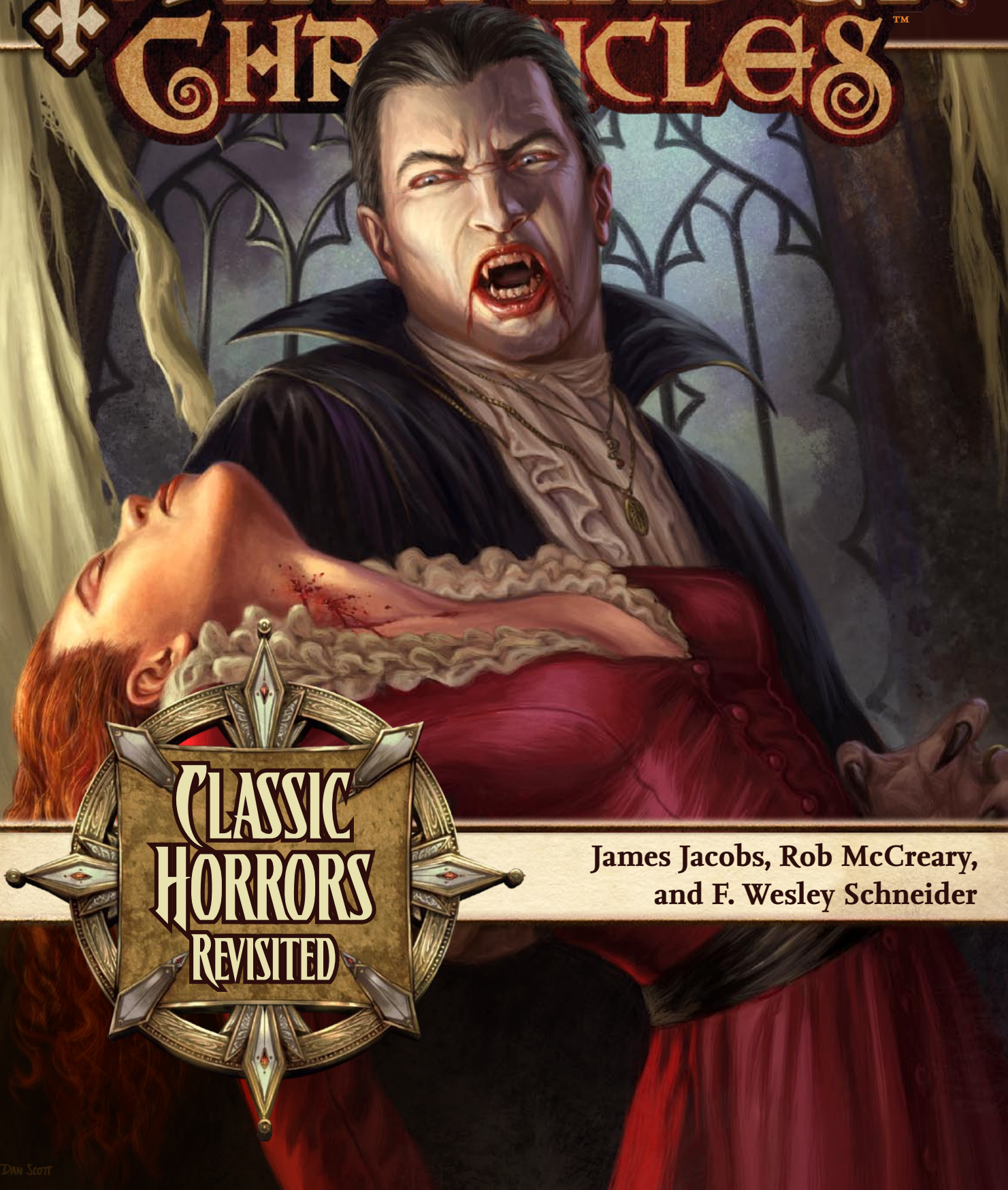


# BATHRINDER CHRONICLES



CLASSIC  
HORRORS  
REVISITED

James Jacobs, Rob McCreary,  
and F. Wesley Schneider

# SOURCES OF TERROR



## DERRO

**FICTION:** *The Mothman Prophecies*, "The Shaver Mystery" (stories), *The Time Machine*

**FILM:** *The Descent*, *Fire in the Sky*, *Marebito*, *The X Files*



## HAG

**FICTION:** "Dreams in the Witch House," "Macbeth," *The Wizard of Oz*

**FILM:** *The Blair Witch Project*, *Drag Me to Hell*, *Inferno*, *Mother of Tears*, *Suspiria*



## FLESH GOLEM

**FICTION:** "The Colossus of Ylourgne," *Frankenstein* (AKA *Prometheus Unbound*)

**FILM:** *Bride of Frankenstein*, *Bride of Re-Animator*, *Frankenstein* (1931)



## MUMMY

**FICTION:** *The Mummy* (AKA *Ramses the Damned*)

**FILM:** *The Mummy* (1932, 1999), *Tales from the Darkside: The Movie*



## GARGOYLE

**FICTION:** "The Maker of Gargoyles"

**FILM:** *Gargoyles* (1972), *Tales from the Darkside: The Movie*



## VAMPIRE

**FICTION:** "Carmilla," *Dracula*, *I Am Legend*, *Interview with the Vampire*, *Necroscope* series, *Salem's Lot*, *The Strain*

**FILM:** *Dracula* (1931, 1958, 1992), *Let the Right One In*, *Nosferatu*, *Nosferatu the Vampyre*, *Shadow of the Vampire*



## GHOST

**FICTION:** *Nazareth Hill*, "Pigeons From Hell," *The Shining*

**FILM:** *1408*, *Below*, *The Changeling*, *The Fog*, *The Haunting* (1963), *Poltergeist*, *The Ring*



## WALKING DEAD

**FICTION:** *Cell*, "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward," *World War Z*

**FILM:** *Army of Darkness*, *Creepshow*, *Evil Dead*, *Evil Dead II*, *Re-Animator*, *The Serpent and the Rainbow*



## GHOUL

**FICTION:** "Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath," "Pickman's Model"

**FILM:** *Dawn of the Dead* (1978, 2004), *Night of the Living Dead*, *Return of the Living Dead*



## WEREWOLF

**FICTION:** "Bisclairret," "The Skin Trade"

**FILM:** *An American Werewolf in London*, *Dog Soldiers*, *Ginger Snaps*, *The Howling*, *The Wolf Man*

# CLASSIC HORRORS REVISITED

A *Pathfinder Chronicles* Supplement

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# TURN BACK AND BE SPARED

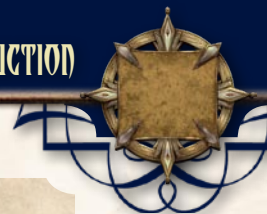
Perhaps you've picked up this collection by mistake, thinking it a compilation of fictions or literary exercises in the macabre. I can understand the misconception. Were the matters on the following pages merely the gory twaddle of reprobate hoaxers and lurid halfwits, one might imagine a measure of sanity and righteousness inherent in the world. If I thought she and her ilk listened to bitter old souls, I'd wish to Desna that such were the case. In that fantasy of sanity I'd joyously give up my paranoid routines, the absinthe-stained kettles that guard against waking screams, and the chill of sharp silver hidden amid my bedclothes. There I'd fill my waning days sipping weak tea and writing scandalous romances, while sharing my evenings with many an old friend—and not merely their ghosts. Yet that world is not ours, foolish reader, and by daring to look past arrogance and assumptions of security, you choose the path that was forced upon me, and risk drawing inhuman eyes upon yourself and all you profess to love.

Your nightmares are true, you see, and worse still, they pale in comparison to the true horrors that hunt the shadowed fringes of our so-called civilization. Your illusions might grant you peace, but don't imagine that you are ever safe.

When I was approached by scoundrels in the service of the hypocritical Pathfinder Society to consult on this guidebook, I initially refused—having long considered my days with those thieves at an end. Only the repayment of a long-outstanding personal favor to a certain irascible captain of charlatans drew me back, and even then only with the allowance of writing this introduction and the promise of the final work's limited circulation. If you are reading this, I suspect the latter stipulation has been breached. Yet with the former, I hope to save you a measure of the hardship I've endured through a life visited by more sorrows than most.

My tale is brief. In the autumn of a year likely before your birth, devilry and a beastly bargain stole away my elder sister. Denying fate and overestimating my will's effect upon the world, I rallied my most devoted friends and struck out to retrieve her. Within a week, those whom I loved most dearly lay dead beneath the streets of Caliphaz, a heavy price that ultimately paid but a portion of my sister's freedom. The rest of the cost I offered of myself, and in so doing took her place.





For three years I dwelt in darkness, a slave to terror guised in lordliness and virtue. Blasphemies beyond my dull imagining confronted me daily, and every time I believed my humanity lost to shock and pain, some new profanity staggered my senses. I witnessed death, and in guises so terrible and surprising as to shatter all truths of the world I knew before. I was made a pawn in abomination, and cursing myself as abhorrent and unclean sought after my own death. But death was my captor, and I lived after his will.

When I stepped into the light once again, it was only by luck and upon a path paved by the corpses of strangers. They found me a forsaken wreck, and only added years of asylum redeemed my ruin to a measure of what I am today. There was no honor in my survival, no heroic victory or triumph inspired by an indomitable spirit. There was luck, and a life that by all right should have ended in the darkness—the soul of a crippled, blind rodent somehow spared the claws of an owl, with wings feathered by all the horrors of the night.

When next I walked the ways of men unaided, in fear and terrible wonder I sought understanding and, to a measure, the means to avenge myself. My travels took me across this land, by wagon and ship and more wondrous means, but where I strode my eyes saw only the evils that lurked behind a thousand facades. Every breed of man appeared as but another breed of sheep, unguarded prey to predators numbering in legions. At times I came upon souls as wary as myself, and more than once we struck hollow victories for our kind. But truthfully, even our greatest achievements were more petty revenges than the heroics of crusaders. In the end, I saw every ally fade and fail, the luckiest slain outright, the unlucky left prisoners of their own minds, puppets of dark wills, or victims of fates unspeakably worse. When finally my soul took its fill of sorrow, I retired to the only place I ever knew innocence, yet found those halls but a faded painting of a painting, the reality distorted and lost long ago. Taking up my pen, I wrote my life of nightmares upon a page and cathartically cast them into a world sick with desire of terror. And I have done so ever since, and known acclaim, and wealth, and fame, and cared for none of it, for the world is spoiled and my life reduced to but swift-running hourglass sands falling into an eternal, empty night.

Of course, I cannot know your reasons, your ambitions, or your pain, but let me dissuade as best I can. Should you seek the details found here as an academic pursuit, let me impress upon you a truth known to all old scholars: many secrets are shields, and woe to those who would seek to leave themselves unguarded. Should you indulge these accounts to seek out the terrors described herein, let me suggest suicides less elaborate and less likely to torment your survivors. And most seriously of all, should you

## TEN NIGHTMARES

Descriptions of 10 legendary terrors fill the following pages, their details being the stuff of nightmares and thus for only the most steeled of souls.

**Derro:** Mad denizens of a nighted world devoid of sanity or morality, the derro claw forth from the depths of the Darklands to claim unsuspecting souls. By James Jacobs.

**Flesh Golem:** Abominations born of terrible genius and blasphemous ambition, in flesh golems the dead find a new, terrible existence. By Rob McCreary.

**Gargoyle:** Hidden among works of opulence and majesty, stone-clawed gargoyles hide in plain sight and steal away victims as though they never were. By Rob McCreary.

**Ghost:** Spirits lingering in defiance of death, ghosts tarry upon the mortal world, and only by the acts or blood of the living might they pass into eternity. By F. Wesley Schneider.

**Ghoul:** Crazed by hunger for living flesh, voracious ghouls yearn eternally for satiation, though even the foulest feast offers but momentary respite from their ravenous curse. By James Jacobs.

**Hag:** Mothers of nightmares and practitioners of strange and ancient arts, the witches of the wild lands unleash the profane powers of the world's darkest reaches. By Rob McCreary.

**Mummy:** From the depths of ancient pyramids, mummies seek righteous revenge upon any who would disturb their eternal slumber. By F. Wesley Schneider.

