



In the Dark of Fright



*An adventure for
3rd-4th level characters*



This adventure takes place in and around the haunted ruins of a freed slave commune and is designed to be completed in one session by 3rd-4th level characters. Any combination of classes can be successful in this adventure, but a mixed group will have the best time of it.

Background

Thanarkka the Bold, cleric of The Guardian and successful abolitionist was already near the end of her adventuring days when, with a group of hardy companions, she liberated the slaves of a minor grel tribe. With the grel scattered, Thanarkka was left with the question of what to do with the three hundred slaves she had just freed. She was miles from the nearest settlement and the grel had left few supplies behind in their well-ordered retreat. A tracker attached to Thanarkka's group pointed the way towards a cluster of springs and, after a three-day march, the group encamped and Thanarkka planned her next move. It seemed that she had few options available to her. The slaves were mostly without trades and the nearby human communities were too poor to absorb such a large influx of refugees and suspicious of outsiders, to boot. She discussed plans with her companions for days, trying to find a solution, until she had an epiphany.

During the time she and her companions had spent deliberating, the former slaves had already begun to order the camp and organize the gathering and distribution of food and water. The outlying land was scrubland, true, but the springs here seemed to have an inexhaustible volume of freshwater. With work, the camp could be built up into a self-sustaining farming collective run by the former slaves. Thanarkka was able to garner church funds to buy seed and construction materials for the establishment of the new community (and, of course, a new chapel at its center). For fifteen years, the community, now called Maridu, prospered and grew. The people were not wealthy, but they were well fed and protected by their patron, Thanarkka. The cleric took on and trained deacons from within the population to preach her faith and because she was growing old, she began training a protégé, Resemel, who could one day replace her as the town's patron and protector. People were married, children were born, and soon the community numbered nearly four hundred members. That was when the grel returned.

The grel, humiliated by their former defeat, had retreated into the wilderness, raiding into south and gathering their strength. As their travels brought the grel back north, it did not take long for word of a town of former slaves led by a retired cleric to reach their ears. If the grel took the town, they could slay the cleric and retake their slaves to avenge their former humiliation. So, the grel struck early one morning as the farmers went out to their fields.

The grel attack was characteristically swift and ruthless. Groups of farmers were easily isolated and cowed by their former masters, while a core group of warriors set fire to outlying buildings both to spread confusion and draw out Thanarkka. Their ploy worked and Thanarkka, suspecting an attack by bandits, rushed out with Resemel and a few followers to drive off the interlopers. She was quickly surrounded by grel warriors. The grel pushed her back into the town square jeering as they formed a wide circle around Thanarkka and her retinue, shooting arrows at their feet and shrieking insults. Virslakt, the grel chieftain, strode into the circle and spit at Thanarkka's feet, saying it was below him to stain his blade on "such a withered creature." He gave the signal and as he turned away the assembled warriors shot seventeen arrows into the noble cleric. She died bleeding out into the dusty town square. The warriors chortled at their sport and laughed all the harder when Resemel picked up his fallen mentor's sword and pointed it towards Virslakt in his shaky grip. Virslakt smiled and invited Resemel to take a swing; if the young could draw blood, then he could go free. Virslakt half-turned to smirk at his warriors and was caught off guard when an enraged Resemel immediately charged forward and thrust the blade towards the grel's face. Virslakt went to pivot, but his foot struck against a stone under the dusty town square and the grel stumbled. Resemel's blow struck home and the sword pierced Virslakt's eye and embedded itself in his brain. The chieftain's body crumpled to the ground.

There was a moment of disbelief. The grel warriors had stopped laughing and stood dumbfounded, waiting for their leader to rise back up. But, Virslakt did not rise to his feet. Blood pooled around his head and mixed with the dust of the town square. A single voice cried out "blood for blood!" from the crowd and was quickly answered in kind. The grel no longer cared about retrieving their lost slaves— only vengeance for their chieftain. The grel tied Resemel to a tree and forced him to watch as they massacred the town, one

person at a time, to make an example. Grel priests cursed the ground where their chief had fallen thrusting their chieftain's spear into the earth and performed their horrific funerary rites for days-- only leaving once no more victims remained to sacrifice. Resemel they killed last, flaying and burning him until he finally expired in terrible agony.

The rituals of the grel priests tainted the land, corrupting it beyond recognition. The earth turned gray and any crops that still grew withered immediately, their fruit spoiling on the vine. Weeks after the grel had departed, Resemel's body began to stir and he awoke as a draugr, pulling himself down from the tree where he had been tortured to death. Unable to face the horror of reality and still in the throes of his transformation, Resemel stripped the body of Virslakt and girded himself with his torturer's armor, retreating into his ever-deepening psychosis. For fifty years, Maridu has lingered on, home now only to restless ghosts and a madman.

This adventure is not a standard dungeon crawl, but a sandbox. There is no linear course that the exploration of Maridu has to take. As GM you will need to be ready to respond to your players' exploration of the town by already having studied the text of the adventure. While there are several set piece encounters, most of the fun of this adventure lies in the generative gameplay it encourages. The GM will need to keep track of and direct the actions of several wandering monsters as they opportunistically attack the PCs.

Puma Attack

Encounter: Two Mountain Lions

👁 Off in the distance, under a slate gray sky, you spot what looks to be the spire of a church rising above a collection of low buildings. Further inspection is interrupted, however, by a shriek-like baying from behind you. From a rocky escarpment, two large, tawny coated felines charge down, loping towards you, eyes focused with deadly intent.

Before the PCs can reach Maridu, they are spotted by a mother mountain lion and her nearly full-grown cub. Hunting has been poor for the pair and the animals are willing to take a chance running down possibly dangerous prey. The PCs are most likely no match for these creatures. PCs who retreat into the town will not be pursued by the pumas, but the beasts will continue to circle the town, going after anyone who tries to leave.

2 Mountain Lions : (350 EP ea): HP 35, 30; Init -3; Spd 5; Atk +7; Dmg 2d4p+2 (claws); Def +4; DR 3; ToP: 14 & 12/5; Jog 25 ft/sec; Tenacity: Nervous; Size M; Saves: P +7, M +6, D+7,



Graybeard's Traumatic Childhood

Setting: Small Town

Bait: The retired farmer Bedron remembers very little about his childhood home of Maridu and most of his knowledge of the settlement is based on what little his adoptive parents told him. When the Grel came to reclaim their slaves, Bedron was only five years old. Part of the first generation to be born free in the settlement, Bedron lived with his mother and father near the town square. His parents contributed to the community by hunting and trapping game in the surrounding scrubland. On the day of the attack, on their way back from checking their traps, Bedron's parents spotted a plume of black smoke coming from the direction of Maridu. Watching from a ridge, they witnessed the Grel systematically exterminating their town. Wasting no time, they took little Bedron and ran to the north, trying to put as much space as possible between themselves and the massacre. They never told Bedron what they saw, but the old man suspects they must have witnessed something truly hideous to keep the information from him. Bedron does not know anything about Maridu's history or even that the Grel massacred the population, just that it was destroyed for some reason and that people avoid the place. He also knows the location of the ruins and can give accurate and simple directions for anyone who wants to travel there.

Pay it Back

Setting: Small Town

Bait: If a party contains a cleric of the Face of the Free, he will be approached by two church representatives who ask him to investigate the chapel of Maridu to see if he can find any lost artifacts of the posthumously beatified Thanarkka. There is no reward promised for this mission—this one's coming from up top. The church representatives are unsure of where the town actually is, but suggest asking older members of the community who might remember its location. If asked about the history of Thanarkka, the church representatives will be able to tell the official version of her history: that she founded Maridu with a group of freed slaves and was eventually martyred when the town was burned to the ground—by whom, it is not known.

Blood Suckers

Setting: Inn or Tavern

Bait: PCs overhear two ranchers gossiping amongst each other. "I brought my herd out a bit farther than usual to get at that good grazing land out by the ridge



trail. Well, queer thing was, when I went back to collect 'em all, I found some of my sheep dead. Now here's the thing, it weren't no cougar that did this. I've seen that nasty business before and this just wasn't one of them. Y'see, there was just two bite marks on the sheep who died. About this far apart. What do you think could'a done that?" He indicates a distance of about four inches with his thumb and forefinger when demonstrating the distance between the bite marks to his friend. If questioned by the PCs, he reveals that not all of his sheep who were bitten died, but most of them that didn't got "damn sick" and he was forced to put them down. If asked about where this took place, the rancher will describe a location around ten miles outside of Maridu and on the route proposed by old Bedron (see, Graybeard's Childhood Trauma, above). The bites were caused by the giant vampyre bat which lives in Maridu's church belfry during its nightly hunts. The sickened sheep are not enchanted but were merely rendered weak enough to be affected by the many diseases in the bat's saliva.

One Cougar Met-in-Camp

Setting: tavern or Inn

Bait: A drunken ox driver is loudly telling anyone that will listen about his recent run in with a mountain lion. "And there I was, jus' broke camp. Trundlin' along with Gerta, she was my ox, you know—with Gerta pulling the cart. Normal day. Everything's fine, everything's normal and then BLAM! Out of nowhere leaps a got-damn puma onto Gerta's back! Now I'm yelling, Gerta's going wild and this mountain screamer is ripping her to shreds, you know? Going right for the throat. Well, Gerta's legs start to buckle and I decide I'm not going to follow her to the big pasture in the sky, so I run like hell the last three miles back here to town. That's the thing to remember about cougars, y'see... what was I saying? Oh, right. That's the thing to remember about cougars: I've never seen one follow a person into a village. Never in my life. Not even once."

Maridu

Encounter: 6 Ghoulings

👁 The outskirts of the town are choked with ruined structures. Support beams rise out from heaps of rubble and dilapidated shacks creak in the cold breeze.

