

# Flame Princess Quid

an unauthorized weird fantasy role-playing zine



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings friends! As I write this message the United States lurches towards a precipice called the 2020 Election. Is it an opportunity to right the ship of state? Will this be the end of a 250-year flirtation with representative democracy? Will the out-of-touch centrist save us from the out-of-control autocrat?

It's days like this that I recall an old bit of gaming lore--was it from *Pocket Empires* for Marc Miller's fourth edition of *Traveller* or the old wargame *Barbarian, Kingdom, and Empire* or maybe some other old game?--that civilizations last about 250 years before they either collapse or transform into something completely unrecognizable to their founders. Of course, that's a gross simplification. Societies, like people, are in a constant state of flux. We tell each other stories about royal lineages and unwavering religious creeds as a way of imposing a sense of structure on the inherent chaos of history.

But deep down, you and I know that the structure is an illusion. That's what makes us weirdos, I suppose. Maybe the chaos is an illusion, too. What was it that Freddy "Anything for a laugh" Nietzsche used to say? "One must contain some chaos to give birth to a dancing star." I don't know what that means, but it's better than approximately 100% of the things I've heard politicians say lately.

Stay weird, friends. It's all that we've got.

Jeff Rients

By all that is unholy, why did I move to a swing state?

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# BEYOND MAIMING:

## FUN WITH POISONS AND DISEASE

by Lord Mhor

Here's an alternate approach to try with poisoning and similar fates. Poisons are based on a Lethality Rating of 1-5. You can use higher Lethality Ratings if you wish, particularly if you allow saving throws, but that's just nasty. Poisons and venoms are also ranked as "instant", "fast", "slow", or "chronic", and "painful" or "painless". The poison or venom is designated upon creation to attack one specific trait, so choose between CHA, CON, DEX, INT, STR, or WIS. When a character is poisoned, the appropriate number of d6 (Lethality Rating) are rolled, and used in a special way:

The highest die value rolled is the core damage inflicted. If the highest is a natural "6", each additional "6" rolled beyond the first, and any pairs or multiples of lower die values, add one additional point to that 6 total from the first die. If the highest rolled is "5" or below, each additional die matching that maximum number, and any pairs or multiples of lower numbers, also add one additional point to that total, and so on. This can add up quickly, making Rank 5 poisons quite deadly. This is what they do:

The final total reduces the targeted trait by that number of points. These points are lost right then for "instant" poisons, at the rate of one per melee round (six seconds) for a "fast" poison, one per turn (ten minutes) for a slow poison, and one per day for a "chronic" poison. This last category is favored by nobles and assassins to mimic withering diseases or to maximize suffering if the poison is "painful". "Painless" poisons have no additional effect, but "painful" poisons lower any d20 action rolls by the amount of accumulated damage at the time that roll is made because the character is distracted by gradually increasing agony.

If/when the targeted trait reaches zero, the character dies right then. That would be the equivalent of a failed poison save. Oops. If the character does not die, that would be the equivalent of a successful poison save—but the party isn't over. The targeted trait is now damaged, and any modifiers related to that trait are adjusted to that new total.

Damaged traits slowly recover at the rate of one point each per in-game week and one point at the beginning of each new \*game session\* if it's an ongoing adventure or campaign. If you want to be a nasty referee, allow no normal healing spells other than those specifically related to poisons to have any effect on poisoned trait recovery. If you are more benevolent, healing spells can speed recovery slightly—but only at one trait point per \*spell\* cast, regardless of levels, unless it is a specific "heal poisoning" spell.

Diseases can also be handled with this system, but usually take longer to manifest. So use "slow" or "chronic" rates of trait decay after adding an incubation delay depending on your tastes and level of kindness. Incubation delays typically range from a few hours for things like bad food to a week or so, during which time the victims are often contagious to others.

Another fun thing to do with diseases is to designate them as either "deadly" or "debilitating". For "deadly" diseases, treat them as poisons above. For "debilitating" diseases, calculate the final total points of trait damage inflicted normally, but don't apply them all to the same trait. Instead, roll a d6 for each final point of damage and map them randomly to the traits as follows:

- 1) CHA
- 2) CON
- 3) DEX
- 4) INT
- 5) STR
- 6) WIS

This will spread the damage randomly across one or more traits, decreasing the chance of death but reducing modifiers across multiple traits.

With disease, the victim limps along with reduced abilities until some sort of disease curing spell, or the slow recovery over time, brings them back to full ability. Players will learn to fear this, causing their characters to be much more careful where poisons and disease are likely to pop up.