**Vampire:** The bloodthirsty princes of the undead crawl from their coffins to stalk the night, their fanged kisses promising an immortality of enticing terror. By F. Wesley Schneider.

**Walking Dead:** Unthinking slaves of foul necromancers, the corpses of both the recent and ancient dead rise again, sweeping away the living in a tide of decay and dark magic. By Rob McCreary.

**Werewolf:** Under the curse of the sanguine moon, men become monsters and slaves to the hungers of beasts, suspicion and ruin following in their clawed tracks. By Rob McCreary.

pursue these secrets to avenge a loss: accept your pain and move on, for you only hasten to increase your sorrow.

I've lost friends, my health, a measure of my mind, and a family that never was. That is the promise of the secrets held herein. Look upon them, and know peace nevermore.

**Ailson Kindler**  
Author, Former Pathfinder





## Chapter One

# DERRO

SUNDAY, ROVA 20TH, 4709 AR—PATIENT 23 CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THE FATHER OF HER UNBORN CHILD IS A DEMON. LAST EVENING'S ADDITIONAL EXAMS DID INDEED PRODUCE SCARRING EVIDENCE ALONG THE LOWER ABDOMEN, AND RECENT DAMAGE TO THE BACK OF THE HEAD NEAR THE BASE OF THE LEFT EAR. SHE REFUSES TO SLEEP AT NIGHT, COMPLAINS OF "THE EMPTY MOON EYES THAT WATCH" AND "THE BLUE PIT TO HELL." SHE PANICS WHENEVER SHE IS BROUGHT DOWN TO THE BASEMENTS, AS IF SHE FEARS THE VERY PROXIMITY OF THE GROUND. THIS EVENING I SHALL VENTURE TO THE DISTRICT IN WHICH SHE WAS FOUND, BLOODY AND AMNESIC, AND ASK AROUND. IF I CAN FIND EVIDENCE OF THIS "BLUE PIT TO HELL," PERHAPS I WILL FIND MORE CLUES AS TO THE FRIGHTFUL MYSTERY THAT PUT HER IN MY CARE.

—FROM THE NOTES OF MISSING EGORIAN ALIENIST, AVAKAR SIVANCHI



It is something of an irony that civilization, a result of a society's reaction to the perils and dangers of living in the wild, brings with it new dangers of its own. The concentration of life in such relatively small locations as one finds in the world's towns and cities magnifies many perils present to a lesser degree in lower populations. A single fire that might burn down a house in the rural parts of the world can spread and wipe out an entire district. A sickness that could devastate a family of farmers on a frontier can lance through a tightly packed population with frightening speed. A deadly predator that picks as its hunting grounds an acre of land will find much more to sate its appetite in a city's slum ward than it would along a lonely moor road. And when that predator is a master at hiding, stalking, and snatching its prey, and has developed exacting methods of covering the traces of its presence, a city becomes not a bulwark against disaster but the very catalyst for despair.

Every city is haunted by missing souls—citizens who simply vanish on the way home from a day's work or while out on a mundane errand. Some are lost forever. Others are returned, alive or dead, their bodies and minds changed from their experiences while abducted. And it seems that for every missing person case that reaches a satisfying (if sometimes tragic) conclusion, two more remain forever mysteries without solutions. What then of society's morale should it be learned that, in a horrifying preponderance, the causes of these unexplained vanishings and abductions stem from the same sinister source?

Cities cast shadows into the depths of the earth as surely as their buildings drape alleys in darkness on the brightest day. In the world below, strange creatures dwell and listen and lurk, the perpetrators of so many vanishings—the derros. Even if the sound of the distant thrum of civilization doesn't carry down through the deep and forgotten tunnels, the heavy concentration of life seems to draw these diminutive but sadistic, pale-skinned, vacant-eyed maniacs near. They build their lairs below the sewers and secret ways of society, creating hidden holes to the surface if none exist and using these passages as highways to make secret invasions under the cover of darkest night. Possessed of a hideous familiarity with the fragile pathways of the mortal frame that allow even the smallest knife to cut deep and kill or maim, they snatch the unsuspecting from beds and midnight walks, dragging them down to the blue-litten catacombs of their laboratories below. For these monsters seek not only to sate their lust for pain, but to discover why it is that those who live above can abide the searing light of the sun, their experiments an attempt to discover the source of this unique quality that the derros lack. They do not always kill in the methodic pursuit of this quest, but those they return to the surface are only rarely released with their minds intact. For most, the time spent among the derros persists only as paralyzing night terrors and repressed memories of pain and fear.

## ECOLOGY

The derros were not always the deranged lunatics they are today—in fact, they were once among the only denizens of the deepest vaults of the world who were not consumed with cruelty and hatred. In these ancient times, before the first derro emerged from its glowing cavern lair to look with jealousy upon those who lived under the sun's ruinous rays, their kind were known as the pech. Fey emigrants from the First World with strong ties to the Plane of Earth, the pech served even stranger masters as slaves. Under the direction of these now all but forgotten lords known today only as the Vault Keepers, the pech built and maintained immense caverns deep underground, their knowledge of earthcraft and its secrets allowing them architectural wonders that survive even to this day, untold eons after the Vault Keepers fled this world and abandoned the pech to their own fates.

Many of these pech grew angry and wrathful in the years following this abandonment, and turned on their kin in increasingly bloody and sadistic civil wars. It isn't clear which of the pech factions first abandoned their deep homes and began the long journey upward in search of a new place to live, but what is clear is that the further they drifted from the deep vaults, the more of this world they became. Just as gnomes have adapted to the world and have lost their deep connection to the First World, the wandering pech found themselves growing weaker and increasingly susceptible to mundane horrors like starvation and thirst. That the tunnels they ceaselessly climbed grew more and more barren further drove the pech to madness, and when it seemed that they must surely perish, for they had no supplies to return home for food or water, they came upon a savior—a pale blue fungus filled with life-giving nutrients and dripping with moisture.

Whether it was their long journey and evolution to be true denizens of this world, the effects of the strange blue fungus known as cytillesh (or "brain mold"), or a combination, the pech had forever transformed. Their bodies grew even lankier, pale and wiry with ivory hair and rough skin. Only in their basic humanoid frame, their white eyes, and their four-fingered hands did any real echo of the pech remain physically apparent—in their minds, no trace remained at all. And when the derros found that, not far above, the caverns opened into the limitless vault of the Overburn and that their flesh blistered and bled under the remorseless rays of the sun, they realized that they had come to their homes.

As centuries wore into eons, the derros spread throughout the upper reaches of the Darklands, yet they never grew numerous. Fecundity is a trait that eludes the derros, primarily because of the mainstay of their diets and the source of their bluish skin. Cytillesh causes brain damage, madness, and an inordinately high number of stillbirths, making the savior of the lost pech also their curse. Today, cytillesh holds an almost holy place in derro society—brain mold is their primary source (in many societies, the only



## FACETS OF FEAR

Of all the monsters discussed in this book, the traditions of fear that fuel the derros are perhaps the most recent—for derros embody a combination of mass hysteria with the fear of abduction and unnecessary invasive surgery. Cattle mutilations and alien abductions are a very modern source of terror, one that despite persistent mundane explanations continues to haunt our nightmares. And tying derros to the themes of modern science fiction and horror as one encounters in shows like *The X Files*, movies like *Fire in the Sky* or *The Fourth Kind*, or books like Whitley Streiber's *Communion* isn't as far-fetched as one might initially think.

Although the derro race has been a part of the game for decades (since their first appearance in the first edition of the game in Gary Gygax's classic adventure, *Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*), this was not their first appearance in literature. In the late '40s, *Amazing Stories* featured a series of tales by Richard Sharpe Shaver collectively known as the "Shaver Mystery." In these stories, Shaver claimed to have had contact with a sinister, ancient society of creatures deep underground. The stories were presented in the guise of fiction, but Shaver claimed that they were based on his actual experiences in the underworld, after he supposedly uncovered an ancient language that was the source of all languages on Earth. The creators of this language had long since departed the world, but they left behind their descendants—the rare and human-like "Teros" and the much more populous and deformed "Deros." Shaver claimed he had been imprisoned by the Deros, and that they had dealings with horrific aliens and could travel in spaceships. The deros kidnapped surface-dwelling people by the thousands for meat or torture and wielded strange powers and technology their masters had left behind long ago, and were responsible for many of the world's misfortunes and disasters. The stories were enormously popular, with many writing in to add their own experiences and encounters with the deros, leading to a strange sort of mass hysteria as the lines between fiction and reality blurred. Even after the stories faded from popularity, the myth of the deros persisted.

It's worth noting that the race we've chosen to approximate the role of the "Tero" on Golarion, the pech, also first appeared in the game alongside the derros back in *Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*. Coincidence? Or Dero/Tero conspiracy?

source) of nourishment. They distill mind-altering drugs and poisons from its sap, dry its fibers into tough sheets for use as leather armor or the cords of their aklyses, light their caverns with its glow, and pen their rambling manifestos with brain mold ink. Much of derro society revolves around

the consumption of cytillesh, such that even if the race could shrug off the addiction to the fungus, they would be unlikely to want to change.

Those derros who survive the process of being born grow to maturity quickly, their growth likely enhanced by a diet of the strange fungus. A derro is full grown and ready to take part in raids or experiments by age 9, but can live as long as the oldest human if it doesn't succumb to violence before then.

Perhaps the most unusual feature of a derro's physiology is its violent allergy to sunlight. Bright light, while something of a discomfort for these creatures, holds no terror for them, but the rays of true sunlight can reduce a derro to a stinking pile of scabs, scorched bits of flesh, steaming blood, and dry bones in only a few days. Even exposure of an hour is enough to cause skin to blister and crack and hair to fall out in clumps, almost as if the creatures were suffering from an accelerated form of radiation poisoning.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

In their madness, the derros as a race have become obsessed with the sun—and with those creatures above who dwell in comfort under its rays. The driving racial goal of the derros is to discover what it is about the surface races that their own bodies lack—experiments with cytillesh deprivation or inflicting similar photogenic allergies upon surface dwellers have to date met with failure. Certainly, the race's endemic madness hurts their chances at progress, as progress by any derro conclave is quickly forgotten by its mad offspring. Yet still the derros toil on, ever driven to abduct new stock for their increasingly horrific experiments. They know their numbers pale in comparison to the denizens of the Overburn, and so are stealthy about those they take. They prefer to abduct only those whose presence won't be missed, focusing on prey found along waterfronts or in slums of the surface cities they invariably dwell below. On occasions when they need to return an abducted victim (either to test the results of their experiments in the world above or because of a fear that a victim allowed to go missing long enough for allies to notice might draw too much attention), the derros use mind-altering poisons to erase their victims' memories. When such unfortunates return to their homes, they often wake in unusual locations, disoriented and sometimes bearing strange aches or unusual scars (remnants of invasive surgeries hastily patched up by magical healing) and with patches of missing memory often stretching into several hours. Frightening and confusing, the long-term results of a derro abduction can be nightmares, personality changes, and even eventual madness—an insidious side effect of the creatures' attempt to keep their workings secret from the world.

Other strange occurrences can also be attributed to derro activity. Livestock mutilations are sometimes the result of derro hunting parties that steal out at night to procure exotic



meats for their platters or raw materials for their experiments, or might only be the derro version of a relaxing trip to the countryside after a particularly grueling week of work. In some places, folks tell fantastic tales of derros using strange circular flying machines to secure a vantage point from above to spy upon their victims, or rumors of derros with the ability to transfer their minds into the minds of human victims in order to live human lives for a day or a year. It is likely these tales are the result of hysteria—yet the derros are a creative and intelligent race infused with a heavy dose of insane insight, and it would be foolish to discount every tale one hears about them.

The derros are isolationists even among the other races of the Darklands, keeping to themselves and eschewing trade with races like the duergar or troglodytes. When a derro enclave finds itself in need of something it cannot provide, its first inclination is to take what it needs from its neighbors. In this regard, the derros generally look to nighttime raids of the surface above.

Derros need a constant source of new experimental stock, and are thus drawn to caverns below large surface cities—as a result, they are generally able to procure anything they need from these raids, targeting specific warehouses, merchant halls, or whatever happens to contain the objects of their desire.