Unbeknownst to the PCs, they are being watched as they enter the ruins of Maridu. Six ghoulings watch from their hiding places within the rubble. The ghoulings will wait for the PCs to pass by far enough so that the ghoulings can rush out all at once to attack them with their claws and teeth. The ghoulings are eager for new victims to play with, and the PCs look like the perfect candidates. When the ghoulings make their surprise attack, read the following aloud:

👁 Suddenly, high-pitched giggling rings out from all around you. Before you have time to react, six misshapen bipedal creatures rush out from under the ruins, reaching out with tiny clawed hands and hooting with laughter!

The ghoulings are natural cowards; and if two of their number are slain, then any survivors will retreat back into the ruins and join the pool of available ghoulings.

6 Ghoulings : (48 EP ea): HP 16 ea; Init -1; Spd 3; Atk +2; Dmg d4p, d4p, & d6p (claw, claw, bite); Def +5; DR 1 ToP: n/a; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Fearless; Size S; Saves: P +2, M immune, D+6,

Many of the remaining structures of Maridu are in ruins (indicated in red on the map). GMs can use the following to describe the appearances of the structures:

👁 What was once a wattle and daub house now is little more than its constituent parts. A single door frame still stands up in the midst of the rubble.

👁 This weatherworn structure is caked in dust. The roof has collapsed inward, and weeds grow thickly in the wreckage.

👁 Outside of this aging cottage is a miniature structure that may have once been a doghouse. The inhabitants are likely long dead.

👁 The wind winds its way through the fluttering canvas shreds of a ruined sunshade over the front of this shack. With things as grim as they are in this town, you find it hard to imagine the sun shining here.

👁 Another pile of rubble. Another former home.

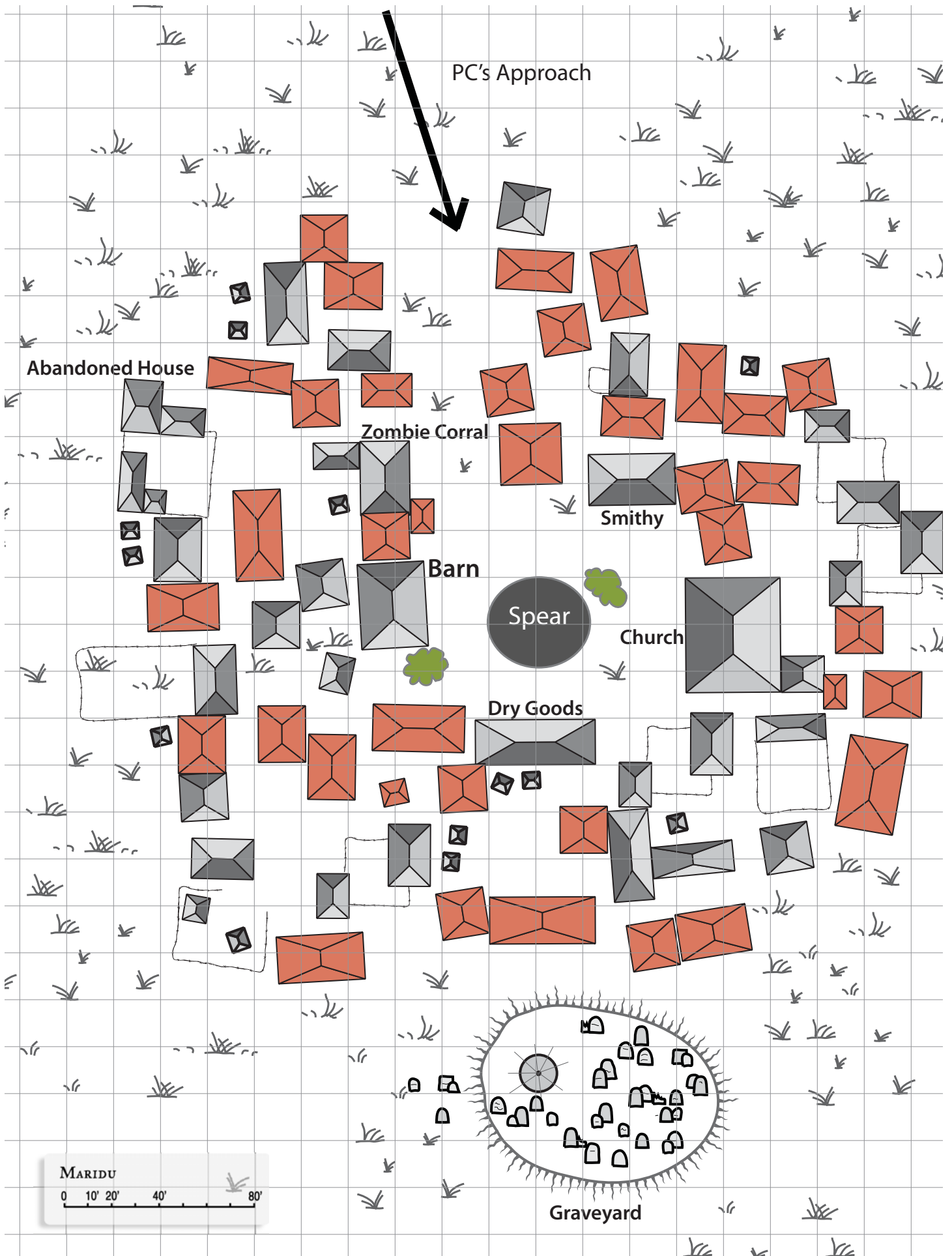
The Lurker Above

Encounter: Giant Vampyre Bat

👁 With an ear-splitting shriek, a winged creature takes to the sky from near the center of town. As it flaps its black wings, the bell tolls, ringing out a morose dirge that echoes through the deserted streets.

Any combat or other noisy activities in Maridu will awaken the giant vampyre bat from its resting place high in the belfry of the Free Church of Maridu. Once awakened, the bat will take to the air, causing the church bell to toll ominously. Once the bat is activated, it will continually circle the town, waiting for an opportunity to swoop down and attack any PC who becomes separated by 30 feet or more from the rest of the group. The bat will not attack those who travel in groups of two or more. The door to the belfry is barred from inside the church, so the bat has no way of entering the inner sanctum.

Giant Vampyre Bat : (75 EP): HP 21; Init -1; Spd 8; Atk +4; Dmg 2d4p (fangs); Def +3; DR 1 ToP: 9/5; Fly 30 ft/sec; Tenacity: Nervous; Size S; Saves: P +2, M +3, D+6,



Town Square

You emerge into what looks to have once been a town square. Larger, more intact buildings ring the common area; and a steepled stone church looms like a sentinel over a bizarre sight. Near the center of the square, in front of a crooked, withered tree, four skeletons lie on the ground, encircling what looks to be a black spear driven into the ground.

The wooden shaft of the spear is as black as ebony. The raven's feathers that hang from the weapon shine with a luster that appear totally undimmed by time.

This weapon carries a terrible curse. A non-evil character that attempts to wield the weapon will suffer constitution drain (as from a barrow wight's touch) as soon as his hands grasp the spear. An evil character may wield the spear without this difficulty. Further information on the spear can be found in *All Things Magic*.

Daarmmer

Encounter: 3 Greletons

Four sets of skeletal remains encircle a black spear stuck into the ground. For several yards around the strange tableau, the earth is totally blackened--not even a solitary weed pokes it way out from the ground here. A small pit has been dug into the earth near the skeleton closest to the withered tree. The top of the tree sways gently as the wind sighs through its naked boughs.

The church looks sturdy and well built. Its exterior is made from clay; and in places where this outer covering has chipped away, it's plain to see that underneath the building is made from stone. Two large double doors girded with iron bands stand before you.

PCs will have to pass through an antechamber before they enter the church proper. The western wall of the room is covered in ghouling drawings, and there are three rectangular outlines where paintings used to hang. Above these blank outlines is a portrait of a red-haired woman beginning to gray. A nameplate near the bottom of the painting reads "Thanarrka."

This is the site of the grel priests' terrible ritual and the grave of Virslakt. The grave was dug up by Resemel shortly after he rose as a draugr; and the corpse of Virslakt is merely a mundane skeleton. PCs who take a close look at the skeletons can tell that the bones look too short and narrow to be those of a human being. An elven PC will be able to identify them as elven bones. Inside the grave there are some dirty scraps of old clothes (the former vestments of Resemel, before he exchanged them for Virslakt's armor and garb).

The three paintings that once hung here depicted the two former deacons and Resemel. Each painting has a small nameplate at the bottom with the subject's name etched on it. The paintings were stolen by the ghoulings and are now located in the dry goods cellar, a ruined building near the edge of the town, and the barn's hayloft.

If the PCs approach within 20 feet of the spear (i.e., step onto the blackened earth), three greletons will rise up (excluding the skeleton nearest to the grave), brandishing their stone-tipped spears and defending themselves with strange, irregularly shaped small shields to attack the PCs.

The paintings are well made and have intrinsic value as works of art. If sold to a patron of the arts, the paintings can fetch 20 sp each. However, if the buyer is a follower of the Face of the Free and recognizes the portrait of the recently beatified Thanarrka, he will be willing to pay 200 sp for that painting alone.