Have fun! 🐱🎉

## CREATURE: WHITE BARON

by Krzysztof Kiser

*Somewhere in a distant land that is far enough away not to be thought of on a daily basis, but too close to be forgotten, is a palace. The white palace. Around it there is a garden of white grass, white flowers and white trees. White apples hang from white branches. White grape ripens on white bushes. The path leading to the white door is made of white earth.*

*Everything is white here. Even dried blood on the bodies of those who had rashly invaded the palace grounds. White are their hair, clothes and irises. When the motionless corpses of the intruders are stripped of all life, color, sensitivity, emotion and spirit - they will turn into empty shells that will be taken over by the White Baron.*

*The White Baron is neither white nor baron - it's just a catchy nickname in tavern tales. During his lifetime, he was sentenced to death because of atrocities, the history of which lies in forgotten volumes rotting at the bottom of abandoned houses' cellars. The offenses of the wicked man were inhuman, so fearing that he would return from beyond the grave to continue his work, a curse was placed upon him. Unfortunately, not skillfully. Due to the lack of sufficient knowledge of the language in which the curse was cast, the preacher spoke a completely different spell during the execution. Today no one has a clue what the priest said on that fateful day, but it caused the Baron to rise from the grave as a mighty specter enclosed in the walls of the estate. To stay alive, he absorbs emotions, sensitivity, spirit from all the matter around. The baron cannot leave his estate, but he can send his servants there, which are under his complete control.*

## STATS:

HD: 7

HP: Like Vampire Spawn.

Speed: Like human (can levitate with half speed).

Armor: Like leather armor and shield.

Attributes: High Intelligence and Wisdom.

Reference: Magic-user of 7th lvl, undead (can be turned but not destroyed).

## ATTACKS:

Rapier, 1d8.

Grapple (see "White Kiss").

Charm Person 2/day (see "White Kiss").

## SPECIAL:

### ***Aura***

Everything on the property begins to lose its life. Whether it is a human, animal, sword or rope. The creature or object gradually turns white, and all the life energy enchanted in it is transmitted to the Baron, nourishing him. After one hour, the living creature loses 1 Constitution point. Items will be destroyed

after hours equal to the owner's level. For magic items, the number of hours is twice the owner's level. These values are irretrievably lost and only the death of the White Baron can restore them.

The effect is cumulative, which means that if someone stayed behind the walls for 30 minutes and then left to re-enter for 30 minutes the next day - they will lose a Constitution point. When



Constitution drops to zero, the creature dies, completely turning white. Objects turn white and lose all their properties after a certain period of time. They become dummies that cannot be used. Swords will crumble, food will turn to dust - according to the will of the Referee.

The Baron will be aware of someone's presence right after crossing the walls, because he will feel the rush of food. However, he will not be able to distinguish whether it is a bunch of rats or a group of adventurers.

### ***White Kiss***

When the Baron captures or charms a creature, he can place his Kiss on it. At the will of the Referee, this may look like a vampire bite or a literal kiss. A creature under the influence of the White Kiss suffers from Aura effects at an accelerated rate - it loses a Constitution point per round until it breaks free. To break free, make a Paralyze save. A creature that is attacked in this way may still use its action in initiative order.

### ***Servant***

The Baron always controls  $1d6 + 1$  creatures. These are once living creatures, from which all life energy has vanished. The empty white shells seized by the steward of these lands obey his orders. A servant, unlike his master, can leave the walls of the estate. Oftentimes, the Baron sends these creatures to fetch food. The Servant has zombie stats, but moves at the speed of its original creature. The White Baron can use this ability on any dead creature (beast, human, animal, etc.) and can control a maximum of as many Minions as the Hit Dice he has (seven by default).

### ***Death of the Baron***

Reduced to zero Hit Points, the White Baron will fall to the ground looking dead. Regardless of the degree of damage to the body, it will respawn in  $1d10$  hours with half of the maximum HP. He will die in two cases. If he is outside the walls of the estate - not the house, but the entire estate. The second option is to find the records of his execution and find out what kind of curse was supposed to be placed on him, and then - correct the curse over his grave.



# SKELETON PARASITE / POSSESSED FLESH CLASS

by Tim "Samwise7" Harper

WEAK-WILLED HOSTS ARE AN OPEN INVITATION TO US. Parasitic skeletons are said to have been created by a necromantic ritual gone awry. A small group of necromancers fell prey to their own devious machinations and their minds were trapped within spell-wrought bones. These bones thirsted for living hosts, and the trail of withered corpses from that need are littered through history in a meandering path of destruction.



The unfortunate hosts of these malign bones only last a short while (1D12 days) before their life energy is completely devoured and the enslaved flesh dies. The pale cracked parasite can only survive for 6 turns without a host before their lingering magical energy ceases to be and their bones crumble into a pile of dust; utterly destroyed.

If the unwitting host is in close range and fails a saving throw vs. paralyze the arcane-infested parasitic organism sinks in its bony fingers, grasps the spine, and then rips out the host's entire skeletal structure through the bleeding wound. The parasite then crawls in the bloody exit wound like it's a new set of clothes, before sealing up the injury. The whole process of "melding" with a host takes a full turn as the nervous system and other bodily connections join with the new skeleton. The horrendously scarred back of a host in the shape of shredded skin flaps are a tell-tell sign of bodily possession.

