (when head is detached)

Medium

allip, bodak, crypt thing, draugr, draugr chieftain, draugr skald, huecuva, mohrg, penanggalan, skull lord

Large

boneclaw, devourer, caller in darkness

Huge

nightwalker

Gargantuan

nightcrawler

Monsters by CR

CR 3

gaslight

CR 6

greater gaslight, mohrg

CR 7

allip, huecuva

CR 8

draugr

CR 9

crypt thing, draugr skald

CR 10

bodak, draugr chieftain

CR 11

skull lord

CR 12

boneclaw, devourer, penanggalan

CR 14

caller in darkness, nightwalker

CR 16

nightcrawler

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