Most non-derro denizens of an enclave are slaves. Morlocks and mongrelmen are the most common slaves found in derro society, simply because their flesh is not deemed edible by derros. Members of other races who find themselves captured by derros typically have only a short amount of time as prisoner, ending up on a derro platter, lightly cooked and seasoned with brain mold spores. Derros are consumed by a constant mental storm of new theories and ideas for their sadistic torture-experiments, and as such usually have little time for religion. Most derro enclaves leave matters of spirituality and faith to one or two priests—these derros invariably turn to a demon lord for enlightenment. Lamashtu is a favorite, for her association with madness and deformity, but other demon lords that derros favor include razor-lipped Andirifkhu, pustulant and fungoid Cyth-V'sug, master necromancer Orcus, or murderous and sadistic Shax.

Derros live in settlements known as enclaves—typically networks of caverns filled with traps and guardians along the outer edges, with derro living quarters and laboratories in the heart of the maze-like warrens. Their leaders are invariably known as magisters despite their actual class and training (typically alchemists, sorcerers, or rogues). In large enclaves, a triad of magisters sometimes shares responsibility of leadership, but this is somewhat rare—derros are nothing if not paranoid and quick to murder their kin for perceived conspiracies.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Derros are an excellent race to use for an urban campaign that has ties to the Darklands. Whereas most of the races of the underground world are isolationists with little contact with the surface world (like the drow or duergar) or tend to dwell in remote regions when they do establish lairs in the upper reaches (like troglodytes or vegepygmies), derros almost always select caverns under large cities as their homes. A derro enclave can feature numerous tunnels that wind up through the dark to connect with sewers, basements, and dungeons, often without the owners of such locations even knowing their homes have become the doorstep to a hideous horror from below.

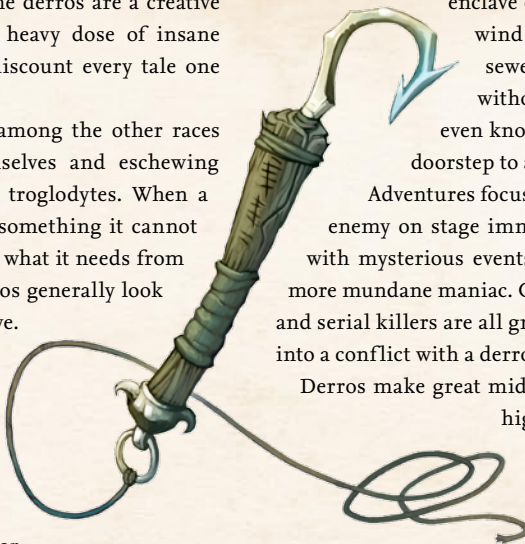
Adventures focusing on derros should not bring the enemy on stage immediately. Instead, present the PCs with mysterious events that could well be the work of a more mundane maniac. Cattle mutilations, missing persons, and serial killers are all great “cover stories” that can develop into a conflict with a derro enclave.

Derros make great mid-level foes; they have an unusually high number of Hit Dice for a humanoid race, and when you start to stack class levels on a derro, he can quickly grow into a powerful foe. It can be fun to have a long investigation into a sinister case of missing memories culminate in a horrific basement battle against a single derro. With their skill at stealth and their ability to use *darkness* and *ghost sound* at will, a derro can single-handedly “haunt” an old house. The PCs might track the clues left by a serial killer or an abduction to an old decrepit house rumored to be haunted, only to find that the house is in fact a front for an entrance to a derro enclave.

## KNOWN DERROS

The most infamous of derros are generally their magisters. Yet when a lone derro gets separated from his society (either as a result of being the lone survivor of a cleansing raid from enemies or, perhaps more distressingly, after being exiled from his enclave for crossing some unknown extreme that even other derros might blanch at), these loners can make for incredibly dangerous foes. An example of each of these types of derros are presented here.

**Mirgik:** Whereas most derros are quite chaotic in their mannerisms, sometimes a derro emerges with the capacity to organize her thoughts and maintain well-laid plans. In many ways, these derros who manage to focus their evils are the most dangerous of all. Mirgik is one such magister, the leader of the derro enclave of Kmlin-Bru, the second largest derro settlement under Avistan. Located deep beneath the dungeons of an ancient dwarven Sky Citadel, Mirgik has formed a powerful alliance with Primarch Bremovir of Galt. Using



## DERRO WEAPONS

The derros use several signature weapons designed to incapacitate foes for easy capture, but also enjoy using weapons that make clean slashing wounds that do not overly damage tissue on the mass scale that large bludgeoning weapons tend to do. Listed below are four of the more unusual weapons utilized by derros—all derros gain proficiency in the use of these weapons for free.

**Aklys:** The aklys is a short throwing club, usually of wood or bone, attached to a 20-foot-long cord. Most aklyses feature short iron hooks as well. An aklys has a maximum range of 20 feet, allowing the user to retrieve the thrown aklys as a move action after it has been thrown. Some derros wield aklyses drilled with holes so that, when thrown, they make eerie whistling sounds that can alert nearby derros of danger.

**Crystal Chakram:** Shaped and carved from quartz or stranger subterranean crystals, these circular throwing discs have jagged razor-sharp edges. When a crystal chakram strikes a foe, the weapon shatters into tiny sharp fragments; if it misses, there is a 50% chance the chakram shatters when it hits the ground or another solid object; otherwise it can be retrieved and used again. A crystal chakram is treated as ammunition for the purpose of creating magic weapons.

**Fauchard:** This polearm is similar to a glaive, being a curved blade affixed to the end of a pole. Unlike a glaive, though, the cutting edge of a fauchard is along the concave side, causing the blade to resemble that of a sickle or scythe. The resulting weapon is more awkward to utilize (and as such is an exotic weapon), but its increased threat range over a glaive and the ability to trip foes make it a dangerous weapon in the hands of a skilled user.

**Injection Spear:** The design of this insidious weapon, often stolen by surface races like gnolls or troglodytes (invariably resulting in lesser, one-use variants), allows the wielder to inject targets with poisons, drugs, or potions. The hollow head of an injection spear contains a reservoir that can contain up to five doses of liquid. When the head pierces flesh, a pressure-sensitive valve injects a single dose into the target. An injection spear is somewhat awkward to use; those without proficiency can wield it as a spear, but cannot use it to inject targets.

Simple Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type	Special
<i>One-Handed Melee Weapon</i>								
Aklys	5 sp	1d4	1d6	×2	10 ft.	3 lbs.	B and P	Max range 20 ft.
Exotic Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type	Special
<i>Two-Handed Melee Weapons</i>								
Fauchard	14 gp	1d8	1d10	18–20/×2	—	10 lbs.	S	reach, trip
Injection Spear	60 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	—	8 lbs.	P	injection
<i>Ranged Weapon</i>								
Crystal Chakram	20 gp	1d4	1d6	18–20/×2	—	2 lbs.	S	—

magic to appear as an attractive torturer and jailor, Mirgik has deceived the Primarch into thinking she is little more than the keeper of the massive underground prison known as the Dread Dungeons, a place where Primarch Bremovir can ensconce his enemies and various political prisoners and never worry again about their plots against him. Of course, these prisoners are little more than a steady and controlled supply of experimental stock and exotic food for the derro of Kmlin-Bru, and should she wish, Mirgik could organize the increasing number of lobotomized lunatic-thralls of the Dread Dungeons to mount a devastating assault on the world above.

**Zyregek:** Zyregek didn't survive a raid on his home, nor was he exiled by his magister. This violent and dangerous monster is a murderer among his own kind, a cannibal and sadist who quenched his thirst for pain by secretly slaying and then feeding on the bodies of his brothers and sisters in the small enclave of Voord under Ustalav's capital city of Caliphass. By the time the other derros of Voord found Zyregek out, he was able to hunt and murder them all before they had a chance to kill him.

He built a throne of their bones and now stalks the streets of Caliphass by night, seeking children, halflings, or gnomes that he can kidnap for his ever-consuming desire to surgically craft a bride and queen for his empty enclave. To date, his hideous attempts to turn a victim into a derro queen have failed, and he has gorged on their bodies and added their bones to his ever-growing throne.

## DERRO POISONS

Derro create a unique poison from their favorite fungus.

### CYTILLESH EXTRACT

**Type** poison, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 18

**Frequency** 1/hour for 8 hours

**Effect** victim loses all memory of events that took place in the previous hour and cannot form new memories for 8 hours; these lost and prevented memories might return later as dreams, and can be returned with a *restoration* or *heal* spell;

**Cure** 2 saves. **Cost** 800 gp



## SAMPLE DERRO

Presented here is a sample derro magister, a female sorcerer that represents the lower end of what one might expect to find leading a derro enclave. A derro magister like Evehxa is unlikely to be encountered on her own—she surrounds herself with loyal derro bodyguards or keeps close a charmed minion selected from her enclave's experimental stock to whom she may have taken a liking.

### EVEHXA, DERRO MAGISTER

**CR 8**
**XP 3,200**

 Female derro sorcerer 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 70*)

CE Small humanoid

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 16, flat-footed +7 (+3 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 70 (9 HD; 3d8+6d6+36)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +14

**SR** 14

**Weaknesses** susceptible to sunlight

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** +1 *aklys* +11 (1d6)

**Ranged** +1 *aklys* +11 (1d6)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with melee touch attacks)

**Special Attacks** bloodline arcana (increase polymorph subschool duration by 50%); sneak attack +1d6

**Derro Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 3rd)

 At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 16)

 1/day—*daze* (DC 16), *sound burst* (DC 18)

**Bloodline Spell-Like Ability** (CL 6th; +10 ranged touch)

 9/day—*acidic ray* (30 ft., 1d6+3 acid damage)

**Spells Known** (CL 6th; +10 ranged touch)

 3rd (4/day)—*hold person* (DC 19)

 2nd (7/day)—*alter self*, *invisibility*,  
see *invisibility*

 1st (8/day)—*charm person* (DC 17), *enlarge person*,  
*hypnotism* (DC 17), *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*

 o (at will)—*acid splash*, *bleed* (DC 16) *detect magic*,  
*dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *message*
**Bloodline** aberrant

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 9, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 14, **Wis** 5, **Cha** 22

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Arcane Armor Training, Brew Potion, Derro Magic, Derro Magister, Eschew Materials, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Craft (alchemy) +14, Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Perception +6, Spellcraft +7, Stealth +17

