

Gregorius21778:

Ghoul Succedaneum



“A Different Heritage” for the “Gifted” Archetype

COMPATIBLE WITH
DS&DS

Version 1.0; created by Kai Pütz

(c) 2021

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About the Ghouls that Dwell Below....

"(...) seldom completely human, but often [human] in varying degree. Most of [them], while roughly bipedal, [have] a forward slumping, and a vaguely canine cast. The texture of [their skin] (...) unpleasant rubberiness. (...)"

"(...)teaching a small child how to feed like [them] (...)The price of a changeling, (...) [they] leave their spawn in cradles in exchange for the human babes they steal. (...) The dog-things [had] developed from mortals (...).

" And no sooner had I wondered what he made of their own young as left with mankind in the form of changelings, than my eye caught a picture embodying that very thought. It was that of an ancient Puritan interior—a heavily beamed room with lattice windows, a settle, and clumsy seventeenth-century furniture, with the family sitting about while the father read from the Scriptures. Every face but one shewed nobility and reverence, but that one reflected the mockery of the pit. It was that of a young man in years, and no doubt belonged to a supposed son of that pious father, but in essence it was the kin of the unclean things. It was their changeling (...)"

Excerpts taken from "Pickman's Model", a story by H.P. Lovecraft.



Recently, I had been listening to a sound story base on "Pickman's Model", a story of H.P. Lovecraft. At the point in the story where the protagonist was lead through Pickman's collection by the "man" himself, so that it became clear that (Lovecraft's) ghouls had a habit of exchanging their progeny with that of mere humans, an idea struck me right out of the blue. Why not opening up a background as a ghoul-changeling (or as I rather call them, *ghoul succedaneum*) as an option for player characters in *Dark Streets & Darker Secrets*™? Not "ghoul" like "blood-slave of a vampire", but "ghoul" like "foul, corpse-devouring daemonic man-things from somewhere below...

After all, the "Gifted" Archetype already includes an option for a Supernatural Heritage. While Richard Upton Pickman was not a sorcerous figure in the original story, this does not mean that a roleplayer may not bend the source material this way or that.

And of course, there is this *A Different Heritage* release of mine, that turns the "Gifted" from a spell-wielding archetype into a character class that develops gifts. The figure Richard Upton Pickman did not showed any supernatural abilities, yet the story mentions that "*Pickman repelled him more and more every day, and almost frightened him toward the last—that the fellow's features and expression were slowly developing in a way he didn't like; in a way that wasn't human.*"

...and as I said already, a roleplayer may bend the source material this way or that if the game profits from it.

So... here we are... Ghoul Succedaneum: "A Different Heritage" for the "Gifted" Archetype. The release of mine of the same name is not needed to make use of it, this title includes all rules changes needed to put this archetype into use. Of course, getting -that- title of mine will offer up ... further options.... to you.

And I would be a blatant liar if I would claim that I do -not- think about this release as a fitting little advertisement for my work....

Ghoul Succedaneum

Prime Attributes: Agility and Willpower

Recovery Roll: 1d6

Special Abilities: either as the “Gifted” Archetype with *Consume the Flesh* as Heritage ability. Or, as written in the rules of “A Different Heritage”, remove the *I Make My Own Reality* and *There is Power in the Blood* special abilities from the class. Instead, pick two of the following special abilities, in addition to the Heritage ability mentioned above. An additional one is picked at the third level, and every second level thereafter.

Rules reminder: *These abilities can only be used a number of times per adventure equal to the character’s level (see DS&DS p. 19; Supernatural Heritage).*

Ghoul Special Abilities:

Consume the Flesh: Spend an Action to consume the flesh of a human corpse to regenerate 1d6 Vitality points. Depending on its exact nature (and status of decay), a corpse may provide up to 5d6 Vitality to those that feast.

Unnatural Bite: while the teeth of the character look normal, their bite is much more horrible. In a grapple, the character may bite for 1d6+1 damage.

Creature of the Night: darkness is what the character grew accustomed to. There are no penalties from darkness, and the character will actually gain an Positive Die to any stealth roll while in the dark.

Frightening Fighter: there something in the savagery of the character during a fight, something in the eyes and the visage that is enough to frighten common men. Any mortal character with less than 4 HD must make a Moral Check after three rounds of combat, and every time that the character is able to take out an opponent.

One with Death & Decay: morbid is the nature of the ghoul, and morbidity holds no horror to their spawn once they are in touch with their own heritage. The character will not suffer Sanity loss from scenes of carnage, decay or death. Even if they are supernatural in nature.

Monster’s Visage: the character may change the own appearance at will, to gain horrible visage and appearance worthy a ghoul. It would take a person that knows the character well an Intellect test to recognize that THIS is the character. In addition, the claw-like nails of the ghoul-form count as small weapons in melee.

Aberration: as the Supernatural Heritage on p.19 of DS&DS(tm).

Call of the Ghouls: the character may give horrifying cry that will reach even further underground than above. Any ghoul or character with ghoul heritage within long (above ground) or distant (below) will mystically hear it (whenever possible or not) and feel drawn to the character. A random reaction is rolled for twice when they arrive, and the better result is kept.



Further Releases of Mine

A Different Heritage

A set of rules to The Gifted Class of DS&DS from a sorcerer-type into a scion of another kind, which will develop more and more beneficial, supernatural powers over time.

For I am Your Creator

A D20 table to define the reason for a vampire's creation. PWYW

20 Ways to Embroil Mortals into a Vampire Feud

System neutral hooks for a modern game that involves vampires. Inspired by the "Blood War" scenario in [Old Skull Zine 1](#).

99 Quirks, Details and Habits for Vampires

Further inspirational material to flesh out a vampire character.

100 Items of Modern-ish JUNK

Need some stuff to clutter up a place? Get some! Pay-what-you-want!

99 Deformations

No tentacles included!

Foul is all Magick

A small set of tables for the random generation of "ingredients" for spells or rituals. System neutral; pay-what-you-want.

Get-A-Goon

Need some tuffs, thugs or hired muscle? No idea what they are or look like aside from their stat block? Here you are... pay-what-you-want.

Strange & Cruel Personal Titles

What evil will your players face next? Ask this three-table name generator. Perhaps it will be *the Embodiment of the Erasing Call*, or *the Shadow of the Screaming Truth*.



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