3 skeletons : (67 EP ea): HP 28, 28, 34; Init +4; Spd 12; Atk +1; Dmg 2d6p-1 (lithic spear, -1 dam vs M armor, -3 dam vs H armor); Def +5; DR 3 ToP: n/a; Jog 10 ft/sec; Tenacity: Fearless; Size M; Saves: P +1, M immune, D+1,

If the PCs get a closer look at Virslakt's spear, read or paraphrase the following:

Inside, the church is disarray but surprisingly intact apart from some scorch marks on the walls. None of the hostile creatures from around Maridu will enter the consecrated inner sanctum of the church. The PCs may want to use this chamber as a place to rest and regain their strength. If they stay in the church for more than

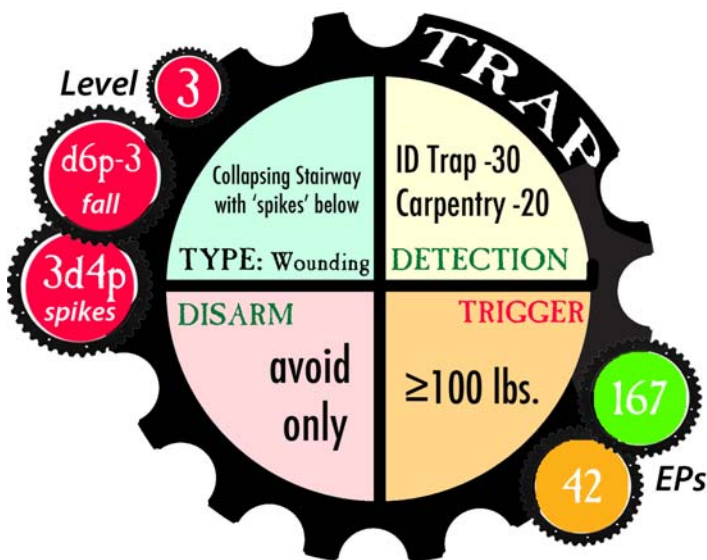
four hours, an apparition will appear. The apparition appears to be a man in his middle years, but pin-cushioned with arrows. In life, this apparition was Deacon Fonomar, one of Thanarkka priests-in-training. The Deacon thinks that it is highly inappropriate to use the church as a campground and will ask the PCs to leave if they are merely here to “loaf about.” If PCs try to sleep in the church anyway, then the Deacon will moan, shake chains, and generally make enough noise to guarantee no one can get any rest.

Conversely, the Deacon will be eager to answer any questions the PCs may have about the history of the town; but has a difficult time remembering anything after his own death. The Deacon can be used by the GM as a source of information for players and can be placed in another building if the PCs are totally lost and need a push in the right direction. Fonomar believes that the profane rites of the Grel have cursed Maridu and worries that the souls of those killed here will never truly be at rest until the curse is lifted. How one is supposed to accomplish that, however, he does not know.

Large Barn

Encounter: 2 Ghoulings

👁 Next to the church, this appears to be the largest structure in town. Two large doors hang open, barely attached to the rusted hinges.



This barn once held livestock the former residents of Maridu used as beasts of burden and as food sources, but these animals died long ago. Above the PCs, in the hayloft of the barn, two ghoulings are barely suppressing their exuberant laughter, waiting for the PCs to pass beneath them so that the little monsters can drop a heavy iron cauldron down onto their heads. **GM's Note: Dropped object damage penetrates on an 11 or a 12.**

👁 Mocking laughter rings out as a heavy cauldron topples down towards your head!

After pushing the cauldron down, the ghoulings will erupt in laughter but escape out of the hayloft to a nearby roof and disappear into the ruins, joining the pool of available ghoulings.

2 Ghoulings : (48 EP ea); HP 16 ea; Init -1; Spd n/a; Atk -6; Dmg d12p+2 (dropped cauldron); Def +5; DR 1 ToP: n/a; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Fearless; Size S; Saves: P +2, M immune, D+6,

One of the missing paintings from the church is in the barn's hayloft, it depicts a human woman in her mid forties and the nameplate reads “Deacon Benali.”

Dry Goods Store

Encounter: 3 Ghoulings

👁 The door of this building is nowhere to be seen. The outer walls are covered with children's doodles.

This building was once a dry goods store serving the community, but now serves as the main den of the ghoulings. The interior is completely helter-skelter. The walls are covered in doodles and drawings and any goods of value that may have once been in the store have been dashed to pieces or otherwise ruined during the ghoulings' boisterous play. Three ghoulings are hiding in the mess here, ready to throw garbage and taunt the PCs. If the PCs give chase to them, the ghoulings will retreat into their den in the store's cellar in attempt to lead the PCs over the trapped staircase down. Any PC weighing 100 pounds or more who steps onto the third step in the rickety staircase will fall down onto the upturned pitchfork heads below, skewering himself and taking fall damage (see the trap rose). The only PCs who should be given a chance to spot this trap are

those who specifically state they are inspecting the staircase.

The cellar is a dead end, and the ghoulings, once cornered, will fight ferociously to either kill their attackers or escape (though the latter is unlikely due to their slow speed). Read or paraphrase the following when PCs make it into the cellar:

👁️ The stairs leading down into the cellar crack under your weight as you descend but do not break. The room in front of you is piled high with rotting blankets and pillows. In different places throughout the room, collections of bones lay in little heaps.

👁️ The stairs leading down into the cellar crack and break under your weight! You plummet down into a pit onto the sharp tines of three pitchforks!

One of the missing paintings is hidden amidst the piles of junk in the cellar. It depicts an aged man with an easy smile. The nameplate reads “Deacon Fonomar.”

3 Ghoulings : (48 EP ea): HP 16 ea; Init -1; Spd 3; Atk +2; Dmg d4p, d4p, & d6p (claw, claw, bite); Def +5; DR 1 ToP: n/a; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Fearless; Size S; Saves: P +2, M immune, D+6,

Abandoned House

👁️ The tumbledown hut in front of you appears totally unassuming, little different than its neighbors.

This abandoned house holds the painting of Resemel. In life, Resemel was a very stern man and was not well liked by the children of Maridu. Because the ghoulings are very fearful of the draugr Resemel, they have removed the painting of him to the house farthest from their favorite haunts. If a PC succeeds on an (Average) Observation check, he notices that this house is the only one in town with no ghouling graffiti on the walls.

Smithy

Encounter: 4 Ghoulings

👁️ This building's roof is half collapsed, exposing a tall, clay chimney. Fallen support beams jut out from the structure like spears in a killed boar.

During the Maridu's few years of prosperity, this building was a smithy tending to the meager needs of the community at large. Two ghoulings crouching near the back of the smithy will spring from their positions if a PC enters the building (or turns his back on them) and hurl whatever they can get their hands on at him (horseshoes, tongs, small hammers, bricks, etc.). While those ghoulings distract the PCs, a second pair will circle around the side of the building to attack from behind. When the second pair of ghoulings joins the fight, the original pair will rush into melee.

2 Ghoulings : (48 EP ea): HP 16 ea; Init -1; Spd 3; Atk +2; Dmg d4p, d4p, & d6p (claw, claw, bite); Def +5; DR 1 ToP: n/a; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Fearless; Size S; Saves: P +2, M immune, D+6,

2 Ghoulings : (48 EP ea): HP 16 ea; Init -1; Spd 7; Atk +2; Dmg d6p-3 (thrown objects); Def +5; DR 1 ToP: n/a; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Fearless; Size S; Saves: P +2, M immune, D+6,

Zombie Corral

Encounter: 5 Zombies

👁️ This earthen structure is conical in shape. It has no windows, and the set of double doors leading in is held shut with heavy chains and a rusty padlock.

This building was once Maridu's granary, but was defiled during the grel attack. The grel threw piles of corpses into the granary, and forced other farmers to “thresh” the bodies before they themselves were killed. The granary still holds 30 discarded corpses, rotted to skeletons lying amidst piles of dust. When the door is opened, or if there is a significant amount of noise outside the doors, then the five zombies hidden under the bones will arise and begin shambling towards the PCs. The doors open outward, so the zombies merely have to put their weight against the doors to open them, even if the PCs barricade the door.

If the PCs try to use their own strength to hold the door shut, then they have to succeed on a Feat of Strength check versus d20p against one zombie. Each additional zombie who comes to push on the door adds an additional +3 to the roll, so that two zombies would roll d20p+3, three zombies would roll d20p+6, four zombies would roll d20p+9, and five zombies all pushing together would roll d20p+12. PCs can use the same method to hold the door shut (additional PCs grant the main door holder a bonus to his Feat of Strength check). GMs are encouraged to take advantage of PCs holding the door shut by sic'ing ghoulings on them in their moment of vulnerability. There are no large objects to barricade the door with within reach.

Once the zombies get loose, they will continually shuffle after the PCs. If the PCs escape from the slower adversaries altogether but leave them alive, then the PCs will stumble across a lone zombie every five minutes. If one of the zombies is killed, then the interval increases to every ten minutes. If two are killed, the interval increases to fifteen minutes, then twenty minutes, then twenty five minutes when only one remains.

5 Zombies (100 EP ea): HP 32 each; Init +6; Spd 10; Atk +4; Dmg 0(grab) then 1d4p (*automatic rending once 2 hits are made by any combo of zombies*); Def 0; DR 8; Will 3; ToP n/a; Size M; Move 5 ft./sec.

Graveyard

Encounter: Draugr

Potential Yield: Bronze torque inlaid with two green peridot stones (200 sp)

☞ A hill rises a little way outside of town. The hill is dotted with tombstones in varying states of decay, and there seems to be a sort of tent erected at its base.

The graveyard is where Resemel, now a draugr, has taken up residence for the past fifty years. The tent is a grel-style yurt, constructed from scraps of fabric and leather scrounged from around town. The draugr has exhumed bodies from the graveyard and set them up in various arrangements as if they were living people. Approaching the tent will cause the draugr to emerge. The draugr will not attack the PCs on sight, as he has difficulty distinguishing friend from foe.

☞ A gaunt figure emerges from the tent, dressed in molding leather armor, with a bronze snake torque around his neck. An unkempt reddish beard protrudes from under his helmet, and long hair clings to his neck and shoulders. With a rasp, he begins to speak in unaccented Kalamaran, "Who dares to seek audience with the great and powerful Virslakt, chieftain of the grunge elves?"



The draugr acts as he believes a grel chieftain would act, to the best of his knowledge. However, the PCs may notice a fair few inconsistencies with his statement.