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Terran, Undercommon

**SQ** long limbs, madness, poison use

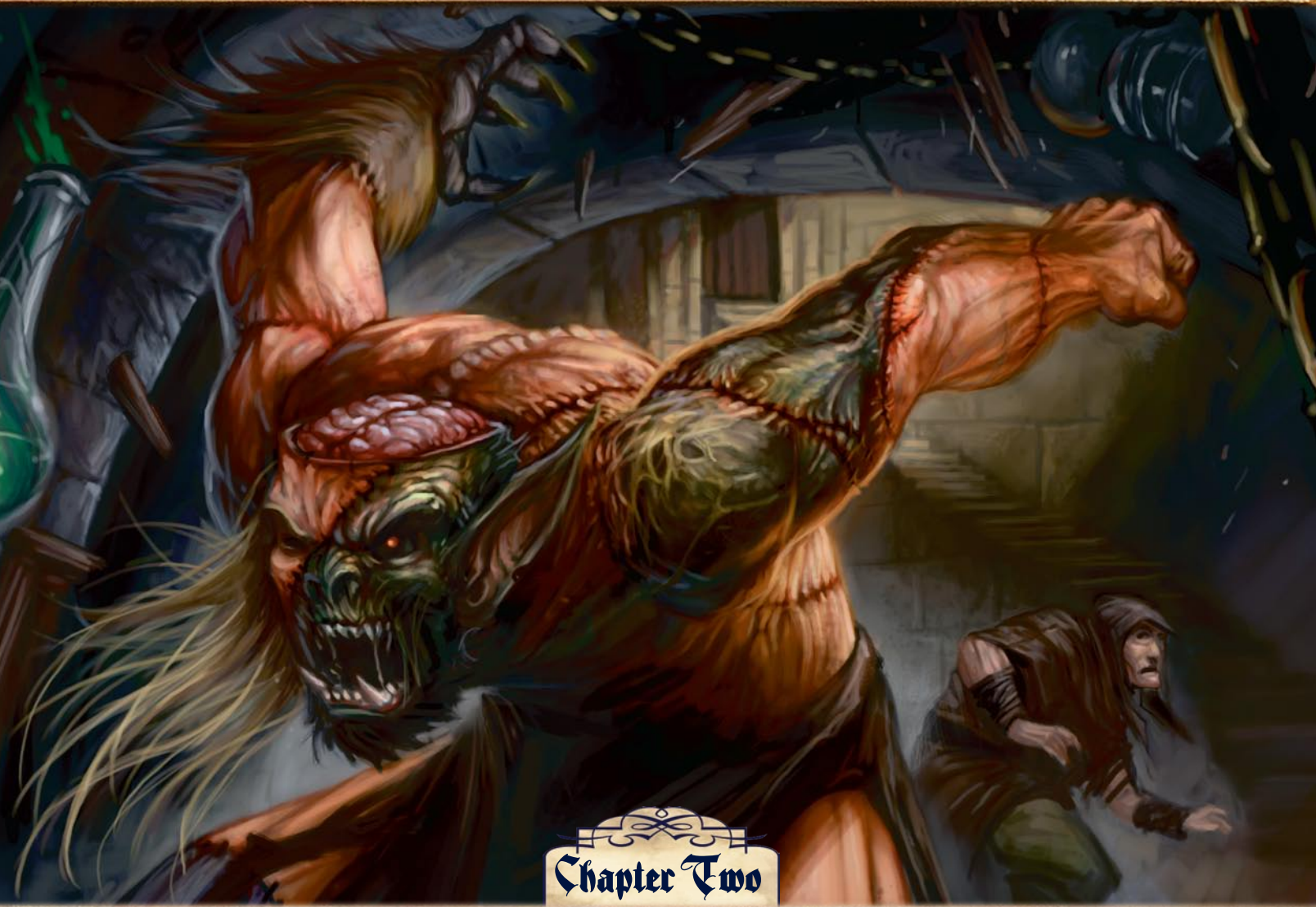
**Combat Gear** cytillesh extract (2 doses); **Other Gear** +1 leather armor, +1 *aklys*, handy haversack, ring of protection +1

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Madness (Ex)** Derros use their Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of their Wisdom modifier, and are immune to insanity and confusion effects. Only a *miracle* or *wish* can remove a derro's madness. If this occurs, the derro gains 6 points of Wisdom and loses 6 points of Charisma.

**Poison Use (Ex)** Derros are not at risk of poisoning themselves when handling poison.

**Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex)** A derro takes 1 point of Con damage after every hour it is exposed to sunlight.

## Chapter Two

# FLESH GOLEM

SOON MY BELOVED ELSA WILL ONCE MORE LIE IN MY ARMS. AFTER HER UNTIMELY DEATH, I HAVE FINALLY FOUND A WAY FOR MY LOVE TO REJOIN ME. UNFORTUNATELY, BY THE TIME I WAS ABLE TO RECOVER HER BODY FROM THE PRIESTS, SHE HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO DISPLAY THE RAVAGES OF DECAY. I WAS ONLY ABLE TO RESCUE HER HEAD AND MOST OF HER LISSOME TORSO, BUT I HAVE FOUND REPLACEMENTS FOR WHAT SHE LOST. I HAVE DEPLETED MY INHERITANCE PURCHASING THE ALCHEMICAL UNGUENTS NEEDED TO TREAT HER DELICATE SKIN, BUT I HAVE STITCHED THE PARTS TOGETHER WITH LOVING CARE, AND I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT HER BEAUTY IS STILL AS RARE AS WHEN HER CHEEKS YET BLOOMED WITH LIFE. ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO ADD THE FINAL SPARK THAT WILL RETURN HER TO LIFE. TONIGHT WE SHALL BE REUNITED!

—FINAL ENTRY IN THE JOURNAL OF DR. SEPTIMUS THESIGER

**T**owering monstrosities of stolen, necrotic body parts, flesh golems are neither alive, dead, nor undead. Instead, they are lifeless constructs, given a spark of lifelike mobility through the animating spirit of a bound elemental. Though weaker than their counterparts of clay, stone, and iron, flesh golems nevertheless possess a horror all their own, as they are composed of the mismatched limbs and pieces of multiple humanoid cadavers.

Utterly mindless, flesh golems have no independent thoughts or emotions and are completely beholden to their creators. While incapable of strategy or tactics, they prove tenacious, implacable foes, explicitly following the commands they are given. Flesh golems obey their last instructions until the task is completed, whether that be to attack, guard a room, or kill all creatures that enter. Only its creator's command, or the golem's total destruction, can stop it from fulfilling its orders.

But flesh golems have a shortcoming as well. Under the stress of combat, many types of golems can go on a berserk rampage, caused by the elemental spirit within the golem as it struggles against its bonds. In flesh golems, however, this berserk frenzy usually has another source. While the golem's creation rituals firmly bind the elemental spirit in place, they have no such power over the angry spirits of the bodies used in the golem's construction. Outraged over the misuse of their stolen flesh, these spirits can usurp control of the golem, sending it into an uncontrolled, destructive rage. Only when the spirits have vented their fury can the golem's creator once more assert his command over the monster.

Rarely, flesh golems have been known to gain some measure of consciousness after going berserk. These exceptional specimens become gifted with a simple intelligence, and often rebel more purposefully against their masters. Such awakened golems are typically destroyed by their creators, but occasionally one escapes to make a life for itself, usually somewhere beyond the bounds of civilization.

Flesh golems are usually crafted by powerful wizards with the help of potent magics and rare alchemical or pseudo-scientific processes, although the common methods are well known and instructions can easily be found in assorted texts, including magical *golem manuals*. Yet other varieties of flesh golems exist, usually of a more crude construction. Carrion golems (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #7) are similar to the standard flesh golem, but are not limited to human corpses for their constituent parts. These patchwork horrors are often diseased, and their assortment of flesh makes carrion golems weaker than their larger cousins—though considerably easier and cheaper to construct as a result.

Stories from the deepest jungles also speak of more primitive flesh golems crafted by the witch doctors and shamans of savage tribes. The creation process often differs from the more generally accepted methods, and usually incorporates religious rituals and magic (and some say, dark sacrifices and

long-forgotten rites). Such barbaric flesh golems are generally stronger, but have a higher chance of going berserk and turning against their masters.

## ECOLOGY

A typical flesh golem stands about 8 feet tall and weighs almost 500 pounds. Its skin has a sickly green or yellowish tint, like that of decaying flesh, and it is usually clothed in no more than a ragged pair of trousers. It carries no weapons and owns no other possessions. Incapable of human speech, flesh golems are only able to produce a hoarse roar from their lifeless mouths. They are prodigiously strong, but somewhat clumsy, moving in a jerky, stiff-jointed manner akin to a puppet.

Physically, awakened flesh golems look no different from their unintelligent brethren. They clothe themselves in whatever hodgepodge scraps they can scrounge, and may own battered, discarded weapons, as well as a handful of belongings that have some personal value only to them. No longer under another's control, intelligent flesh golems move more easily and naturally, though they can never approach the grace of a living being. Unlike normal golems, intelligent flesh golems also have the ability to speak. Because they learn language through mimicry and self-teaching, however, their speech patterns are often childlike, but with a disturbing groaning quality, as if their voices are rusty from disuse.

As unliving constructs, flesh golems do not eat, breathe, or sleep. Their dead organs and other bodily systems no longer function, although their eyes are magically enhanced far beyond the human norm. Flesh golems are tireless, effortlessly able to stand perfectly still or labor continuously. They do not age or die, nor are they susceptible to poisons or diseases that afflict the living. Their dead flesh is alchemically preserved against decay and deterioration, and proves highly resistant to damage of any kind. Barring accident or misfortune, a flesh golem can exist indefinitely, ceasing to function only when its body is damaged beyond repair or suffers complete destruction.

Although flesh golems are unable to heal naturally, electricity can be used to repair their preserved bodies, even strengthening them for a short time if enough power is applied. Flesh golems are immune to most other magical spells, but they are somewhat susceptible to cold and fire. While such energies do no additional damage to a flesh golem, they do slow the creature temporarily.

Flesh golems are generally constructed of parts from no less than six human corpses, none of which can show signs of significant decay. Occasionally, parts from additional bodies may be required to complete construction. Once the pieces have been gathered, they are stitched and stapled together, creating the golem's composite humanoid body. Because of the difficulty in replicating and connecting the tiny parts of the human body, flesh golems usually



## VARIANT FLESH GOLEMS

The exact methods of creating a flesh golem frequently differ as a result of knowledge, geography, or culture. These variations in the creation process can sometimes result in flesh golems with previously unheard-of powers and abilities.

**Electrified Flesh Golem:** Through unknown processes, some flesh golems retain some of the electrical power used in their creation, while others are fashioned with implanted electro-thaumaturgical dynamos and capacitors that generate and store electrical energy. Electrified golems are able to channel this electricity into their attacks, as well as absorb electrical attacks to increase their speed. An electrified flesh golem's melee attacks deal 1d6 points of electricity damage in addition to their normal damage.

The golem has the supernatural ability to generate a blast of electricity that strikes one creature within 60 feet. The golem must make a ranged touch attack; if it hits, the bolt deals 4d6 points of electricity damage. The golem can use this ability once every 1d6 rounds. It cannot use this attack on itself.

Electrical attacks against the golem heal it just like a normal flesh golem and also *haste* it (as the spell) for 1 round per die of damage the attack normally deals. (+1 CR)

**Unholy Flesh Golem:** Evil golem creators sometimes infuse their creations with negative energy. Positive channeled energy harms them and negative channeled energy heals them as if they were undead, although they are unaffected by special abilities that use channel energy (such as *Command Undead*, *Turn Undead*, or the power of the Sun domain).

Any living creature hit by an unholy flesh golem's melee attacks also takes 1 point of Strength damage. This is a negative energy effect. An unholy flesh golem has an evil aura. Creating an unholy flesh golem is an evil act. (+0 CR)

end up significantly larger than the typical humans they superficially represent. Once the body has been assembled, it is wrapped in special bindings and alchemical unguents are applied, followed by the casting of the required spells. A final application of electrical energy animates the golem and gives it the semblance of life.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

As unintelligent constructs, flesh golems have no culture or society of their own, other than those physical trappings given to them by their creators. They can be found anywhere wizards and alchemists quest for power, from the jungles of the Mwangi Expanse to the frozen wastes of the Crown of the World. Flesh golems are often

created as guards, whether at entrances to a wizard's tower or in deep vaults to watch over a precious treasure. They can also be found sealed within ancient tombs to safeguard those interred there, animating only when grave robbers attempt to plunder the treasures buried within. Some powerful crime lords have even been known to use flesh golems as indisputably loyal enforcers and brute muscle that diligently follow orders without question.

Uncontrolled, berserk golems can be found anywhere, wandering aimlessly and without purpose, although usually far from civilization, where they would otherwise be hunted down and destroyed. Intelligent flesh golems, on the other hand, live solitary lives by nature and necessity. Faced with fear and prejudice if not outright hatred, awakened flesh golems are usually driven away from civilized areas. Nevertheless, humans fascinate the golems, and these unfortunate outcasts try to eke out what meager livings they can on the fringes of human society, lurking in crumbling tenements and slums, dank sewers, and isolated cabins or abandoned ruins, often providing fodder for local tales of terrible monsters.

Rumors persist, however, of a settlement of awakened golems that have banded together deep in the wilds. Led by an intelligent flesh golem known as the Thinker, this community welcomes golems of all makes who have achieved consciousness. Their goal is to create a civilization of their own, far from the frightened and intolerant meddling of human society, where awakened golems can learn to control their berserk rages and work together to build a unique golem culture. Still, most human nations that hear of this place continue to fear these uncontrolled golems, and would eradicate or try to control them for their own ends if the settlement's location ever became known.

## SPARK OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Through some unknown process, rare berserk golems have been known to spontaneously generate consciousness and intelligence, breaking free of their masters' control and setting them far above their mindless counterparts. This can only occur if the golem has ever gone berserk.