Parasitic bone structure can tear free of a used up host in one full round, but they can only do this if they have one hit point or more. If they are reduced to negative hit points they are trapped within the host and are destroyed along with the flesh if they are not healed before they get to -3 hit points. Those that witness a skeleton emerging this way are often traumatized.

Intelligent creatures can tell that they are "not quite right" with a roll of 2-in-6. Parasitic skeletons also have a -2 penalty to reaction rolls when they are in a host because of how unnatural they are.

In regards to healing, if your parasitic character is in a host they will heal normally but if the naked skeleton is out of a body then only the reverse of healing spells work on the bony creature. With a GM's permission damaged or broken bones can be replaced or repaired with new bones from victims the character has slain. Holy water hurts them because they are undead (even if they are wearing a living meat suit).

They can use all forms of armor, but weapons that they wield deal one dice-step less of damage. For example, a longsword would only deal 1D6 of damage instead of 1D8. The parasite has a difficult time manipulating the flesh puppet with it's spliced nerve connections.

Their fists can be used as if they were a medium sized melee weapon and they deal 1D4 damage.

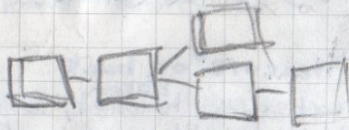
Bludgeoning weapons deal full damage to them, but edged and sharp weapons deal only half damage. They are immune to sleep effects. Turn Undead affects the character as if they were an Undead of the same HD as their character level.

Level	XP	HD*	Par	Pois	Brth	Dev	Mag
0	-	1d6	17	10	17	15	18
1	0	1d8	15	8	16	13	16
2	2800	+1d8	15	6	16	13	16
3	5600	+1d8	15	6	16	13	16
4	11200	+1d8	13	4	14	11	14
5	22400	+1d8	13	4	14	11	14
6	44800	+1d8	13	2	14	11	14
7	89600	+1d8	11	2	10	9	12
8	179200	+1d8	11	2	10	9	12
9	358400	+1d8	11	2	10	9	12
10	537600	+2	9	2	8	7	10
11	715000	+2	9	2	8	7	10
12	893750	+2	9	2	8	7	10
13	+180000/ level	+2	7	2	6	5	8

\*Constitution modifiers do not affect a parasitic skeleton's hit point total.

*Thanks go to: Jeff Cape, Ignacio Bergkamp, and Shawn Urban for their feedback and suggestions on how to improve this class.*

The Mudfish has struck a rock in the night.



① Entrance/Guardian-Crew Quarters -  
The room is quickly filling with seawater.  
The door is blocked by barrels that  
have come loose.

② Ruzzle/Challenge - Galley/Kitchen  
A Deckhand is cowering  
& holding the stair way hatch closed.  
& won't let the PC's through.  
Barrels have also rolled over the  
floor hatch leading below to  
the cargo hold. \*Grady

③ Red Herring - Cargo Hold - half the cargo  
hold is flooded. There is a crack  
large enough to squeeze through.  
Black Soles hide in the darkness  
& latch onto creatures that push  
into the room.

④ Climax/Conflict - Deck - Zombie pirates  
swarm the deck, no other crew  
can be found. the dingy is  
missing.

⑤ twist - Capt Quarters - maps are scattered.  
• a series of triangles are drawn  
through several island chains.

Tini's free is not found on the  
map.  
\* Captain's Sabot.



K  
M.  
mess  
h  
w

Timer 1d6 The Mudfish is sinking in 1d6 rounds & is over run with zombie pirates.

The ship has run aground & the crew has abandoned ship.

F=22  
J=20 19  
V=12

Mudfish

2d8  
Zombie Pirates - (9) HD 2

Zombie P. rates Grapple  
then bite/tear  
doing 1d6 dmg.

critical,  
Undead Fortitude: radiant fire dmg will kill  
a zombie outright if reduced  
to 0 hp. Otherwise roll  
a die. Even if the zombie  
stays at 1 hp. ~~the~~  
~~zombie~~ reanimates on its  
next ~~turn~~ next turn.  
Odd; the zombie is  
destroyed.

2d4  
Black ~~Worms~~ Seps (7) HD 1/2

Black Seps attach to a creature  
doing 1d4 necrotic dmg ~~with~~  
reducing max HP ~~to 0~~. A creature may  
remove 1d4 Black Seps  
on ~~per~~ turn



Jon  
Captain ~~Barry~~ Farrenae -

- captain of the Mudfish.
- loyal & fair.
- dark haired, young
- wants to strike out on his own.
- adventurous

- Dorin - ~~the~~ navigator
- halfling
  - loyal, intelligent
  - led the ship through isles to avoid pirates.

- Grady - deckhand
- urchin from the city
  - has never sailed before
  - lies about his age, (claims to be 17)
  - ~~dopey~~

What does Dorin ~~know~~ ???

- was with the captain when ship hit a rock (oh what a shock)
- dead pirates came aboard captain held them off while crew escaped in dingy
- dingy capsized, Dorin fished out by fish.