- ▶ The draugr speaks in clear, unaccented Kalamaran; and if any PC tries to speak to him in Sarlangan, he will be unable to understand.
- ▶ The draugr sports a long reddish beard (which grel cannot grow).
- ▶ A PC who succeeds on a (Average) Observation check will notice that he wears a holy symbol of The Guardian (something a grel would never wear). Ordained worshipers of the Guardian will notice this inconsistency without needing to roll.
- ▶ The term “grunge elf” is derogatory, and a grel would never refer to himself as such.

Depending on how the PCs answer his question, the draugr may react one of three ways.

1. The PCs try to pass themselves off as grel. If the PCs say that they are grel (regardless of their actual appearance) the draugr will relax and congratulate them on their success in taking the town so easily. He will then order them off to gather up the slaves, so that the tribe can get on the move again. If the PCs point out that there are no slaves to gather (or any other inconsistencies), the draugr will beat his fists against his head, shudder, and then begin his speech again, as if he is caught in a loop. The draugr cannot mentally cope with information that contradicts his psychosis and responds by avoiding the thoughts.

2. The PCs say Resemel’s true name aloud. If the PCs say the name “Resemel” aloud (or show him his portrait), then the draugr will experience total clarity and remember his true identity. With the realization of what he has become, the draugr will beg the PCs to end his suffering and destroy him. The draugr knows that the gauntlets on his hands can be worn to draw the spear from the ground, ending the curse. He will offer to draw it out for the PCs, if they promise to finally end his life in exchange.

3. The PCs identify themselves as anything else than grel. Acting as he believes a grel chieftain would, Resemel snarls, “Then you die!”, before howling out an Angawa Battle Cry (which he attempts but cannot do) and rushing to the attack.

Draugr : (425 EP): HP 45; Init 0; Spd 10; Atk +7; Dmg d4p + CON drain (chilling touch); Def +1; DR 14 ToP: n/a; Jog 10 ft/sec; Tenacity: Brave; Size M; Saves: P +8, M immune, D+7,

Conclusion

Once the spear is drawn from the ground, the clouds above Maridu will part. Any remaining ghoulings and zombies instantly fall to the ground, their spirits rising up from their destroyed bodies. All around the town, wispy spirits happily rise into the air and dissipate, free from their torment. Resemel the draugr was created by his own hatred and not by the grel rites, so he will remain until killed by the PCs. Deacon Fonormar will be overjoyed that his flock have been freed and will lead PCs to a secret hidey hole underneath one of the flagstones in the church’s floor. Inside are two vials of holy water and a minor healing potion. Once he has passed these treasure on to the PCs, he will spend one final day in the church before dissipating himself.

Potential Story Awards:

- Returning Resemel to his true state of mind and lifting the curse on Maridu (1900 EP) *or*
- Lifting the curse on Maridu without returning Resemel to his true state of mind (1000 EP) *and possibly...*
- Learning Resemel’s identity after he has already been killed (100 EP)

Credits

Author: John McConnell

Design Consultant: Steve Johansson

Proofreader: George Fields


Appendix: Ghoulings and How to Use Them

The ghoulings that appear throughout Maridu were once mortal children who survived the massacre by hiding in cellars or in other hard to find nooks and crannies. When they finally emerged from hiding, days after the massacre had ended, the town had already been cursed. Unsure of where to go and desperately hungry, the children clung together, surviving on rotting food and slowly succumbing to the corruption now pervading the area. Over time, they began their gradual transformation into ghoulings.

The ghoulings have the run of Maridu. The many ruined buildings throughout town are treated as obstacles to Medium size creatures, but Small size creatures are able to pass through the buildings with impunity thanks to the numerous small passageways and tunnels the ghoulings have cleared through them. Retreating ghoulings use these passages to escape from pursuers. Throughout this adventure, there are set-piece scenarios where the ghoulings attack the PCs in a scripted way (such as when the PCs first enter town, explore the smithy, etc.) after which “surviving ghoulings join the pool of available ghoulings.” This means that once ghoulings have been activated and if they survive an encounter, they become the GM’s tool to wreak havoc throughout the town and harass the PCs.


The only places the ghoulings will not go are inside the church, into the zombie corral (until the zombies have been released), or into the house containing the painting of Resemel (as the draugr was a cruel teacher in life and frightens the ghoulings terribly). At their core, ghoulings represent the depraved cruelty of childhood and the glee with which a creature without empathy can take pleasure in hurting another creature. The GM is encouraged to use the available ghoulings to set up ambushes, play pranks, and to attack PCs as he sees fit.

The following are several examples of how the GM might use the ghoulings at his disposal to harass and attack the PCs. This list is by no means exhaustive, if you can think up other ways to utilize these bizarre undead children, then go for it!


 All of a sudden a hail of stones tumbles down towards your head! Glancing upwards, you spot a troop of small figures hurling stones from the rooftops!

Ghoulings hurl rocks at the PCs from on top of a nearby building, scattering as normal if two of their number are slain.


X Ghoulings : (48 EP ea): HP 16 ea; Init -1; Spd 7; Atk +2; Dmg d6p-3 (thrown rock); Def +5; DR 1 ToP: n/a; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Fearless; Size S; Saves: P +2, M immune, D+6,

 As you turn the corner, you spy a shambling corpse lazily shuffling along, apparently unaware of your presence. Before you can decide what to do, you can hear a shrill cry from behind you, followed by whooping laughter. The corpse turns in your direction and begins lurching forward.

This event can be used if the zombies have been released from their prison to wander the town of Maridu. When the group would normally encounter a zombie, have at least one ghouling appear to help direct the creature towards the PCs.

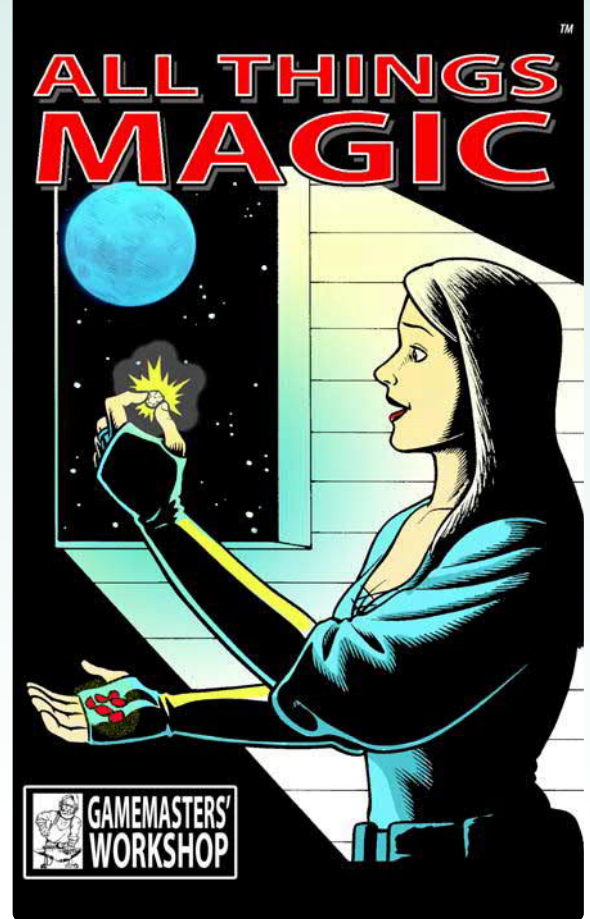
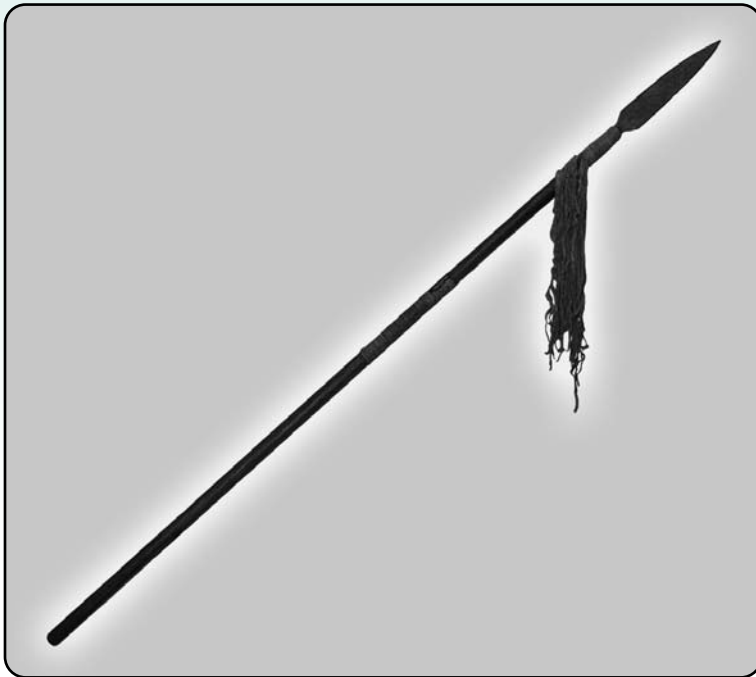
 Suddenly, high pitched giggling bubbles up from all around you. With a shriek, corpselike children rush from their hiding places with clawed hands outstretched!

Ghoulings rush out to attack PCs from their hiding places, scattering if two or more of their number are killed.

 In the distance, you spy several of the corpselike children squatting in a circle, surrounding a largish rat. The creature squeals piteously as the children pull its limbs from its body, grinning malevolently.

It is the GM’s choice as to whether the ghoulings will turn and attack the PCs or scatter back into the ruins if the creatures detect the adventurers’ presence.