The golem becomes an intelligent, sentient creature. Roll 3d6 for its new Intelligence and Charisma scores. The awakened golem immediately gains skill points equal to 2 + Int modifier (minimum 1) per Hit Die, as well as feats based on its Hit Dice. A golem has no class skills. The golem also gains the ability to speak the language of its creator and chooses any bonus languages from among those its creator speaks. While the golem retains its immunity to magic and most other construct traits, it loses its immunity to mind-affecting effects.

An awakened golem can advance like any other creature, even taking levels in character classes. An awakened golem has no favored classes. Though intelligent, an awakened

golem may still be controlled by its creator, but it can attempt to break free of its master's control with an opposed Charisma check.

An intelligent golem also has a higher chance of going berserk. An awakened golem has a cumulative 5% chance each round to go berserk during combat. The golem's creator, if within 60 feet, can try to regain control of the awakened golem, which requires a successful Intimidate check, but the golem gets a Will save (DC equal to creator's Intimidate result) to resist. It takes 1 minute of inactivity by the golem to reset the golem's berserk chance to 0%.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Flesh golems are frequently encountered as guards in powerful wizards' sanctums. Yet a flesh golem can be even more effective when it is least expected. A flesh golem among the undead inhabiting a necromancer's lair, for example, might appear as a large zombie, giving the party's cleric a nasty surprise when his turning ability doesn't work and the creature proves far more difficult to destroy than simple undead.

A flesh golem can also be behind a series of unexplained, grisly murders in a town, which the PCs are tasked to investigate. The reasons behind the murders can be varied—is it just a golem gone berserk, or is it following its creator's orders for some darker purpose? Is it perhaps an intelligent flesh golem blindly lashing out at those who have hunted and persecuted it, or even worse, collecting spare parts?

An intelligent flesh golem can make for an interesting roleplaying opportunity. Hired by an angry mob to hunt down and destroy a berserk golem, what will the PCs do when they find the golem is not a mindless automaton, but rather a tragically misunderstood thinking creature? Or perhaps an awakened golem seeks out the PCs, hoping they might be able to teach it about human ways and help it join human society, or even hiring the PCs to procure the materials it needs to create a mate for itself.

## KNOWN FLESH GOLEMS

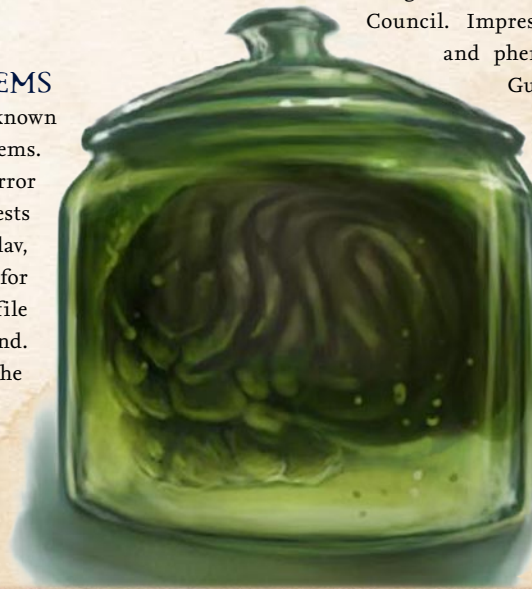
The following are a few well-known monsters believed to be flesh golems.

**The Beast of Lepidstadt:** A terror stalks the mist-shrouded forests and fens of northwestern Ustalav, a monster held responsible for the deaths of several high-profile figures in the Palatinate of Vieland. First appearing 20 years ago in the city of Lepidstadt after a spate of grave robberies, the Beast of Lepidstadt (as it is called) is thought to be an unnatural creation made of the corpses

of condemned criminals who died hanging from the city's gallows. Although human in appearance, the Beast is said to have the strength of an ogre and be prone to murderous rages. There seems to be some purpose behind the Beast's killings, however, as it has been known to ignore some people, and has even helped children in need on more than one occasion. Also known as the Dippelmere Horror, the creature hasn't been seen in Lepidstadt since the Lampblack Murders 5 years ago, and is now believed to lurk among the strange stone monoliths of the Dippelmere swamp.

**The Carcass-Man of Belkzen:** Rumors from out of the Hold of Belkzen speak of a terrible flesh golem created by a shaman of the Defiled Corpse tribe from the body parts of their slain human foes. This primitive monstrosity is said to be taller than a hill giant, towering over the orcs, with three powerful arms and two heads like an ettin. The Carcass-Man leads the tribe into battle, crushing the orcs' enemies with a giant spiked tree-trunk club and ripping foes limb from limb with its mighty fists. Its effectiveness in battle has catapulted the Defiled Corpse to a position of strength among the warring orc tribes of Belkzen, but the monster frequently goes berserk in battle, tearing into both friendly and enemy combatants with mindless abandon. It is believed that the Defiled Corpse orcs cannot hold their position of power for long, as they are losing more warriors than they can easily replace due to the destructive rampages of their pet war machine.

**The Red Guardians:** Erszebet Lavenza is a woman long fascinated with the sciences of alchemy, biology, and galvanism. A gifted wizard and the newest member of Galt's Revolutionary Council, her fascination became an obsession after studying at the golemworks of Oenopion in Nex. Having returned home to Galt, Erszebet took a position as surgeon at the Torvin Academy in Edme, now a notorious prison. Using the cadavers of condemned prisoners, Erszebet crafted a flesh golem which she brought before the Revolutionary Council. Impressed with the unshakable devotion and phenomenal strength of her first "Red Guardian," the Council instructed her to create more golems for the Revolution. Citizen Goss hopes to eventually have a small army of flesh golems at his command to enforce the Council's will, protect him from the mob's anger, and even replace the worrisomely independent Gray Gardeners as Galt's loyal executioners. Thus far, Erszebet has completed three flesh golems using the body parts of those executed by Edme's guillotine, Razor Jenni, not realizing that using the victims of the *final blade* as components



## FACETS OF FEAR

Flesh golems can be viewed as a warning against unhindered progress, representing both the fear of magic gone amok and—especially in magical societies—of unchecked scientific discovery. There are some things that human beings were not meant to understand, such as the boundary between life and death, and tampering with such forbidden subjects treads on the domains of the gods themselves. And if magic or science can animate dead bodies without divine intervention and control them like puppets on a string, might they not also be able to do the same to a living, thinking person?

In another sense, flesh golems also reflect humans' intolerance toward one another, for it is easier to fear and hate than to love and accept. People have a tendency to make anyone different from them an "other"—an object, not a person, something to be feared, hated, and reviled. Flesh golems represent this prejudiced and narrow-minded part of ourselves, the little voice inside that whispers incessantly and cannot be ignored.

To a lesser extent, flesh golems also embody a fear of death, or more specifically what happens to a person's remains after death, the dread that one's deceased loved ones can be used to create something unnatural and horrid. And while other terrors of the night have their weaknesses—the undead can be repelled with holy symbols or even something as simple as garlic or running water, and silver can be used against werewolves—what can stand against the brute strength and mindless, implacable rage of a golem?

for her creations has had an unforeseen side effect—with the souls of the condemned trapped inside Razor Jenni, Erszebet's golems have a much lower chance of going berserk than normal.

## SAMPLE FLESH GOLEM

It is not known for sure who built the golem now known as the Beast of Lepidstadt, but those who have studied the creature believe it to be the creation of Dr. Henri Moritz, a promising student of alchemy and magic at Lepidstadt College and the first victim attributed to the Beast. Over the past 20 years, the Beast has been blamed for a series of brutal murders, including many notables of the Palatinate, all butchered with the Beast's signature weapon, a jagged ogre hook. Strangely, a few witnesses to the Beast's attacks have claimed to hear it reciting poetry before its rampages.

The Beast of Lepidstadt is that rarest of all flesh golems, one who has gained intelligence, having achieved consciousness after it killed its creator in a berserk rage. Ashamed of what it had done, but curious about the wider world, the Beast attempted to make contact with the citizens of Lepidstadt, but its appearance frightened the people it met. When the city

watch was called to attack it, the Beast went berserk again, and when it came to its senses, half a dozen guardsmen and a passing merchant were dead. A series of similarly unfortunate encounters followed, enough that the Beast grew angry and began targeting specific powerful individuals it viewed as threats to its existence.

Over the years, the Beast has learned to embrace and control its rage somewhat, though the stress of battle inevitably causes it to lose control and go berserk. It doesn't understand why the humans hate it so much and seeks to better understand them, even memorizing the verses in an old book of Taldan poetry it came across in an attempt to find some meaning. Although it no longer makes the mistake of trying to join human society, the Beast desperately wants to be accepted, and has returned children lost in the forest unharmed to their homes in hopes of gaining some measure of tolerance.

About 5 years ago, the Beast found a *flesh golem manual* on the body of a self-professed "golem slayer" it had killed. Hoping that the book might help it to overcome its monstrous nature, the Beast fled to an abandoned hovel deep in the Dippelmere swamp to study the text in isolation. So far, it has been unsuccessful, but it perseveres in trying to decipher the esoteric manuscript. Occasionally, however, the Beast's frustration proves too much and it is unable to contain its rage. Its berserk rampages through the swamps (and the deaths of three unfortunate swamp dwellers so far) have given rise to the new legend of the Dippelmere Horror.

### THE BEAST OF LEPIDSTADT

CR 13

XP 25,600

Flesh golem barbarian 6

N Large construct

**Init** -1; **Senses** low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +1

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 23, touch 6, flat-footed 23

(+5 armor, -1 Dex, +12 natural, -2 rage, -1 size)

**hp** 118 (9d10+6d12+30)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +10

**Defensive Abilities** improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2;

**DR** 5/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits, magic

**Weaknesses** open mind

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** ogre hook +21/+16/+11 (3d6+7/x3) or

2 slams +21 (2d8+7 plus 1d6 electricity)

**Ranged** double crossbow +12 (2d6/19-20 plus 2d6)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** berserk, knockback, rage (14 rounds/day),

rage powers (knockback, moment of clarity, renewed vigor [1d8+2 hp])

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The Beast tries to avoid combat if at all



possible, unless hunting a particular foe.

**During Combat** The Beast begins by attempting to demoralize its target before attacking with its ogre hook. If faced with multiple opponents or ones who seem able to bypass its damage reduction, the Beast rages. While raging or berserk, the Beast has little grasp of tactics, pummeling a single enemy with its fists until it stops moving.

**Morale** With no way to heal itself except its renewed vigor rage power, the Beast flees from battle if reduced to less than half its hit points. If berserk, the Beast fights until destroyed.

**Base Statistics** When not raging, the Beast's statistics are as follows: **AC** 25, touch 8, flat-footed 25; **Will** +8; **Melee** ogre hook +19/+14/+9 (3d6+5/x3) or 2 slams +19 (2d8+5 plus 1d6 electricity); **Str** 21; **CMB** +21 (+23 bull rush); **CMD** 30 (32 vs. bull rush); **Skills** Intimidate +16 (+20 against Medium or smaller creatures)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 25, **Dex** 9, **Con** —, **Int** 7, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +23 (+25 bull rush); **CMD** 32 (34 vs. bull rush)

**Feats** Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double crossbow), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Iron Will, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth)

**Skills** Disguise +8, Intimidate +18 (+22 against Medium or smaller creatures), Perception +1, Stealth +7

**Languages** Common

**SQ** fast movement, moment of clarity, renewed vigor (1/day; 1d8)

**Gear** battered masterwork breastplate, double crossbow (see *Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign Setting*), ogre hook, boots of the mire (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #3), cloak of elvenkind, flesh golem manual, shock amulet of mighty fists, ragged and torn explorer's outfit, headless doll, tattered book of Taldan poetry, aquamarine worth 100 gp.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Berserk (Ex)** When the Beast enters combat, there is a cumulative 5% chance each round that it goes berserk. This increases to 10% per round when using its rage ability. The uncontrolled golem goes on a rampage, attacking the nearest living creature or smashing some object smaller than itself if no creature is within reach, then moving on to spread more destruction. It takes 1 minute of inactivity by the golem to reset its berserk chance to 0%.

**Immunity to Magic (Ex)** A flesh golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

- A magical attack that deals cold or fire damage slows a flesh golem (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds (no save).
- A magical attack that deals electricity damage

breaks any *slow* effect on the golem and heals 1 point of damage for every 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. A flesh golem gets no saving throw against attacks that deal electricity damage.