# CREATURE: LIFESEEKER

by Markus Schauta

## Lore

Lifeseekers are an outrage against nature. Something that crawls though it should long be dead, animated by broken remnants of what once was a human consciousness. Bereft of their senses, all that's left is an idea of what it means to be alive: warm blood, a glint in the eyes and a beating heart. The undead want to own those things, in hope to regain the life they have lost. A fallacy. For a glint cannot be captured, spilled blood cools quickly, and a ripped out heart pulsates only some short seconds before it stands still forever. Lifeseekers follow their victims at a distance, crawling in the shadows scantily outside the light of the torches. When they smell blood they get in a frenzy. It begins with a far cry and a terrible echo. Then they come. Crawling, raging, longing. Tearing apart their victims with their rotten teeth and claws and an inhumane strength, they hope in despair to get a handful of warm life.



One of these Lifeseekers may be Markus Schauta, writer, referee, player.  
You can find other bits of weird fantasy on his blog  
<https://tolkiensalbtraum.blogspot.com>



## Game mechanics

As soon as the party loses a total number of hit points equal to 3 multiplied by the number of PCs in the group, the Lifeseeker attacks. They come in a group of  $1d6+2$  and always try to attack the healthiest PC with the highest number of hit points. When the first PC goes down (unconscious or dead) they will rip his body while ignoring the others. If one of the Lifeseekers gets a heart, an eye or a bit of flesh, they leave into the dark to contemplate the body part, smell it, taste it, feel its warmth.

Armor 14

Move 120'

2 Hit Dice

9hp

claws and teeth 2d3 damage

morale 12

Has regular undead immunities.

If a Lifeseeker deals 6 damage and the PC misses a saving throw against paralyzation, roll 1d6 and consult the following chart:

- 1:** It rips the heart out of the body of the PC. Instant death.
- 2:** It tears an eye out of the eyehole. Blinded in one eye.
- 3:** It rends the abdomen and pulls out the intestine to feed on it. PC dies in 1d4 rounds unless the intestine is restored.
- 4:** It grabs a bit of flesh and tears it from the bones. The PC bleeds like hell and loses 1 hit point per round for the next 1d4 rounds.
- 5:** It bites the face of the PC and leaves a bloody mess. The PC bleeds like hell and loses 1 hit point per round for the next 1d4 rounds and has an ugly scarface for the rest of his life.
- 6:** He bites off one hand of the SC.

## How to fight them

As they always try to attack the healthiest SC first, this SC should be put in the backline of the combat. In trying to reach the healthiest SC, the Lifeseeker loose their attack in the first round. After the first round, they will attack everyone. The bigger the radius of light, the sooner the SC will see the Lifeseeker coming. A quick heal spell which reduces the number of lost hp can blind the Lifeseeker in a way that they no longer smell the blood and pass the SC without attacking them.

# ALTERNATE SHIP RULES

by Doctor Pat Mathis

Here are some alternative rules to govern Ship to Ship combat. The numbers listed for Speed in Rules & Magic on page 43 take into account the shape of the ship, the number of sails and how maneuverable it is. It is an average speed for daily travel. When doing combat. The speed is variable based on the wind speed. For ease of plotting movement. Counters can be used with a hexagonal grid, with each hex equalling 500 feet.

For Rowing, a boat or ship can be rowed one hex per round for long periods. It can be rowed 2 hexes per round for 10 rounds before having to rest by rowing 1 Hex per round for 10 rounds. It can be rowed 3 hexes per round for 5 rounds before having to rest by not rowing at all for 10 rounds. If a ship has sails and is rowing with the wind, rowing speed can be added to sailing speed.

When Sailing, square sails only work for going with the wind. The Wind Speed is 1d6 rolled by the Referee each round. Windspeed is the same for all ships.

Triangular sails are needed to sail against the wind and give the ship maneuverability. A certain amount of crew is needed to sail a ship. And by doubling the crew working the sails, the maneuverability of the Ship can be increased by one category. This is called having the ship "Topped Out" and it is obvious at a glance when this has been done to a ship. Maneuverability is measured in Classes which is designated Maneuverability Class or MC, which is measured on a scale of A to G

**A** = Ship can make 180° turns without using any of its movement rate

**B** or **C** = Ship can make 60° turns in one round, before moving forward one Hex.

**D** or **E** = Ship can make 30° turns in one round, before moving forward one Hex.

**F** = Ship must move forward one Hex before turning 30°.

**G** = Ship unable to make turns at all.

A ship needs its full crew and Hit Points in order to have its' listed MC. If a damaged ship has at least half the crew and half the Hit Points the ship is one MC worse. If the ship has between 1/4 and 1/2 its' Crew or Hit Points it is two MC worse. If the Ship has less than 1/4 its' crew or Hit points, it is 3 MC worse.

**Cannon** may be placed on a ship.

Each Ship's Cannon uses one ton of the ship's cargo space. (this does not include the powder) Half of the cannons will be on each side of the ship.