Daarmmer



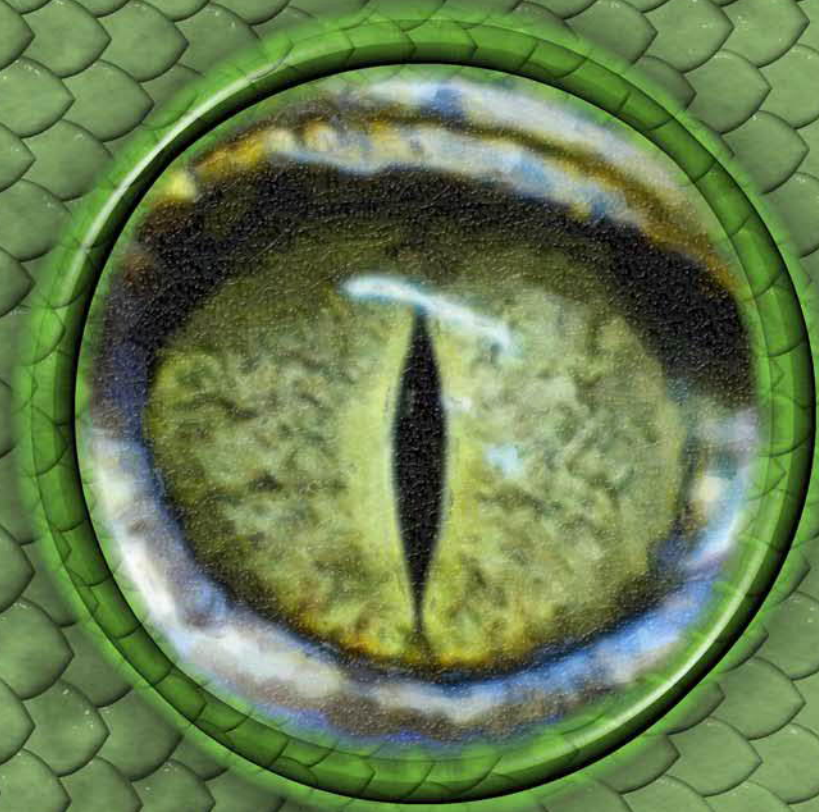
In the Sarlangan tongue Daarmmer means Twilight's Bane. This jet-black spear has been passed down through four successive generations of grel chieftains after it was stolen from the treasure hoard of a barrow wight several hundred years ago. In the barrow wight's lair, the spear was used as a ritualistic killing device, gutting victims the barrow wight hung from its ceiling. When the wight happened to catch a lone grel one day, the grel's tribesmen were quick to exact revenge. The grel poured into the creature's lair, spending their lives to dispatch the wight. After a brutal battle, the tribe's warriors succeeded; and their chieftain took the spear as a prize. Since that day, the spear has been used to slay many victims, innocent and otherwise; and it has lost none of its malign energy.

Despite its age, the spear appears as it did when the first of that line of chieftains took it into his hands. Any person truly aligned to the forces of evil can wield the spear with no concern, but a character dedicated to good (or one who walks the line between the two) can never hope to hold

the spear in his bare hands lest he feel the chill embrace of the barrow wight who once wielded it.

In addition to bestowing a +2 bonus to attack and damage, Daarmmer counts as a silvered weapon when employed against the undead and cannot be broken by mundane means. However, as the spear is a lithic weapon, it still has certain limitations. As with all lithic weapons, the spear does -1 damage when used against medium armor and -3 damage when used against heavy armor.

Paired with the spear is a set of leather gauntlets, each one sewn with a pattern that resembles a skeletal hand. The gauntlets once belonged to the grel chieftain who himself slew the barrow wight; and through hundreds of years of use alongside Daarmmer, have become at once suffused with and inured to the baleful aura the spear emits. It is only by wearing these gauntlets that one not aligned with evil can hope to wield the spear, for whatever purpose.



The Bestiary

APPARITION

In my youth, I often saw them, the spirits, you know. I never felt afraid when I saw them. They didn't seem like sinister beings at all—more sad than anything else. There was one woman I used to see often, she had gray hair done up in a very old fashioned manner and always had a look as if she had just finished crying. She wandered often through the garden, looking at the peonies in the moonlight. I would ask her what was wrong and she would just repeat that she couldn't remember; that she had forgotten where to find what she was looking for. Well, being a child, I volunteered myself to help. We would spend long hours looking for something or other, I can't actually remember what. Maybe it was... a necklace? No, a locket. Yes, we were looking for her locket.



Well, one day some porters were delivering a monstrously heavy new divan for our family's study; and one of them lost his grip. The thing fell onto our old wood floor and smashed right through. My mother was furious with the men, shouting invective and didn't notice what I did. There was a small hollow space under the floor. I reached in and pulled out a small object wrapped up in layers of yellowed lace. Of course, you've realized by now that it was the locket wrapped up inside. It was beautiful, a sort of delicate carved crystal. I rushed out to the gardens to show the spirit; but in my haste I tripped. The locket flew through the air, struck the base of our sundial, and shattered right there.

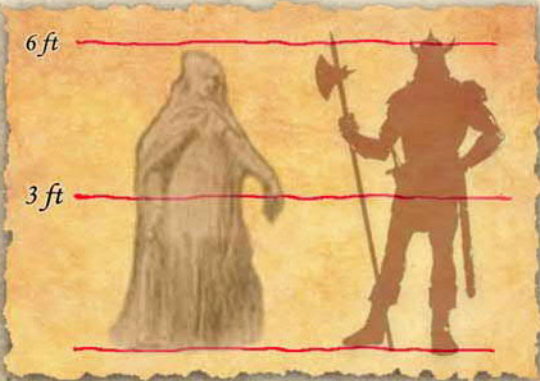
The spirit asked if I was all right and "what was it you wanted to show me?" I lied and said it was nothing, that I was just playing a game. She smiled her sad smile and went back to her wandering. I didn't talk to her much after that. I suppose I was too embarrassed or ashamed, who can say. We moved to a new house on the other side of town not too long afterward and, you know, life happened. I never saw her again. I wish that I could have made things right somehow, but you don't get many second chances when you're as old as I am.

--transcript of an interview with the apparition known as The Marquis

SIZE COMPARISON

Apparitions may be friendly or baleful. It is best to placate them if possible for they can be mischief makers.

WILL FACTOR
13



Apparitions are spirits bound to the mortal world by unfinished business. Until an apparition's worries can be laid to rest, it is unable to pass on to whatever fate may await it. Apparitions are unable to affect objects in the mortal world and rely on others to help them carry out their desires.

Combat/Tactics

Because they are totally incorporeal and possess no combat abilities, apparitions cannot pose an obvious threat. They may be turned by a priest, but their tenuous link with the physical world makes this an imposing task.

Apparitions possess the power of speech and can prove a nuisance (or even an agent provocateur) should they take a dislike to a living being. Their personalities are as varied as any living being's. Some are downright malevolent while others are downright friendly.

These creatures may pass through any matter.

Society:

Apparitions, like living people, are driven by likes, dislikes, desires, and ambitions. The chiefest of these is usually the desire to fulfill whatever purpose is binding them to the world of the living. Apparitions sometimes offer rewards of hidden wealth or forgotten lore in order to entice living beings into aiding them. Of course, like people, not all apparitions are totally honest or have some last noble deed to accomplish. Some apparitions are tethered to the mortal world by reasons that many would deem petty, cruel, or irrational—again, just as varied as the living.

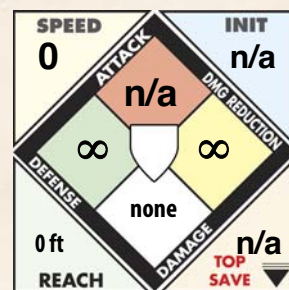
More complicated still are those apparitions who cannot remember what it is that prevents their passing. These piteous individuals are cursed to wander the world with no idea of how they might even begin to pass on. It takes the effort of truly caring people in order to help these poor souls along the way. On the opposite end of the spectrum, there are some stories of apparitions that know exactly what business they need to take of but for varying reasons, refuse to do the task whether because to do so would violate some moral or simply because they fear the prospect of an unfamiliar afterlife.

On Tellene:

Forgotten corners of Tellene's oldest cities are generally the best place to find apparitions. In the Brandobian city of Cosolen, there is said to be a particularly large number of the creatures inhabiting the ruins of an old manor house on a hill outside of town. Supposedly, they celebrate their un-life with raucous parties all through the night and have done so for nearly a hundred years.

Apparition

HIT POINTS:	n/a
SIZE/WEIGHT:	M / incorporeal
TENACITY:	Any
INTELLIGENCE:	Obtuse to Brilliant
FATIGUE FACTOR:	1



MOVEMENT

CRAWL:	—
WALK:	—
JOG:	—
RUN:	—
FLY:	10

SAVES

PHYSICAL:	immune
MENTAL:	immune
DODGE:	immune

ATTACK: Apparitions are incorporeal and cannot harm or be harmed by physical creatures; they are capable of speech and may use that power to irritate those they dislike (& may act as an agent provocateur).

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Invisibility

General Info

ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Always Active
NO. APPEARING:	1 (occasionally more)
% CHANCE IN LAIR:	100%
FREQUENCY:	Unusual
ALIGNMENT:	Any
VISION TYPE:	Undead Sight
AWARENESS/SENSES:	Standard
HABITAT:	Varies
DIET:	none
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any

Yield

MEDICINAL:	nil
SPELL COMPONENTS:	nil
HIDE/TROPHY:	nil
TREASURE:	nil
EDIBLE:	nil
OTHER:	nil
EXPERIENCE POINT VALUE:	none

BAT, GIANT VAMPYRE

B I was running as fast as I could manage. My head swam as I drew in ragged breaths of the humid jungle air. Behind me, the sounds of battle faded as I splashed farther into the jungle interior. It had been an ambush. So stupid not to have seen the signs, but by then we were beyond exhausted. In the four weeks since our departure from Zha-nehmish, we had completely consumed our supplies—including the fresh water. Our “jungle guides” had assured us that it would be a simple task to resupply along the way, but the opposite turned out to be true. There was water everywhere, to be sure, but all of it was fetid and reeked of decay. The only game to be had were snakes and frogs, brightly colored and oozing with venom. When the ambush began, my first thought was that dying would be a mercy compared to trudging one more mile through that damnable jungle. The screams of my porters convinced me otherwise. I had heard stories of what the men of the Vohven did to their captives, but I had no wish to confirm their veracity. I leapt from my palanquin and ran headlong into the jungle, shedding my robes of office as I did so. Undignified for a man of my station, I know, but we were a long way from Ahznomahn. Besides, all of the necessary insurance had been purchase to cover the loss of the laborers.