**Knockback (Ex)** The Beast can make one free bull rush attempt against one target hit in melee this round. The Beast does not need to move back with the target if successful. This power is used as an immediate action after the attack roll is made.

**Open Mind (Ex)** Unlike other constructs, the Beast is susceptible to mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects).

**Rage (Ex)** The Beast does not gain a bonus to its Constitution while in a rage, nor does it gain any extra hit points. Likewise, it is not fatigued after rage.





### Chapter Three

## GARGOYLE

"I WAS WALKING THROUGH THE SCULPTURE GARDEN ON MY ROUNDS LATE ONE NIGHT, WATCHING FOR ANYTHING UNUSUAL, JUST LIKE ANY OTHER SHIFT. BUT I HAD THE QUEEREST FEELING THAT NIGHT THAT SOME OF THE STATUES WERE WATCHING ME. I LOOKED REAL HARD AT ONE OF THEM, KIND OF A WINGED, BLINDFOLDED ANGEL, BUT IT WAS JUST A STATUE. I RUBBED MY EYES, THINKING I WAS GOING CRAZY, AND WHEN I OPENED 'EM AGAIN, I SWEAR THAT STATUE HAD MOVED. I TURNED AROUND AND WALKED AS QUICK AS I COULD BACK TOWARD THE GATE, BUT I THOUGHT I HEARD A NOISE, SO I WHIRLED AROUND. THE STATUE WAS RIGHT BEHIND ME! I WALKED BACKWARD ALL THE WAY TO THE GATE, NEVER LETTING THAT THING OUT OF MY SIGHT. I AIN'T BEEN BACK SINCE."

—HAVRED ALOCIOUS, RETIRED NIGHT WATCHMAN AT THE  
STATUE GARDEN OF PORTHMOS, OPPARA



**S**inister hunters of living stone, gargoyles perch high on the rooftops of towns and cities, appearing for all the world like harmless stone sculptures, carved in the likeness of demons, devils, or other hideous humanoid creatures. As still as statues, they patiently wait through the daylight hours, watching the city come to life and hungrily eyeing the unwitting passersby below. When dusk falls, the statues come alive and fly into the night sky, silently soaring above the darkened streets on stony wings looking for prey, snatching up unsuspecting walkers, never to be seen again.

Those “civilized” races that make their homes in cities foolishly think their stone walls and patrolling guards protect them from the dangers of the wild, often not realizing that vicious natural predators lurk above their heads every day, and these urban inhabitants are the gargoyles’ favored prey. In such a city, the gargoyles are the top of the food chain, not the unsuspecting humans and other residents. When dawn finally breaks, the handiwork of these nocturnal hunters can be discovered: an unidentified mutilated body in an alleyway, the corpse of a suicide who apparently jumped from the bell tower, and all the people that never came home the night before, whose disappearances are never explained. Wise city dwellers simply nod knowingly and make sure their chimneys are blocked, their shutters closed tight for the night.

Gargoyles are not restricted solely to urban environments, however. They can be found almost anywhere, though they prefer hills, mountains, and rocky badlands where they can use their natural camouflage to great effect. So-called “wild” gargoyles do not have the sculptured appearance of their urban brethren; their bodies are rougher and more jagged, more akin to natural rock. They do not limit their activities to the night, either. Away from the trappings of civilization, wild gargoyles have little fear of organized reprisals, and so hunt whenever the mood strikes them, or whenever choice prey appears. Some half-bury themselves in the earth, sand, or snow to pretend to be mysterious statues.

Wild gargoyles tend to prey on isolated travelers, though a wing of gargoyles will attack a caravan if it doesn’t look too heavily guarded. Food is not the object of such hunts, but rather the thrill of the chase, so most local wildlife is safe from the gargoyles’ depredations. A gargoyle will harry and toy with a lone traveler for hours, first appearing high above, then reappearing again and again, closer each time, to heighten the fear of its chosen prey. As the traveler becomes more panicked and seeks to escape his pursuer, the gargoyle swoops in to claim its prize. Such travelers usually fail to reach their destinations and are never heard from again, their fates unknown. Most often, the gargoyle kills its prey at the conclusion of a hunt, dropping it from a great height onto sharp rocks below, but occasionally a gargoyle will take a prisoner back to its lair to torture and abuse until the poor victim finally dies. Few travelers marked as prey by wild gargoyles ever escape to tell the tale.

## ECOLOGY

When unmoving, a gargoyle appears to be nothing more than a lifeless, winged stone statue, albeit one with a fearsome demonic appearance. Gargoyles can hold themselves perfectly still, and only the keenest observers may notice something is amiss before the statue suddenly explodes into life in a frenzy of knife-edged claws, gnashing teeth, and cruelly pointed horns. Gargoyles are humanoid, standing about 6 feet tall with a wingspan of 15 feet, and their dense stone bodies weigh upward of 1,200 pounds.

Gargoyles have only the most rudimentary bodily systems; they can go a month between meals, and can hibernate for years when food is scarce, leading some to believe they do not eat at all. They are incredibly resistant to damage—attacking one is like hacking a solid stone statue, and only magical weapons prove effective at piercing their stony skin. Over time, however, a gargoyle’s skin does gradually erode from exposure to the elements. Young gargoyles appear newly carved, while the eldest among them are weathered and pitted, traced with cracks, and often sporting growths of moss or lichen as well.

Although they rarely need to eat, gargoyles enjoy inflicting pain on other beings, and seem to take a perverse pleasure, if not actual sustenance, from the screams and whimpers of their prey. Because of this predilection, gargoyles focus their hunts on humans and other intelligent beings, and usually disdain lesser animals. They revel in the torture of helpless prey, and gargoyles have been known to feed upon fallen foes while they are still alive, grinning toothily and swaying in ecstasy to the victim’s horrified screams.

Gargoyles mate whenever the fancy strikes them, in short, violent aerial clashes that seem more brawl than breeding ritual. They choose partners seemingly at random, with the strong often subduing the weak, and have nothing to do with one another afterward. A female gargoyle lays a clutch of 1–4 stony eggs in a secluded place such as a cleft in a cliff face or the lee of a chimney, then abandons the eggs to their fate. A month later, the eggs hatch, although the first hatchling may succumb to a cruel urge to break the eggs of its clutch-mates before they can hatch, leaving it the sole survivor. A gargoyle reaches full maturity in only 1 year.

Gargoyles can live for hundreds, perhaps thousands of years, though their exact lifespan remains a mystery. They do not grow weaker with age, but their stone bodies do become more brittle and subject to accidental breakage as time passes. It has been theorized that a gargoyle can live as long as its stone body can endure, giving it a lifespan of geologic scale, but few gargoyles ever last to such an advanced age. Most fall prey to stronger hunters, accidents, or their own internal feuds long before.

Over time, gargoyles begin to take on the appearance of their environment. The longer they stay in one place, the more they come to resemble the architectural styles or natural features of their surroundings. A tribe of gargoyles



### GARGOYLE GAMES

Gargoyles are cruel and look down upon “weak” creatures that cannot fly and have to regularly eat to survive. Though slow of wit, they are remarkably cunning at finding ways to harass and torture other creatures for sport. A bored gargoyle might single out a small farm and spend an entire night pulling up all the crops in the farmer’s field just to see his reaction at dawn. Then it might steal his chickens one by one, breaking their wings and letting them plummet to their deaths onto his roof. From there it might kill the larger animals, then the farmer’s wife and children, and finally the farmer, dropping him over and over in a remote area until his legs are broken and he starves to death. A city gargoyle may follow a particular night watchman every night, making moonlight shadows and strange noises, dropping pebbles on him, swooping down to clutch at his cloak, and so on, until the man is completely terrified. Few gargoyles have the patience to do this for more than a few days, but those who do gain a reputation as vile as most demons.

### GARGOYLE TROPHIES

Driven by their obsessive natures, gargoyles amass a variety of trophies with which to decorate their lairs and boast of their kills. In most cases these trophies have little value, though some prefer jewelry or other trinkets, and a rare few collect magic items.

Use the following table to randomly determine what sort of mementos a gargoyle collects and displays in its territory.

d20	Trophy
1	Books or scrolls
2	Shoes
3	Buttons
4	Rings
5	Brooches or clasps
6	Pieces of armor
7	Scalps
8	Ears
9	Teeth
10	Skulls
11	Bones
12	Fingers
13	Skins or pieces of skin
14	Weapons
15	Necklaces or bracelets
16	Coins
17	Belts
18	Pouches
19	Strips of cloth
20	Minor magic items

inhabiting a vibrant city will eventually look similar to the style of statues prevalent there, while those dwelling in the lava fields below a volcano gradually take on a jagged, ashen appearance. Such adaptations are slow and subtle, but over the span of many years, a gargoyle’s appearance can change dramatically depending on its surroundings.

An old Varisian tale says that gargoyles were once a tribe of cowardly hillmen, creatures of soft flesh and weak hearts. Their tribe’s shamans made a pact with the demon Xoveron, gaining the ability to transform their warriors into living stone—in exchange for their souls. Emboldened by their near-invulnerability, they raided other tribes for food and treasures, but the more they used this ability, the harder it was for the warriors to resume their normal forms. When these warriors fathered children, they were born demonic and stone-gray, hardening after a few hours to unfeeling rock, and the entire tribe turned on the shamans for dooming their children to ugliness. Within a generation, the entire tribe had become flint-skinned monsters. Petty rivalries escalated into open warfare between families, and the survivors scattered to the four winds, becoming all the kinds of gargoyles known to the world.

Some legends say that one night a year, perhaps late in Lamashan or early Neth, the gargoyles can walk as humans, temporarily freed of their ancient curse, mingling with the people of the cities, perhaps finding love, but becoming hideous monsters once again at the dawn’s first light.

### HABITAT & SOCIETY

Gargoyles can live anywhere, but prefer rocky areas or subterranean caverns with ample hiding places for ambushes, as well as crumbling ruins and large cities with plenty of stone construction. One variety of gargoyle, the kapoacynth, has even adapted to aquatic life, dwelling in shallow coastal areas or sunken, ruined cities. Gargoyles can be loosely divided into two main groups, urban and wild, depending upon their chosen habitat.

Urban gargoyles usually live alone, but young hunting pairs are not uncommon. Sometimes larger numbers of urban gargoyles band together in short-lived wings, usually for sport or, in the case of organized resistance, for mutual protection. Wild gargoyles tend to lead solitary lives as well; larger tribes of wild gargoyles do exist, but these are unstable gatherings at best. Gargoyles are petty, spiteful, and perfidious creatures, and individuals feud and squabble with one another constantly. Tribal membership changes frequently as individuals are driven out, killed, or leave of their own volition, while new members join or smaller wings and tribes are conquered and assimilated. There is no division based on gender, only on strength—males and females hunt and kill equally, and the strong of either sex dominate the weak.

The leadership of such tribes is always hotly contested, and no warlord or tribal chieftain lasts long if he is unable



to defend his rule from younger rivals eager to prove their strength and prowess. Challenges for leadership are common, and most often take the form of boasting duels. Gargoyles love to brag about themselves, and the challenger who can boast of the most conquests, the most interesting kills, and the most cunning and long-lasting tortures usually wins by acclaim. In cases where there is no clear winner, the challengers must prove their worth in the Ritual of the Thousand Pains. The entire tribe gathers in two facing lines, and the competitors must fly the gauntlet as their tribe-mates slash at them with sharpened claws. If a contender falters, even for a moment, the tribe falls upon it and rips it to shreds. The victor emerges at the end of line, torn and tattered, scarred for life, but with the bragging rights to claim rulership.

Gargoyles are notoriously obsessive, and avid collectors of trinkets and trophies, both as proof of their boasts and as decoration for their bodies and lairs. They do this less for material wealth than as a way to distinguish themselves from others in their tribe. One gargoyle might collect scalps claimed from her fallen foes, while another wears the coins of his kills strung together in belts and necklaces. Still another might proudly display the weapons of her defeated opponents.