A Ship's Cannon requires a barrel of gunpowder per firing and does 1d24 Ship's Hit Points of damage to the target ship. A Natural 20 is required to hit individual targets.

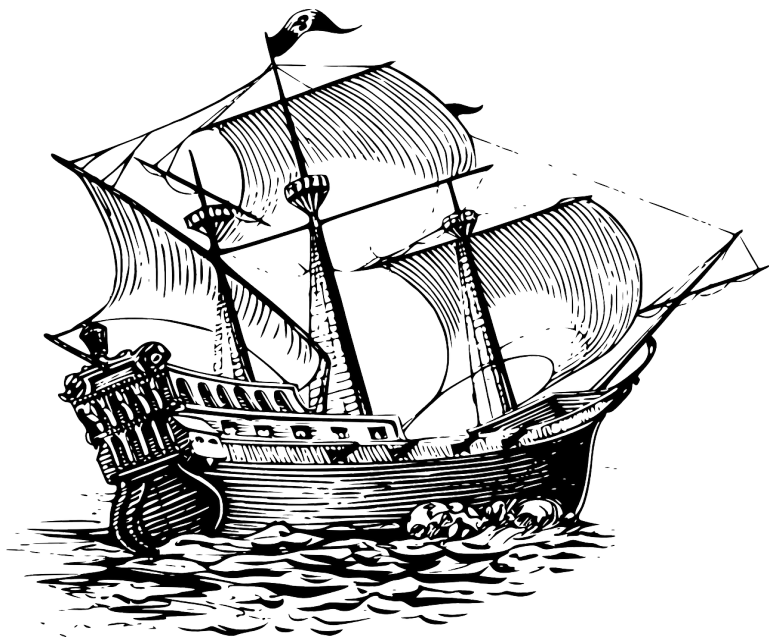
Rate of fire is based on the number of crewmen assigned to the cannon. These are in addition to the crew required to sail the ship.

4 crewmen = 1/10 rounds

3 crewmen = 1/20 rounds

2 crewmen = 1/30 rounds

1 crewman = 1/40 rounds



# Ship Chart

Ships	Crew	MC	Rowing	Cannon
Raft	1	F	1-3	0
Canoe	1	A	1-3	0
Lifeboat	1	B	1-3	0
Trireme	170	F	1-3	0
Quadrireme	170	F	1-3	0
Longship	75	D	1-3	0
River Galley	20	D	1-3	0
Riverboat	16	D	1-3	0
Sailboat	1	B	-	0
Cog	20	E	-	2
Caravel	35	D	-	4
Carrack	82	E	-	6
Galleon	150	E	-	20
Cutter	20	D	-	4
Brig	45	D	-	8
Corvette	84	C	-	10
Frigate	84	D	-	12

# MURDER IN WHITELOACH

by Zak Sabbath

## Ingredients

1. An invitation to one of the PCs to join The Touchers, a secret society
2. A tip that the next thing The Touchers will touch is an item worth several thousand silver pieces.

## Background

The mismatched aesthetes known as the Touchers (formally the Haptic League) are a society of enthusiasts, collectors of sensations. It is claimed that, in aggregate and over the centuries, they have touched all things, from the ears of the Bloat Leviathan to the hidden lips of Agricola Pork, the Foaming Fox. Their various archives include not only descriptions rich in the language of the tactile, but detailed (if less ecstatic) records of sources and methods exploited in order to accomplish members' more audacious feats of caress.

Lord Preston Dunleavy-Thorpe, this years' chairman, a man of generosity and good humor, has gathered the Touchers together on this midsummer evening to his rambling estate for a special meeting, he is rumored to have discovered "an unusual entity preserved in state in a magical box". The players have managed to secure an invitation. After dinner and light conversation, he assembles the League members around the kitchen table.

"My friends, I've gathered you all here not simply for the pleasure of your company (*successful passive Wisdom check here will notice Dunleavy-Thorpe's eyes darting quickly toward Mace Middleton-Harald at this point*) but to engage with me in a tactile experience of a wholly unique nature. As I flatter myself you know, I am a man who likes to share, so when I told a colleague of our august organization of my find, they recommended I hold my tongue until such time as the League was all gathered together and then I could evenly diffuse the pleasure of simultaneously discovering this find and palpating it. I have done so—we have secreted the item in a secure location at the end of a pleasant evening's walk, so let us all....urghhhh" And then he falls flat on the dinner table.

Immediately the Comte De Marseille, a noted surgeon, flips him over and pronounces "He has been poisoned!" and then eyes Lord Dunleavy-Thorpe's half-eaten manchester tart.

"But who?!?" sings the Baroness de Chantal.

"Someone who wants the thing to themselves!" says Middleton-Harald.

"But zis can only be ze one he revealed 'is find to?" opines Madame de Caravelle.

"Who is it?" barks Baron Brode.

"Who?" they all cried.

"Who indeed?" says Mace Middleton-Harald, arching an eyebrow at the party members...