Just when I was sure I could run no longer, I found myself at the edge of a wide clearing with a prodigiously large, dead tree standing in the center. The standing water was knee deep, but any fear I had of water snakes was of little concern next to the fear of capture. I emerged out from under the canopy and light from the risen moon shone down as I waded through the water towards the tree, hoping that it was hollow. There was an opening in the base of the tree and I had to suck in my paunch in order to squeeze through to the interior. My nostrils were immediately assaulted by the powerful odor of the place. It stunk worse than my uncle’s horse stables on a hot day. My boots (already ruined by my retreat through the jungle) sank down into some sort of soft, stinking mud until the rank stuff began to flow over and into my boots.

I retched and began trying to squeeze my way out, but stopped dead when I heard the slow, rhythmic breathing above me. By now the moon had progressed in its nightly journey until it was almost directly over the opening at the top of the hollow tree. Its light illuminated a dozen or more furry bodies hanging upside down about 25 yards above my head. Each one seemed to have a torso about three feet long, they didn’t actually seem that large at all. My attention was suddenly drawn back to the tree’s exterior by the low murmurs of human voices from the forest’s edge. Emerging from the tree line came two of the warriors from the ambush, inspecting something hanging from a low branch. I looked down at my silk tunic. There was a scrap of fabric missing. It must have torn off as I ran. One of the warriors pointed towards the tree and they began to silently wade out towards my hiding place, brandishing long spears. I would be skewered like a pig as soon as they found me.



Wasting no time, I tried to squeeze my way back out of the tree and make a break for the jungle. It was useless. The hole in the base of the tree angled inward, I couldn’t force my way back out. That didn’t stop me from trying, however. I slammed myself against the tree, trying to force my way out if I had to. My efforts sent vibrations shooting up through the tree’s dead bulk and the slow breathing from above me was replaced by high pitched chirping as the creatures began to stir to wakefulness. I froze. The dozen beasts were on the move now, climbing up towards the light of the moon. When I saw them spread their leather wings, I finally realized that they were bats! Gigantic bats of a kind I had never seen. Their wings must have been eight feet from tip to tip. The giant bats cast huge shadows onto the water in the moonlight, and I heard the warriors cry out in alarm. From my vantage point, I watched the colony of bats swoop down onto my would-be assailants, landing only long enough to sink their prodigious fangs into the exposed flesh of the warriors before taking off again—only to return seconds later. Blood ran freely from the bite wounds inflicted by the bats, and soon the tribesmen were stumbling back towards the tree line, unwilling to fight against the black-winged monsters. One of the pair tripped as he ran. When he resurfaced, all twelve of the bats were on him at once. He shook and screamed, but the bats were too much for him. They drank their fill and left the man, pale and limp, to float quietly in the water before he eventually sank below the placid surface. I hid in the base of that tree for four days, covering myself in bat guano and keeping absolutely still to avoid detection. On the morning of the fourth day, I was able to squeeze my way back out and escape from that hideous clearing.

--From the testimony of Izvan Izahn, Defendant in the Case of Izvan Izahn vs. The Ahznomahnii Spicer’s Guild

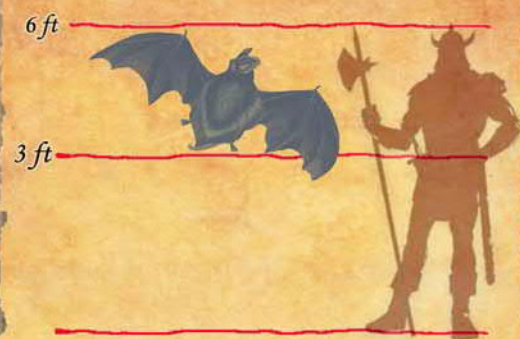
SIGN/TRACKS

Beware a cave wherein copious white droppings are found...

RANGE ON TELLENE



SIZE COMPARISON



Giant Giant vampyre bats are social, nocturnal parasites that subsist on diet consisting entirely of blood. These hematophages grow to weigh about 33 lbs and stand about three feet tall. Their wingspan ranges anywhere between seven to eight and a half feet wide; and their fur ranges from jet black to light brown and, in rare instances, snowy white. Some claim that these albino giant vampyre bats grow even larger than the more common varieties, but this has never been verified.

Combat/Tactics

Giant vampyre bats hunt best in complete darkness, where they can use a combination of echolocation and thermal detection to find their prey. A giant vampyre bat's large, fleshy nose has thermoreceptors used to detect the warmth of blood in its potential victims. A giant vampyre bat attacks by swooping down onto its prey and puncturing its skin with its razor sharp fangs. These enamel-less teeth are sharp enough to puncture the thick hides of most large mammals or slide through mail links and functionally ignore two points of DR. Creatures who sustain a wound of five or more points from a giant vampyre bat are subsequently subject to severe bleeding, as the anti-coagulants in the bat's saliva inhibiting blood clotting. The bite of a vampyre bat is also dangerous as a disease vector. Giant vampyre bats are host to several diseases that, while having no effect on the bat, can be dangerously injurious to human health.

Habitat/Society:

Giant vampyre bats congregate together in social groups called colonies. Small colonies may be found in hollow trees, old wells, or abandoned houses, while larger colonies require more space and are often located in caves or particularly spacious abandoned structures (such as the ruins of a high-ceilinged church, a barn, or a manor house). While small colonies of the bats may only have around twelve individual members, larger colonies may number hundreds strong or even thousands strong. Colonies produce massive amounts of guano, which piles up beneath the bats. The guano is highly prized by farmers for its properties as a fertilizer and some mages believe it can increase the potency of a Fireball spell. Guano also attracts large numbers of insects that feed on and help to decompose the guano. Particularly large concentrations of guano are rumored to attract insects of comparatively greater size, as well.

In the wild, the primary prey of giant vampyre bats are large herbivores. As giant vampyre bats range from cold to tropical climates, these prey animals also vary considerably, from elk, to water buffalo, camels, mule deer, and, in some cases, human beings. Giant vampyres bats are the bane of ranchers and herdsmen whose large herds and flocks are prime targets for the bats' nightly feeding. Extermination of the bats is difficult, not only because of their large size and dangerous bite, but also because locating the actual site of the colony is complicated by the bats' fifteen square mile hunting range.

Giant vampyre bats are very social creatures that practice altruistic sharing of food. A giant vampyre bat cannot go more than two days without feeding, and not every night will end in a successful hunt. Giant vampyre bats will beg for food from their fellow colony members who will vomit a portion of a blood into the less fortunate bat's mouth. That bat will later reciprocate the favor if another bat is in need.

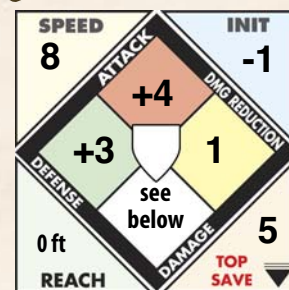
On Tellene:

Giilia is known as The City of Bats for a reason. A cave complex just over a mile west of the city holds one of the largest colonies of bats on Tellene. The sixteen million bats which live in the cave system are primarily of the small, insectivorous sort, but the cavern also houses thousands of giant vampyre bats which fly off nightly into the hills to hunt for larger prey.

**Untreated severe bleeding continues to cause damage at the rate of d6-2 hp per minute. However, a natural "1" on the damage roll indicates that the wound has clotted sufficiently on its own to halt further hp loss. A character with the First Aid skill can staunch the bleeding with a pressure bandage. This requires an average skill check for a novice and can automatically be performed by anyone of higher skill mastery. The time required is equivalent to other applications of critical care. Note that the patient continues to suffer bleeding damage until the first aid provider completes his task.*

Giant Vampyre Bat

HIT POINTS:	16+1d8
SIZE/WEIGHT:	5 / 33 lbs
TENACITY:	Nervous
INTELLIGENCE:	Animal, High
FATIGUE FACTOR:	1



MOVEMENT

CRAWL:	1¼
WALK:	2½
JOG:	5
RUN:	5
FLY:	30

SAVES

PHYSICAL:	+2
MENTAL:	+3
DODGE:	+6

ATTACK: Lands on stationary prey or flutters about active targets; bite inflicts 2d4p damage and bypasses 2 DR; anyone suffering a ≥5 hit point wound (e.g. after DR) is subject to severe bleeding.* May spread disease via bite.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Flight, Blind Fighting

General Info

ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Nocturnal
NO. APPEARING:	1-12
% CHANCE IN LAIR:	100% (during the day) or 50% (at night)
FREQUENCY:	Unusual
ALIGNMENT:	Non
VISION TYPE:	Extreme Low Light Vision
AWARENESS/SENSES:	Blind Fighting
HABITAT:	Caves
DIET:	Hematophage
ORGANIZATION:	Flocks
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Tropical to Temperate

Yield

MEDICINAL:	Guano is thought to improve night vision
SPELL COMPONENTS:	nil
HIDE/TROPHY:	Wings and fangs
TREASURE:	nil
EDIBLE:	yes (though meat may be disease vector)
OTHER:	nil
EXPERIENCE POINT VALUE:	75

DRAUGR

Also Known As: Dreygur, Afturganga

D



We were huddled together under a sort of canvas tent pitched in the center of the deck. I shivered and pulled my wool cloak closer around my body, despite its dampness. The Fhokki sailors around me didn't speak-- just stared off into the mists outside. The mist was nearly the same color as the slate gray water lapping at our boat, and I felt as if I was ensconced totally within a cloud of gray and white. The boat didn't make a sound as it bobbed in the icy water. It was completely still.