Most gargoyles worship Xoveron, the Horned Prince, demon lord of gargoyles and ruins. Gargoyle religion is far from organized, and while larger tribes might have an adept or two, they are seldom treated any differently from their peers and have no special status or influence among their fellows. The rare four-armed gargoyles, however, are considered blessed by Xoveron, and are frequently paid great respect and given positions of power, at least as long as their actions match their boasts.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Gargoyles function as superb aerial predators and ambush hunters. Any rooftop, ruin, cliff face, or statue garden can hold a gargoyle silently and patiently waiting to attack unwary PCs. Gargoyles can also serve as excellent guards for an enemy's fortress or villain's lair—with little need for food or water and the ability to blend seamlessly into its surroundings, a gargoyle guard can wait endlessly for intruders.

Gargoyles are perhaps most easily used in urban or ruined settings. Their ability to appear as harmless statues provides excellent cover for their vicious activities. But beyond their role as solitary hunters, gargoyles can also be used to add a bit of

mystery to a campaign. A series of unexplained disappearances or murders can eventually lead back to a gargoyle serial killer who soars the rooftops by night but perches quietly on a church steeple during the day.

Outside of cities, wings of tribal gargoyles can rampage through the wilds, attacking travelers and merchant caravans or even isolated homesteads and villages. The PCs might be hired as guards for a caravan venturing into known gargoyle territory, or be tasked with protecting a village from a gargoyle raiding party. In these situations, the gargoyles' aerial abilities and damage reduction can prove quite a challenge, especially for lower-level groups.



## VARIANT GARGOYLES

In addition to the aquatic kapoacanth, several other varieties of gargoyle exist that have adapted to their surroundings.

**Arctic Gargoyle:** In cold, northern climes, some gargoyles have adapted to hunt the icy glaciers and snowfields.

The skin of arctic gargoyles looks like weathered rock with scattered white patches that helps them hide among the snowy mountains. They gain a +6 racial modifier on Stealth checks made in stony or snowy environs and have cold resistance 5. (CR +0)

**Forest Gargoyle:** These strange gargoyles prefer the tall trees of forests and jungles to the rocky spires of mountains. Their skin has the appearance of bark, granting them a +6 racial modifier on Stealth checks in wooded areas (this replaces the normal gargoyle's modifier in stony areas). Forest gargoyles lose the normal gargoyle's freeze ability, but gain the following spell-like ability: 3/day—*warp wood*. (CR +0)

**Gemstone Gargoyle:** Rarely, an individual gargoyle is born with skin with the luster and appearance of a valuable gemstone. Amethyst, opal, sapphire, and topaz are most common, but legends also tell of diamond, emerald, and ruby gargoyles. Gemstone gargoyles are usually smarter and stronger than other gargoyles, and often rise to positions of leadership within tribes or wings. Gemstone gargoyles have the advanced creature template and usually have class levels, typically in barbarian or fighter. They have DR 10/adamantine (instead of the normal gargoyle DR), SR 14, and resistance 10 to acid, cold, electricity, or fire. (CR +1 plus advanced creature template and class levels)

**Obsidian Gargoyle:** Creatures at home in the searing heat of volcanoes and lava fields, obsidian gargoyles have the dark, glassy appearance of polished obsidian. The razor-sharp edges of their claws and teeth increase the damage of their natural attacks by one step, and anyone attacking an obsidian gargoyle

## FACETS OF FEAR

Among the monuments of a city, statues stare blankly at nothing, devoid of intellect and feeling, as cold, uncaring, and lifeless as the walls of the city's man-made canyons. But sometimes the walls seem to have eyes, and in the play of shadows, statues can appear to move with dark intent. Gargoyles embody this fear, the terror that comes when night falls and the city itself seems to come alive, to purge itself of the living vermin who populate its streets.

Urbanization can have a dehumanizing and isolating effect as well, where one feels alone in a crowd of thousands. Among such teeming multitudes, a person could disappear without a trace and no one would notice his absence. Humans and other intelligent races pride themselves on their "civilization," their ability to tame and impose order on nature. Behind their walls, in their cities of wood and stone, they feel safe, with all the terrors of the wilderness locked safely outside. But lying just below the surface is always the fear that maybe they are *not* safe, that perhaps civilization is just a facade, and that danger can lurk in the eaves of buildings just as easily as among the branches of the forest. In urban environments, gargoyles are apex predators, swooping out of the night sky on soundless wings to snatch unsuspecting residents, who quickly learn they may be prey as well as predator. And when such poor unfortunates are taken, will anyone hear their screams? Will anyone care?

with unarmed or natural attacks takes 1d4 points of damage from the gargoyle's jagged glass spikes. Obsidian gargoyles also have fire resistance 10. (CR +0)

**Sandstone Gargoyle:** Sandstone gargoyles inhabit wide beaches and deserts, or anywhere with a large amount of sand or loose dirt. They have a rough, granulated appearance, and small bits of debris constantly fall from their bodies. Sandstone gargoyles have a burrow speed of 10 feet, though only through sand or loose soil. They can also bury themselves in sand, erupting forth to attack with surprise. This counts as a charge, except the gargoyle can only move its speed (not twice its speed). (CR +0)

**Waterspout Gargoyle:** These creatures have adapted to life in a magical city, and may be the descendents of a wizard's team of modified gargoyle guards and spies. They can cling to buildings with ease and have a climb speed of 20 feet. Waterspout gargoyles have a breath weapon in the form of a stream of high-velocity water 20 feet long and 1 foot wide which expels about 30 gallons of water. The force of this geyser deals 1d4 points of damage to a single target and the gargoyle can use this ability to trip or bull rush the target as a free action (if the attempt fails, the gargoyle cannot be tripped or bull rushed in return). The breath weapon is usable every 1d4

rounds and is a supernatural ability. In addition, particularly daring gargoyles can reduce their stream to a trickle in order to pass themselves off as ornamental fountains. (CR +0)

## KNOWN GARGOYLES

The following are a few particularly infamous gargoyles.

**The Blind Angels:** This wing of gargoyles inhabits the famed Statue Garden of Porthmos in Oppara's Memorial Park. Unlike their normal kin, these gargoyles look like blindfolded angelic statues with feathered wings rather than the more usual bat-winged demons. Even stranger, the Blind Angels seem to suffer from a curse that freezes them involuntarily when viewed directly. Alone or in total darkness, they can move freely, but as long as someone is looking at them, they are frozen in statue form, unable to move. This curse has made them masters of stealth and ambush, as they can only attack unseen. Although many stories circulate through Oppara about statues that come to life and kill when one's back is turned, most Opparans believe these to be mere myths, even in the face of several unexplained disappearances in the Statue Garden.

**Xiveraka and the Twisted Horns:** This scarred priestess of Xoveron leads a tribe of wild gargoyles that roam the blasted wastelands of the Worldwound. Warped and tainted by the Worldwound's abyssal energies, the Twisted Horns regularly raid the few remaining settlements of lost Sarkoris that cling to life on the Worldwound's southwestern frontier, and even fly occasional sorties against the crusaders of Mendev as well. The tribe sometimes allies itself with one demonic warlord or another, but such partnerships are short-lived, as Xiveraka constantly breaks alliances to lead the Twisted Horns on her own mysterious vision quests that she claims to receive from the Horned Prince himself.

## SAMPLE GARGOYLE

This solitary gargoyle hunter prowls the rooftops and skies of Magnimar's Underbridge district, where the shadow of the Irespan allows him to hunt his victims in the safety of darkness at almost any hour of the day. While Underbridge is his primary hunting ground, Ajekrith does sometimes venture out from under the Shadow, especially when bored of his usual prey. At these times, Ajekrith usually stalks the rooftops of Lowcleft and Dockway, preying upon lone late-night revelers. He rarely visits the districts atop the Summit, except for occasional forays into the Alabaster and Marble districts to wander among the statue-lined streets.

The frightened vagabonds, vagrants, and other slum-dwellers that he hunts don't know who or what he is, but they know that *something* snatches lone victims from the deserted streets and alleyways, and have come to call it "the Nightwing Snatcher," an epithet Ajekrith privately enjoys.

Ajekrith likes to toy with his prey, and those unfortunate enough to survive his initial attacks are often brought back



to his lair where he can torture them at his leisure. One of his favorite pastimes is to drop a live and conscious victim from the heights of the Irespan or the Arvensoar, relishing the unfortunate's screams as they fall to the rocks below.

Ajekrith roosts on the top floor of a dilapidated, condemned tower near one of the Irespan's immense pylons. Flight provides the only access to his nest, as all of the tower's interior staircases have collapsed. Inside, his lair is bedecked with strips of dried skin torn with perverse care from his victims, dangling from ropes like drying laundry. When not out hunting, Ajekrith can usually be found here fondling these grisly trophies, speaking to them in guttural whispers as he brag of his most recent kills.

### AJEKRITH, THE NIGHTWING SNATCHER CR 8

XP 4,800

Male gargoyle rogue 4

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

#### DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+1 armor, +1 deflection, +5 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 63 (5d10+4d8+18)

Fort +4, Ref +13, Will +5

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; DR 10/magic

#### OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d6+5), bite +13 (1d4+5), gore +13 (1d4+5)

Special Attacks bleeding attack, sneak attack +2d6, surprise attacks

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Ajekrith enjoys perching among carved stone gargoyles and other city decorations, blending in and observing all who pass by. He sometimes waits above an alley or entrance to a spooky church, relying on stealth to give him an advantage against an unsuspecting victim.

**During Combat** Ajekrith prefers to ambush lone prey, silently tracking his target from above. When a choice moment presents itself, he swoops down with a flyby sneak attack. Once a victim is bleeding, Ajekrith pulls back and follows his prey from a distance until it collapses from blood loss. Against foes who fight back, Ajekrith uses Flyby Attack to stay out of range of his opponents' weapons. He only lands to make full attacks if he thinks he can quickly put an opponent out of commission.

**Morale** Ajekrith flees if reduced to below 20 hit points, to nurse his wounds and plot his revenge.

#### STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

Base Atk +8; CMB +12; CMD 28

Feats Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Fly), Skill Focus (Stealth)

**Skills** Acrobatics +13 (+17 to jump), Bluff +7, Escape Artist +13, Fly +20, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +12, Stealth +21 (+27 in stony areas); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Stealth (+6 in stony and urban areas)

**Languages** Common, Terran

**SQ** freeze, trapfinding

**Gear** *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *bracers of armor* +1, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork thieves' tools, 1,274 gp worth of coins, gems, and jewelry

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Freeze (Ex)** A gargoyle can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. A gargoyle that uses freeze can take 20 on its Stealth check to hide in plain sight as a stone statue.





## Chapter Four

# GHOST

THERE UPON THE HOUSE STAIRS STOOD THE LADY IN QUESTION HERSELF—MORE A THING OF AETHER AND ECTOPLASM THAN SKIN AND SUBSTANCE. STILL CLAD IN A GOWN BEFITTING A QUEEN OF THE LADIES OF THE NIGHT, HER IVORY SKIN SHIMMERED IN SPECTRAL TRANSLUCENCE, THE SUGGESTIVE CURVES OF HER SHOULDERS SWEEPING UPWARD TO A NECK WEARING GORE LIKE A RUBY CHOKER—AND NOTHING MORE! OUTSTRETCHED IN A DELICATE CLAW, GRIPPED UNCEREMONIOUSLY BY A SHOCK OF EPHEMERAL HAIR, SWUNG THE LADY'S MISPLACED HEAD, HER BEGUILING FEATURES DARKENED BY THE SIGHT OF VISTAS UNKNOWNABLE. SLOWLY SHE DESCENDED, HER EVERY SPECTRAL STEP HERALDED BY A GRAVE NOTE FROM THE TOWERING SALON CLOCK'S INVOCATION OF THE ELEVENTH HOUR—EXACTLY THE TIME BOLES HAD CONJECTURED THE HOUSE MISTRESS HAD BEEN SO THOROUGHLY FINISHED.

—AILSON KINDLER, *STEPS UPON THE SANGUINE STAIR*



Beyond the world of mortals lies a realm of spirits, an unknowable reach forbidden to all but departed souls and the guardians and gaolers of that fantastic and terrible realm. Death alone serves as both gate and key to this eternity, a supposedly one-way passage from which few return. Yet for some, even the laws of existence prove insufficient to drive them from the realm of the living, with injustice, delusion, fury, or fear compelling them to cling to the fleeting tendrils of their failing lives. In states of boundless sorrow or deathless malice, such spirits linger on, no longer kin to the quick, but death given an impression of thought and form, dire witnesses at the door to beyond—ghosts of the living.