The only way to find the slab is to solve the murder (the only other option is scour every inch of countryside within "a pleasant evening's walk" and if the players go for that you're on your own). Right now the party members, being newcomers, are the number one suspect.

Try to make it clear that the assembled Touchers are people of influence, and if the PC earn their ire (by, say, torturing each one in turn) then that's asking for a world of pain. They all have servants and bodyguards outside, though none are in the estate..

## **Suspects and events**

**Mace Middleton-Harald, Lord Frost** is a dark-eyed adventurer and composer and Dunleavy-Thorpe's secret lover. He will play the Sherlock if no-one else does as this murder touches him very deeply, and his men refuse to let anyone leave. He strongly suspects the PCs.

**Madame de Caravelle** is a stylish sensualist with green nails in her early 30s. If nothing happens to stop it, at a convenient moment she will try to sneak out through the hedge maze and be caught by Baron Brode's men. It turns out she made the manchester tart and fears being suspected. It turns out Lord Preston simply had it before and asked her to make it for the occasion—she had no part in the murder.

**Baron Brode**, an overweight stiff-necked military man, is suspicious of this (as he is of nearly everything). He will reveal the intimate

connection of the victim with Mace Middleton-Harald and wonders: Lord Dunleavy-Thorpe had Madame De Caravelle's tart in private circumstances? Were Dunleavy-Thorpe and Caravelle also lovers? Could she have found out and slain their host in a fit of jealousy? Or could Middleton-Harald have done it for the same reason? Hmm??? Unless something happens at this point to prevent it, Middleton-Harald drops dead of a stab wound from a letter opener.

**The Baroness de Chantal**—secretly a specialist with Sneak Attack 5 but openly a naive young ingenue—is responsible and will stab the Baron as discreetly as possible after finding out Middleton-Harald was Dunleavy-Thorpe's lover. Out of actual jealous rage because *she* was Thorpe's lover. She couldn't be Dunleavy-Thorpe's confidant and murderer, however, because all summer she has just this morning returned to England after spending two years in France carrying out targeted assassinations of influential Protestants at the behest of Baron Brode! And the letters she carries prove it.

**The Comte de Marseille** will be alarmed to hear this, and will waste no time pointing out Baron Brode has taken every opportunity to cast blame on anyone but himself. And then Madame de Caravelle *will* say she saw the Baron handing his tart to Dunleavy-Thorpe. The Baron will likely take offense and challenge the Comte to a duel. Hopefully before either of them dies, the players will have realized the Comte himself was the murderer. The Comte (a secret Huguenot aware of Brode's militant anti-Protestant stance) was intending to poison the *Baron* by injecting the tart with the same sea-snake venom he was about to coat his dueling rapier in but didn't realize he was allergic to coconut. The Comte, of course, knows where the magic box is.



# THE TWELVE FACES OF THE ANTI-FEELING

by C.A. Paul

This intricately carved Roman dodecahedron is made of a copper alloy, now green with patina. When placed into an orifice of a living human being it transforms the area around it into a pistol barrel made of flesh, muscle, bone, and cartilage. No matter where the dodecahedron is placed, the subject's teeth will migrate to that area to form a hidden chamber of tooth-bullets. This entire process is extremely painful.



Roll 1d12: it takes this many minutes for the transformation, the pistol is that many inches long, and the character takes that much damage.

## Orifice Reference chart

Anus	Defecation is impossible (something will need to be done or the bowels will burst). The character fires at a -10 to attack, but automatically fires and hits anyone making a sneak attack from behind.
Ear	The character loses hearing in that ear (and is more easily surprised by opponents coming in that direction). They fire the pistol with a -6 penalty.
Eye	The character loses depth perception and peripheral vision (can be attacked as if from behind by opponents on that side of the body). Range penalties are doubled, but they fire at point blank with a +6 bonus.
Hand	If the dodecahedron is clenched tightly in either hand, it mistakes that area for an orifice; the fingers and hand meld together to form the pistol (and the hand is otherwise useless). There is no bonus or penalty to attacks, but the character always has the pistol "at the ready."



Mouth	The character loses the ability to speak, eat, taste, and breathe through their mouth (penalty to fatigue checks). They can fire the pistol with a +4 bonus.
Nose	If placed in either nostril the entire nose transforms (the pistol will be sticking straight out, much like with the mouth). The character loses their sense of smell and can only breathe through their mouth (penalty to fatigue checks). They can fire the pistol with a +4 bonus.
Urethra	The character can no longer ejaculate or urinate (something will need to be done or their bladder will burst). They can make two attacks per round with no penalty by holding the pistol with their offhand while using their dominant hand to attack normally.
Vagina	The character can no longer release their menses or get pregnant (if already pregnant, an alternate delivery method will need to be employed). They must lay on their back to fire, and fire in semi-automatic bursts, making a -2 attack to all within a 90 degree arc of the pistol (normal range penalties still apply).