This was my second week on the lake, and it didn't seem like I would be leaving anytime soon. The journey was supposed to take four days; but on the second night out, the crew decided to pop one of the barrels of bitter-korn whiskey and let their hair down, so to speak. I joined in their revelry, not wanting to appear the puritanical southerner. While we slept, the jets and eddies of the lake drew us off course; and when we awoke, the shore was nowhere to be seen. Assured by our captain, Eddorad, that the trade winds would drive in the general direction of destination, we decided to wait for a fair breeze. We were still for the wind waiting when we spotted the other craft.

The stillness broke when Eddorad lifted up his mitten-clad hand to point into the mist. Steam rose from beneath his icy moustache as his breathing quickened. I wanted to ask what he saw, but before I could speak a word of inquiry, one of the other sailors clapped his large hand over my mouth and held me still.

Now every eye was on the mists encircling the boat. I peered into the distance, seeing and hearing nothing but the gray water and floating hunks of ice gently clacking against one another.

The other craft appeared all of a sudden, like spotting an animal concealed in the underbrush. It was broken in half, the prow pointing upwards out of the water. The sail was tattered and hung limply in the frigid air, draped in icicles. Some unseen force seemed to impel the craft forward, as it drifted towards our boat. Then, I saw them. Four figures huddled near the prow of the ship, draped in long tresses of kelp. Under the kelp I could still see the remains of what looked to be fishermen's garb; but it was hard to be sure. Their blue faces looked out from underneath the kelp fronds and regarded our vessel with wide, pale yellow eyes. No one moved a muscle in our little canvas tent-- not even to shiver. One of the creatures seemed to be looking directly at me. I sneezed.

The creatures shrieked out in guttural Fhokki and plunged their hands into the water, paddling towards us. The sailors were on their feet in a moment, all running towards the oars. The men were screaming at one another, and they paddled in a blind panic without coordination, succeeding only in turning the boat about widdershins. The other craft was gliding through the water now, getting closer to our boat. Eddorad appeared at the prow of our boat with his drum, beating out a quick pace to the oarsmen. With the familiar sound, the sailors were able to row in tandem and our ship began to lurch forward through water. We were too slow. The other craft reached the aft of our ship, and the creatures reached out with grasping hands towards the nearest sailor, a red-bearded man named Hedorn. I watched as he attempted to scramble away from the revenants, but they grabbed him by his arm before he could get away. Hedorn was a big man but when those three hands grabbed him, he went limp as a dead octopus, as if the strength had been sapped from his body. The other men hadn't stopped rowing, though; and we pulled away from the craft as Hedorn's screams faded into the mists. The crew rowed for two days straight until we found a trade wind.

--from the diary of Sulat Serrel, Kalamaran wine merchant

SIZE COMPARISON

Not all Draugr are beyond redemption.

WILL FACTOR

8



6 ft

3 ft



The draugr are resurrected corpses, driven on by vengeance, jealousy, and greed. A draugr can find no solace in death until its lingering desires have been satiated, much like a ghost might need to complete unfinished business before it can pass on. However, unlike most ghosts, draugr's minds are utterly corrupted upon their transformation. Their memories become hazy and indistinct as the draugr are twisted into macabre facsimiles of their former selves. The only things of them that remain are a few scattered memories and that single, driving emotion which impelled the draugr to unlife in the first place. Only, with its memories largely tainted, the draugr can no longer remember what first spurred it back into consciousness. As a result, the draugr can never complete the task it had set out for itself. This inner conflict drives a draugr completely mad. Any memories the creature can cling to become evil obsessions and focal points of the draugr's relentless motivation. Anyone who dies with a curse on their lips may rise again as a draugr.

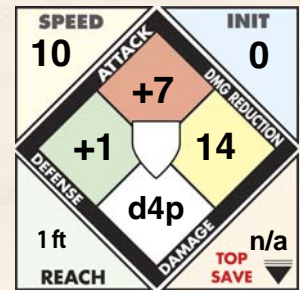
For instance, a man being tortured to death may swear vengeance on his killers and later rise as a draugr. With his memory corrupted, the newly risen afturganga may take on the identity of his former torturers and murder victims in the same way he himself was killed. Perhaps a wealthy merchant never quite felt he could get out of the shadow of a prominent rival and died covetous of his wealth and prestige. As a draugr, he may still be driven to amass great riches in his grave, but he would have forgotten the identity of the man he wanted to ruin.

Not all hope is lost for the draugr, though. If a draugr can be reminded of the person it used to be, then the creature can experience a rare moment of clarity in which it remembers its original purpose. The creature will then single-mindedly pursue its original intent, upon completion of which, the draugr dies its second death. For many draugr, however, this moment of clarity might also be accompanied by a revelation that it is now impossible to fulfill its purpose. Perhaps the tortured man's murderers all grew old and died long ago; or the merchant's rival lost his fortune to bad investments. Because these draugr are now unable to carry out their purposes, the drive to exist quickly fades from them and is instead replaced by the desire to destroy themselves. A draugr will often ask the person who freed it from its task to end its unlife. Of course, some draugr's identities are lost; and they are cursed to struggle on eternally in their unending quests, accomplishing nothing.

Since anyone may rise as a draugr (as opposed to the barrow-wight or wraith who were usually people of means in life), the outward appearance of a draugr can vary immensely from individual to individual. However, all draugr look to be slowly rotting (or desiccating, depending on climate) corpses; but their skin is always stained the deep, blackish blue of a severe

Draugr

HIT POINTS:	25+3d8
SIZE/WEIGHT:	M/150 lbs.
TENACITY:	Brave
INTELLIGENCE:	Average
FATIGUE FACTOR:	n/a



MOVEMENT

CRAWL:	2½
WALK:	5
JOG:	10
RUN:	15
FLY:	20

SAVES

PHYSICAL:	+8
MENTAL:	immune
DODGE:	+7

ATTACK: Chilling touch inflicts d4p points of damage and equivalent CON drain (save for half). Armor or natural DR does not mitigate this.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: May only be fully damaged by iron* or silver weapons (reduces DR to 7).
*steel is an iron alloy and equally as effective

General Info

ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
NO. APPEARING:	1-6
% CHANCE IN LAIR:	40%
FREQUENCY:	Sporadic
ALIGNMENT:	Any
VISION TYPE:	Undead Sight
AWARENESS/SENSES:	standard
HABITAT:	Any
DIET:	n/a
ORGANIZATION:	Individuals (infrequently bands)
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any

Yield

MEDICINAL:	nil
SPELL COMPONENTS:	nil
HIDE/TROPHY:	nil
TREASURE:	nil
EDIBLE:	no
OTHER:	nil
EXPERIENCE POINT VALUE:	425

bruise. Draugr are capable of speech and thought, but their minds are so twisted that what they have to say is usually little more than ranting soliloquy.

Combat/Tactics:

Draugr hate living beings and may mistake them for the objects of their obsession if the being is unfortunate enough to draw the attention of a draugr. The touch of the draugr saps the life from those it comes in contact with, inflicting a d4p wound (for which armor offers no protection) and an equivalent Constitution drain (though a successful save, d20+CON vs. d20+8, reduces this by half). Though their minds are tainted, Draugr are still intelligent and able to weigh the benefits of retreating from combat if it could help them fulfill their obsession.

Draugr have a high DR that can be overcome by iron weapons. In stone age communities and other areas where iron weaponry is not used, the draugr are especially terrible foes.

Habitat/Ecology:

Draugr can be found in different locations depending on what drives them to keep existing, but they most often lurk in graves, bleak moorlands, deep forests, and catacombs. Draugr who died by drowning inhabit harbors, ponds, and other bodies of water. The draugr who

die at sea can be spotted on stormy days and nights piloting the waves in half broken boats, their bodies draped in seaweed.

Sometimes draugr spawn in groups. Mass graves, shipwrecks, or battlefields may become the homes of varying numbers of draugr. Groups of draugr will stick together, attempting to question one another as to what their purpose may have been. Their combined delusions usually cause the draugr to deviate even further from that original purpose and go off on terrible rampages through local communities in search of satisfaction.

On Tellene:

Draugr can be found near settled communities all over Tellene, whether landlocked or coastal. Areas around Reanaaria Bay and Lake Jorakk, in particular, have strong oral traditions concerning sea-bound draugr who follow fishermen through the mists at dusk. Beneath the sprawling cities of Svimozhia, murder victims are said to rise from their graves to exact revenge unless their feet are tied together before burial. Near the border of the militocracy of Korak, both sides of the ongoing war between humans and hobgoblins avoid a certain canyon; which was once the site of a mass grave. The cadavers interred there are restless and almost impossible to spot in the blue dim of evening when they rise to feed on any interlopers who draw too close to their charnel den.



GHOULING

Also Known As: Schadenkinder



You see, what I do is... what I do isn't technically stealing when you think about it. These buildings are all abandoned, right? So, the owner is long gone, right? He doesn't care about it. He doesn't give a damn what happens to the stuff inside because—hey—it's abandoned, you following me? So let's say I find one of these places and I walk inside—maybe I have to force the door but “abandoned” is the operative word, remember? Ok, so if I find anything inside, then, well, I'm nothing more than a garbage collector, picking up what everyone seems not to want. Really, I'm essentially a public servant when you think about it.

What? Oh, right.

So, my folks died when I was a baby. Don't say sorry, I don't remember them. Anyway, I was bought by a convent. No, I don't remember which order it was. None of us kids talked about that stuff back then, we were more concerned with normal stuff: food, fighting... mostly food, actually. There was never enough to go around. Somebody always ended up a little hungrier than the rest of us. Usually it was this kid... what was his name...? You know, I can't remember what his real name was. We always just called him Squirrel on account of his teeth. That kid really had some teeth on him. We used to throw acorns at him all the time chanting “Feed the Squirrel! Feed the Squirrel!” Yeah, he was always last in line for food even if he showed up first, if you catch my drift.

Well, one morning the Squirrel just didn't want to get out of bed. “Too tired” he says. Now, if you didn't get ready for chores at the right time, you would get the switch. So, naturally, up comes one of sisters and asks the Squirrel why he isn't ready for chores. Well, he sings her the same song as he told us; and she doesn't like that so she starts whipping him. By now, a bunch of us have gathered to watch the Squirrel get what's coming to him. And she's whipping him and whipping him, but the Squirrel doesn't move—he doesn't even cry which is weird because usually the Squirrel cries all the time. It kinda went on like that for a while until a different sister came to shuffle us off to our chores. We don't see the Squirrel after that. When anybody asks where he went, the sisters say that he was adopted. “Lucky bastard” we all thought. After that, more kids start getting adopted, day after day. I thought this was a little weird, because let me tell you something—nobody got adopted from this place. It had a reputation; the kids there were all bad seeds, you know. After about a third of the kids got adopted in one month, I decided to high-tail it outta there. Tied some sheets together and climbed out the window. Eight years old, living fancy free since then. Made me the man I am today, it did.

Yeah, I know, I'm getting to it. So, it's been about fourteen years since my escape; and I happen to be in the area when I hear about the old convent on the hill... hear about the “abandoned” old convent. I think to myself, “how fortuitous. Here's a way for the convent to repay me for my eight years of hard labor.” I figured I might find some good stuff in there, so I decide to check it out. It's easy enough to get in, what with the front door hanging off one of its hinges. I spark up a candle and go looking around. The first thing I notice is that the place has gone to pot. You know, there's weeds growing out of the floorboards, graffiti on the walls, the ceiling is falling in, but there are no rats.

That struck me as strange because in my experience the human race might as well be ratkind's landlords, you know what I mean? You see, it's funny because rats live in abandoned buildings usually and—ok ok, fine, no jokes.

Well, I head up to the second floor and I notice, on closer inspection, the “graffiti” on all the walls is actually little kids' drawings. Hundreds and hundreds of them—but they aren't normal. They're brutal. Digusting. So, I'm gawking at them when I hear laughter. Usually, it's water off a duck's back for me, but this was different. It was kids' laughter. I look up and I can see the staircase back down to the first floor is lined with these skinny little kids, all laughing at me. Their hair was falling out and they were all covered in rags. I yelled at them to scram, but they just kept laughing, only now they're climbing up the staircase towards me, never taking their eyes off of me. They had the same look a tabby gives a rat. I'm about to cuff one of them and scare off the bunch when I notice the kid in front with the big buckteeth. It was the Squirrel—I'd know him anywhere, but he hadn't aged a day. He was still eight years old, but he had changed. His hair was lank and greasy, and his fingernails were long and yellow like knives. I was too dumbfounded to get while the getting was good and one of the other brats lunged at my back from outta nowhere! So, that thing's on my back tearing out my hair and biting my neck and the others start to rush me. I stumble back to the weak spot on the ceiling, and it gives under my weight. The thing hanging on me breaks my fall, and I don't even look back as I run outta there. I don't need to. I could hear them behind me laughing and running after. But, well, I'm a pretty good runner. Oh, you know what? I do remember his name! It was Minon.

--An interview with Crendon the Looter, from the journals of Greytar the Wise

The laughter of children reminds us of the beauty of childhood. The cackling of ghoulings dredges up horrors better forgotten. Ghoulings are, at their core, ghouls that have entered ghoullhood before their adolescence. These little terrors usually stand no more than four feet tall, have pale sallow skin, forked tongues, and long fingernails encrusted with filth. Like ghouls, ghoulings use their long tongues to sniff out their quarry, but not for the same reasons.

While ghouls delight primarily in consuming and defiling cadavers, ghoulings take joy in tormenting their living victims for as long as possible before finally eating them. Ghoulings are true sadists who take perfect delight in cruelty with the pure id of a child. Ghoulings, though they have a modicum of intelligence, cannot remember the life they once had as mortals. These hellions can't be bothered to give such musings a second thought and instead revel in an existence concerned only with savage play.

Combat/Tactics:

Ghoulings always travel in gangs of varying number and prefer to single out a lone victim for their games—preferably one that cannot fight back. Their favorite targets are other children and the elderly. Gnomes and halflings are often preferably targeted by ghoulings; but whether this is merely because of their small stature or because the ghoulings mistakenly believe them to be children, no one knows. Ghoulings prefer to swarm opponents one at a time, scratching and biting with their nails and teeth as they shriek and laugh.

Any creature struck by a ghouling must make an opposed Wisdom check versus the ghouling's Will

Factor (i.e. $d20 + \text{Wisdom}$ vs. $d20 + 3$) or be paralyzed with fear for $d6p$ minutes. Immobilized victims are slowly tormented to death by the ghoulings unless other opponents are present, in which case, the little beasts will attempt to incapacitate other victims.

Ghoulings are natural cowards. If their morale fails, they scatter in every direction, giggling as they run. If one of the creatures is caught and killed during their wild retreat, it will not overly trouble the creatures. All pain experienced by others is a source of fun for ghoulings and they find great mirth even at the sight of a former fellow being slain. Ghoulings who retreat then simply regroup to attack again later. Some ghoulings are intelligent enough to lead pursuers into traps. A staunch warrior may chase a ghouling through a slum, only to find himself led into a dead end where other ghoulings rain down rocks from the rooftops above.

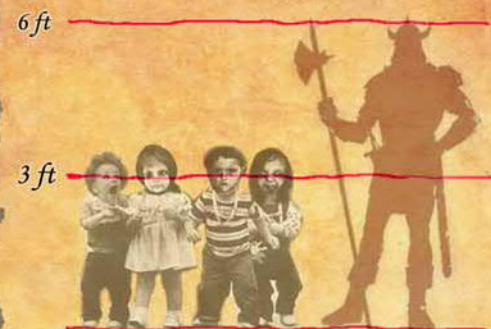
While attacking or chasing prey, ghoulings chortle and laugh to frighten their quarry. They are, however, capable of intelligible speech if the need arises (although that is the rarest of circumstances). Even if ghoulings do speak, they have very diminished intelligence compared to an adult and no conception of a life outside their macabre games.

As with all undead, ghoulings exist by the invigorating power of dark energy and so are immune to magic that requires a living being to act upon, to wit spells that induce a mental state such as fear or a biological one such as Sleep.

Habitat/Ecology:

Ghoulings congregate in slums, abandoned buildings, and cemeteries—never too far from inhabited areas. Ghoulings prefer places honeycombed with crevices, shortcuts, and tunnels that they can use to

SIZE COMPARISON



Pity not these malicious scamps. They would'st see ye die a most gruesome death.

WILL FACTOR

3

escape from and surround larger opponents. They never allow themselves to be cornered, so be assured that any area which may seem to be a dead end always has an escape route. Many of these tunnels or shortcuts lead to a central nesting area where the ghoulings sleep during the day. Of course, only another small size creature could wriggle down one of these passages.

Ghoulings tend to avoid areas already inhabited by ghouls or ghosts. Ghoulings are very disruptive to the more focused hunting methods of their larger brethren, so ghouls and ghosts take pains to run ghoulings out of their territory as soon as they are detected. Ghoulings who stray too close to feeding ghosts or ghouls may be killed outright as a nuisance.

Areas inhabited by ghoulings eventually take on the appearance of a sort of charnel nursery. Walls may be marked with crude, childlike drawings; or small handprints and body parts can be found strewn about like forgotten toys. Some ghoulings pull apart and recombine body parts into odd playthings.

Ghoulings are still undead beings and have no need of food as a source of sustenance, but they do enjoy the taste of living flesh—though they spend much more time playing with their food than eating it. Ghoulings are motivated only by their perverse sense of fun, to exclusion of all else save basic survival.

On Tellene:

The cramped alleyways peculiar to the slums of Tellene's sprawling cities are the perfect haven for ghoulings. Bet Kalamar, Zha-nehzmish, and Giilia are all reputed to have particularly large populations.

Ghoulings rely (though they don't know it) on being overlooked in order to survive. Most holy orders of clerics and paladins are far more concerned with combating ghouls and ghosts to spend their time digging into the earth after these little abominations. Even the most cold hearted warrior may at first feel a twinge of guilt when they have a ghouling at their mercy. The creature's mocking laughter and bite usually puts a stop to that.

Ghouling

HIT POINTS:	12+1d8
SIZE/WEIGHT:	5/65 lbs.
TENACITY:	Nervous
INTELLIGENCE:	Obtuse
FATIGUE FACTOR:	n/a

SPEED	3	INIT	-1
ATTACK	+2	DMG REDUCTION	
DEFENSE	+5	DAMAGE	1
REACH	0 ft	TOP SAVE	n/a
see below			

MOVEMENT

CRAWL:	1¼
WALK:	2½
JOG:	5
RUN:	7½
SPRINT:	70

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Attacks with two claws and a bite for d4p, d4p & d6p; any hit mandates a WIS check or victim becomes rigid with fear for d6p minutes

SAVES

PHYSICAL:	+2
MENTAL:	immune
DODGE:	+6

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Immune to Mental effect spells; climbing mastery 60

General Info

ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Nocturnal
NO. APPEARING:	5-20
% CHANCE IN LAIR:	50%
FREQUENCY:	Sporadic
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Evil
VISION TYPE:	Undead Sight
AWARENESS/SENSES:	standard
HABITAT:	fringes of civilization
DIET:	corpses
ORGANIZATION:	gang
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	any

Yield

MEDICINAL:	nil
SPELL COMPONENTS:	nil
HIDE/TROPHY:	nil
TREASURE:	nil
EDIBLE:	no
OTHER:	nil
EXPERIENCE POINT VALUE:	48