Humans typically have 32 teeth. Some will have fewer due to poor hygiene or other circumstances. 2% of people (even those missing some teeth) have hyperdentia, which results in an extra tooth. If they have this condition, then this will be the last tooth to fire and both the defender and the one firing experience the same emotional blindness effect. (Roll the odds of the character having hyperdentia after they've survived the transformation.)

Each tooth-bullet does 1d12 damage when fired and causes permanent emotional blindness to the defender as described below. Additionally, the wound caused by the tooth becomes a vestigial mouth that grows a fresh set of 32 teeth.

### Roll 1d12 for each tooth fired

1	Never experiences happiness
2	Can only experience happiness
3	Never experiences sadness
4	Can only experience sadness
5	Never experiences fear
6	Can only experience fear
7	Never experiences disgust.
8	Can only experience disgust.
9	Never experiences anger
10	Can only experience anger

11	Never experiences surprise.
12	Can only experience surprise.

When this emotional blindness occurs, the subject is fully aware that they used to have a full range of emotional experiences and that others still do. They also know that they can cause others to have the exact same emotional blindness in two ways:

- 1) If someone else receives any bodily fluids from them the receiver will experience temporary emotional blindness for one full day.
- 2) If a tooth is pulled from the vestigial mouth wound and swallowed by somebody, then the emotional blindness will be permanent.

If someone receives multiple wounds from the tooth pistol, they do not get additional types of emotional blindness, instead they get more mouth wounds (and more teeth with which to create others to share their condition).

These people may be miserable, wishing to spread their plight to others in a desperate attempt to rid themselves of it or to belong, or they may be the founders of a new cult, religious order, or political party: their fluids used like drugs to stave off sadness or fear, for one more day. Perhaps they want to rid the world of anger or they fight with each other over which emotion should rule over the others.

Once all teeth have been shot out of an orifice pistol the dodecahedron will roll out of the pistol barrel, ready to be used again. A subject must have teeth for the dodecahedron to create a pistol in their body, so for most they can only experience this transformation once and get 32 shots out of it. However, there could be a situation where someone has been shot multiple times with the pistol, so they have multiple wounds filled with teeth, and would therefore have more tooth bullets. If such a person is firing the pistol, then those shot receive the same emotional blindness that they have.

**What happens when the dodecahedron is placed in an unnaturally made orifice:**

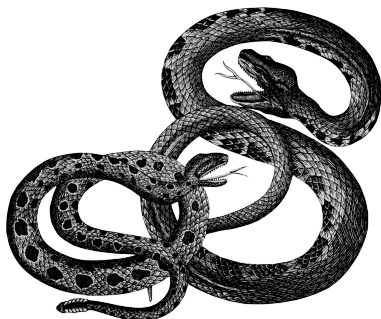
If the dodecahedron is ever placed in an unnatural orifice of a living human being, such as a wound or something created by

a magical item or spell, then the transformation will be much more extreme. The entire body will transform into a horrifying ballista made up of sinew, bone, muscle, and flesh. The subject will be very much alive and in great pain. The dodecahedron will enter the heart, which will form a hard shell around it. Once the ballista is set (by pulling back the protruding spines) it can be fired by pulling the trigger (located near where the taint used to be). The dodecahedron-heart projectile is fired through the esophagus and out the open mouth (finally the subject is killed and put out of their misery). The projectile annihilates everything in its path for 1d12 meters before exploding into twelve streams of differently colored smoke that snake away in all directions.

Emotion has now been eradicated. People are still "civilized" but are now highly pragmatic and instinctual like the rest of the animals. 2% of the world's population are immune to this change (although they now live in a world of monsters). The player characters can be of this select few, still retaining their emotions, or they can be like the others (Referee or player choice). Those who have previously been wounded by the pistol and have emotional blindness will have varied effects: 1/3 will be unaffected, 1/3 will experience a complete reversal (if they couldn't experience happiness before, now it's all they can experience) and 1/3 will be affected like the rest of the world (no emotion).

The changes to the world can be subtle or radical. Instead of a crying wife begging the PCs to save her husband who has been lost in the scary woods, she might simply approach them, recognizing them for the able bodied sort who do this kind of thing, and calmly ask them to retrieve her spouse who is needed to harvest the crops tomorrow. Or people could chop up the elderly and "extra" children (those they can't afford to feed) and use them as pig food. Ultra-utilitarianism and rationalism will rule the day - there is no revenge or greed or need of power, people simply do what makes sense for the ultimate survival and "betterment" of the human race.

The dodecahedron is destroyed when it splits into the twelve rainbow smoke snakes.



# CREATURE: THE FLOATING FIGURE

WITH APOLOGIES TO WASSILY KANDINSKY

by Jeff Rients



This strange, silent gossamer abstraction is actually the exploratory extension of an inhabitant of an adjacent but dimensionally inverted universe where 3D space is compactified but the six dimensions of hyperspace are fully deployed. To interact with our universe, inhabitants from those regions extrude Floating Figures much like the mechanical claw in an arcade amusement dives into the prizes below it. Only the claw is a roughly man-sized blob of oozing polymorphic, multi-hued hyperspatial quasi-matter.

To extend the metaphor to its fullest, Floating Figures are not themselves sentient, but an alien intelligence guides it slowly and at a distance. The mind guiding a Floating Figure is not malevolent, but utterly ignorant of the basic facts of life in our universe and impossible to communicate with. It seeks to understand our world but finds it utterly baffling, inevitably causing great woe wherever it directs the Floating Figure to explore.

Armor 12, Move 90' (in any direction, through any medium), 4 Hit Dice, 20hp, touch attack 1d20 damage plus see below, Morale 12.

Floating Figures are immune to normal weapons. Fire does half damage. Magic weapons and spells may do full damage.

The touch of a Floating Figure is caustic to flesh and metal but also comes with the strange property of merging dissimilar substances. In our universe, an object or concept often is analyzed by breaking it down into constituent components, but the Floating Figure is

designed to gain insights into the composition of things by combining the dissimilar together.

Thus, every time it hits in combat, the referee should roll a second d20 to gauge the relative level of merging caused by the successful strike. The higher the roll, the more debilitating the combinatory effect. A roll of 1 or 2, for example, might indicate that the victim's pants and boots are now a single unit, cumbersome to take off and put back on. Any roll of 11 or higher involves the victim's flesh becoming physically merged with some part of their gear and/or the environment. A 19 or 20 might indicate that the victim's face is now bonded at the molecular level with a nearby wall, for example. You're the referee, make up something horrible.

Unsticking flesh from other objects can be achieved in two ways. The safe way is to use magical healing. An amount of healing equal to the original wound will free the combined flesh but not actually increase the hit points of the victim. The other method is to pull really hard. This inflicts additional damage equal to the amount of the original hit and leaves nasty scars.

A Floating Figure never knowingly engages in or breaks off combat, as the mind behind it does not understand the concepts of fighting, conflict, or violence. It interprets combat as merely rigorous interaction with the local environment. It will tend to leave any combat situation after 2d6 rounds, whether it is winning or losing the affair.

The Floating Figure reacts to sound in much the same way that normal creatures react to heat and cold. It can endure most normal ranges of sounds as we would endure cold and hot weather, but obnoxiously loud sounds can inflict 1d8 damage on it. Because of this, the Floating Figure generally avoids noisy areas such as cities, churches when services are in session, etc. Extreme quiet, such as that produced by a Silence 15' Radius spell, will cause it to freeze solid and shatter into thousands of fragments unless a saving throw avoids this fate.

Other than the constant maintenance of deafening sounds or absolute silence, only force fields and prismatic walls can keep a Floating Figure at bay. Its ghostly body can pass through all normal substances.

# THINGS TO DO IN D&D AFTER YOU'RE DEAD

by Nolan Burgins

Sometimes you just die in D&D. It could be that the player was reckless, it could be that they had a run of terrible luck. It could even be a logical end to their story, agreed to by the Referee and the player. Whatever the source, guidance on this topic has always been somewhat awkward. The prevailing view for much of the OSR community is to simply start characters over again from the beginning. I personally think this a bit too punitive; but i'm also unwilling to simply allow a player to start over at their previous XP total. Instead, I've come up with three methods to assist new PCs in what may very well be higher level campaigns. All of these subsystems can be used with one another without a great deal of conflict.

## **Funerals**

While most people don't need much of an excuse to party, even in character, Funerals are a great excuse to have a bender. They're also a great way to justify Experience towards the new PC of the player whose character the funeral is in honor of. The system here is simple, for each SP (or GP, if that's the basis for your setting's economy) that is spent on the festivities and mourning, the new character gains that same amount of XP. Thus, if 2,589 SP were spent on Grobthar the Fighter's funeral, Yurt the Accursed would start off with 2,589 XP, and would be level 2.

## **Interviews & Auditions**

Adventuring groups can often take on a character of their very own. Continuity, values and norms can be maintained long after their original champions are long since dead or retired. How are these standards (or lack thereof) maintained? Why, an interview process, of course. Through an exhaustive search (and use of their downtime) the players whose characters are still alive can provide a bonus to the slain PC's player. For each week of downtime spent interviewing, searching for and auditioning potential candidates, they can provide the new PC with a 10% bonus to their potential XP total, whatever that may be. A group can only spend a maximum of

three weeks on this task (for a maximum bonus of 30%) since there are only so many potential candidates in a given area.

### **Letters Home**

An easy way to allow PCs to prepare for the worst, writing of their experiences back home to their friends, relatives or colleagues allows players to bank some of the experience that they gain for use with a future character. This is particularly convenient because it allows you to avoid the incredulous situation of a long-lost relative of the slain character showing up out of the blue, since they would have been already foreshadowed. The system here is again quite simple. Once per outing or particularly large story beat (Referee's discretion) a player may choose to send a record of their experiences to another character that has already been rolled; they can commit up to 50% of the experience that they most recently gained towards that new character.