With indescribable forms and myriad intentions, the wayward souls of those recently felled and long forgotten wreak their wills upon the mortal world, seeking to compel or terrorize the living with their undeniable ambitions. While the legends of ages spread stories of unquiet spirits, perhaps no tales prove so diverse and haunting as those of the disembodied dead, and what dread intentions they hold for the living.

## NECROLOGY

More than merely wayward souls cast from the cycle of eternity by random chance, the vast majority of ghosts manifest for a purpose—whether one of their own desires or born from the method of their deaths. So-called “ghost stories” often tell of souls lingering upon the mortal world in an attempt to put right some injustice—typically whatever evil led to their deaths—or to prevent some terrible fate. Yet the circumstances leading to the appearance of a ghost need not be so iconic. Although the mysteries of death may never be fully understood by mortals, the most significant requisite in a ghost’s appearance seems to be extraordinary circumstances of trauma surrounding its death. Such a condition need not be a torturous murder or a violent betrayal—the knowledge of a great responsibility or the jeopardized life of a loved one can potentially prove sufficient cause to compel a soul to linger on past its physical capacity. Such leads some scholars of the afterlife to debate whether or not ghosts are truly wayward souls, or rather mere impressions of a single powerful emotion or desire, left as an obsessed copy of a powerful will.

Aside from personal determination, extreme circumstances might also lead to the formation of ghosts. Tales of unquiet battlefields, ghostly ships, and whole haunted cities typically arise from some manner of terrible collective ordeal. Such conditions must be exceptionally painful or damaging to the mortal mind, as not every fallen fortress or disaster-scoured community results in some mass haunting. While individual ghosts typically require some measure of personal connection, suffering, or desire to bind them to the land of the living, such is lessened for ghosts created en masse. The shared experience of multitudinous lesser horrors are seemingly significant enough to match the singular distress of a lone

spirit, allowing large groups of spirits to manifest due to an incident of extreme shared emotion or disturbance that might not provoke the ghostly manifestation of an individual.

While many forms of undeath carry with them some measure of dark appeal, such can never be said of ghosts. Foremost, the transition from life to spirit is mysterious and unreliable, with no known cases of a willing, purposeful transition into this state of unlife being recorded. Adding to this is the typically stagnant condition of the ghostly state. Unlike many varieties of undead, most ghosts are unable to retain new knowledge after their deaths, and even memories of their undead existences seem blurred and timeless. Only in exceedingly rare exceptions have ghosts that defy these truths been encountered, with even those existing for millennia having little impression of the modern age or the gulfs of time since their deaths.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Encountering a ghost rarely proves as simple as stories of the macabre often imply. Few, for example, care to linger about the monument-dotted graveyards or moldering potter’s fields containing their remains. Such a seeming incongruity is perhaps better understood if one views ghosts as remnants of the living rather than as manifestations of the dead. Typically, ghosts arise near the places they died or at sites to which their lives were connected, with the manors of fallen lords, the vaunted halls of deceased statesmen, and the simple hovels of wayward peasant spirits all holding more connection to the time and meaning of a life than the circumstances of death.

To say that a ghost might appear anywhere only slightly hyperbolizes the truth. As noted, a traumatic event and a place of meaning characterize the unlives of most wandering spirits. Beyond these truths, though, nearly any location might give rise to ghostly hauntings. A certain genuineness hides behind the common fear of aged places, crumbling ruins, abandoned residences, and even shadowy attics. Such settings typically hold connections to lives past, whether as the homes of the deceased or repositories of the trappings of past generations, and draw an undeniable weight from the histories, events, and meaningful happenings that transpired within and about them. And with such weight comes the potential for connection, possibly strong enough to draw the spirits of former owners. This is not to imply that ghosts only linger in the dusty places of the world, though. Tales tell of innumerable ghosts with unusual haunts—such as apparitions upon pilgrim roads, the spirits of fallen mountaineers, or the ghostly beasts of ravaged wildernesses—even those that follow the vestiges of their former homes into new dwellings. Only reaches devoid of contact with the living are sure to be entirely free of ghosts, for where the quick tread, their spirits inexorably follow.

Despite nearly any place’s potential for a ghost’s appearance, lost spirits are an extreme rarity, for the laws and paths of natural life are powerful beyond the strength of most mortal

## FACETS OF FEAR

More so than even the dread of death, ghosts embody the eternally unknowable, and the irreconcilable fear of the afterlife. Among the oldest of humanity's fears, the question of what occurs after one's last breath has been addressed by philosophers, theologians, and storytellers since prehistory. Finding evidence lacking, nearly every approach to the question suggests some manner of life after death, each such answer proving from one vantage comforting and, from another, singularly terrifying. The concept of one's flesh being possessed by a greater, spiritual self that goes on to life again—whether in reward or punishment, in this world again or on one wholly new—inspires more than just tales of the afterlife, but of spirits that fail to move past the mortal world, whether by cosmic accident or undying intention. Thus, one of the oldest literary and folkloric traditions, the ghost story, is born.

Aside from being intrinsically fearful creatures themselves—unnatural, disembodied manifestations of the dead—ghosts possess a deeper horror in the questions concerning their reasons for existence and intentions toward the living. Rarely do spirits forgo the afterlife without great cause, giving spirits typically dire motivations. The ghost that seeks to avenge its death, to right some injustice, to torment its murderer, or to lay claim to that which it eternally views as its own all occur again and again in the folklore and literature of dozens of cultures. To aid them in their dire goals, ghosts draw upon strange powers of the dead and the afterlife, manifesting a wide range of supernatural powers from intense cold to possession of bodies or items, moving or destroying objects, unnaturally changing their environment, or even wilder and stranger effects. The ghostly traditions of different cultures also have widely different explanations and descriptions of ghosts and their powers, making such spirits among the most variable and unpredictable of all undead.

wills and all but the most potent magic to defy. Even those that do appear only do so temporarily, as many circumstances that might draw a soul away from its final rest lose their significance with the passing of time. Souls attempting to protect someone, avenge some wrong, or see a loved one once more typically linger only for a matter of hours or days before their desires are fulfilled and they willingly release their holds on life. The will or dementia that shackles a spirit to the world for ages proves far rarer and born of elaborate circumstances. Thus, while sightings of ghosts or brushes with the dead are relatively common in the folktales of even the smallest communities, actual incidents of an established ghostly resident or continuous haunting prove truly extraordinary.

Even in areas where multiple ghosts do arise through the most unusual of circumstances, these spirits typically have no

concern for one another, showing little more interest toward the living. In most cases, such undead seek only to interact with those who hold some connection to their former lives, bearing on their deathless existences, or those who somehow interrupt their immortal reveries. For example, the ghost of a murder victim might only interact with those it deems sympathetic to avenging its death, while the spirit of lonesome dowager might only treat with those who resemble her lost ancestors. Even in exceptionally rare cases where multiple ghosts haunt the same area, how such apparitions interact largely reflects their relations in life, with the apparitions of strangers ignoring one another even after centuries of cohabitation and enemies playing out rivalries over endless ages.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Ghosts generally serve GMs in a twofold manner: bluntly as enemies, and in a potentially more elegant form as storytelling devices. As undead foes, ghosts measure among vampires and liches in menace, though less so in terms of scale. Rarely are ghosts unfettered, even though their statistics do not require a place or purpose. While spectres, wraiths, and all manner of similar incorporeal undead make fine spooks and unquiet spirits to menace characters, ghosts imply a greater personality, history, and effort to banish. GMs are thus encouraged to create meaningful histories for these apparitions, as their value stems not from wide-reaching plots or even evil intentions at all, but from the stories inherent in their existences and the conditions that might lead them finally to rest.

As storytelling devices, ghosts serve as exceptionally useful links between the world of the present and the past, and manifestations of the wisdom of the realm of the dead as it might affect the lands of the living. Perhaps the ultimate method of “telling” rather than “showing,” a non-combative ghost might frame a tale of woe in no uncertain terms, presenting the ultimate in sympathetic victims—those affected even beyond death. Yet even under the most extreme and seemingly sympathetic conditions, ghosts retain the most strongly held goals and desires of their lives, and not all ghostly ambitions are altruistic or liberating. The trope of ghostly intervention should be carefully utilized, though, as it moves a measure of control and discovery from the PCs' hands entirely to the GM. Ghosts who guilt the living into doing their will or who possess all knowledge can swiftly feel heavy-handed or lead to lazy, unbelievable storytelling. Ghosts with an imperfect vantage, though, or with goals more mysterious than they at first seem, are typically more interesting, but still should be utilized only rarely so as not to force players into specific actions or to undermine their place in a story's spotlight.

## VARIETIES OF GHOSTS

Much confusion arises in folktales and legends between the use of the word “ghost” referring to a specific type of undead and as a generalization for all ethereal undead. Aside from

ghosts, numerous disembodied undead exist, just a smattering of the most common being noted here.

**Allips:** Few fates could be more horrifying than having a life of fear and suffering end, only to find another existence of such torment stretching into eternity. Such is the doom of allips, the mad dead. Souls of the insane too hate-crazed and vicious to find their ways to the afterlife, these shades blather endlessly, spouting profanities and demented tirades from forms stripped of all mortal reason, reduced to nightmarish hallucinations themselves.

**Shadows:** Little more than impressions of wickedness, shadows are the souls of petty villains too fearful of their eternal punishments to pass on to the outer planes, yet too weak-willed to manifest as greater undead. Cursed to wander the darkened places of the world, these pathetic spirits become scavengers of life, sapping vitality from the living in a hopeless attempt to reclaim even an impression of their forgotten lives.

**Spectres:** While ghosts take on a fearful variety of forms for all manner of traumatic reasons, instances of extreme violence and hatred often give rise to a lesser form of spirit: spectres, souls of rage. Compelled to linger upon the mortal plane by their fury, these vicious spirits seek to revenge themselves upon all living creatures, violently afflicting others with their own terrible condition. The light of the sun weakens spectres, forcing them into dark, dismal haunts that only further fuel their loathing for life in all its forms.

**Wraiths:** The souls of exceptionally malevolent individuals, wraiths are manifestations of true evil. They torment the living not out of any particular desire or rampant emotion, but in the indulgence and sadistic enjoyment of malice for malice's sake. Those that intrude upon their darkened realms risk falling victim to their deadly touch, a freezing grip that drains the vital energy from the living until all that's left is an ashen husk and a pathetic soul enslaved to the wraith's cruel whims.

## GHOSTLY CORRUPTIONS

Just as the reasons for ghostly materialization differ wildly, so too do the abilities manifested by the disembodied dead. Upon creating a ghost, GMs choose from a range of special attacks, each representative of the spirit's cause of death or undead intentions. Presented here are a variety of additional special attacks, available to further tailor the tales and powers of these lost souls. As with all other ghostly abilities, the DCs for these special attacks are equal to 10 + 1/2 the ghost's HD + the ghost's Charisma modifier.

**Deathly Delusion (Su):** The ghost died suddenly or unexpectedly. Not even realizing it's dead, this spirit goes about the routines of its daily life, ignoring the living in a state of undead denial. Should a ghost with this ability pass through the square

of a living being, that creature must make a Will save or fall into a fitful sleep full of nightmares that aren't its own for 1d4 minutes. For a number of following nights equal to the ghost's Charisma modifier, the victim must make an additional Will save or be affected as per the spell *nightmare*. (CR +0)

**Fatal Fate (Su):** The ghost died with some work undone or desire unfulfilled. In its desire to see its efforts completed, once per day, a ghost can lay a compulsive curse upon the living, forcing them to either take up its work or face a terrible end. A ghost can lay this curse by making a touch attack, which forces the target to make a Will save or be stunned for 1 round. During this round, the target receives a flood of images suggesting a course of action—though such might remain vague or require research into the ghost's history to discern an exact meaning. The target has a number of days to fulfill the ghost's intentions equal to 14 days minus the ghost's Charisma modifier, to a minimum of 7 days. If the target does not fulfill the course of action suggested by the vision within this set period, he takes 1d4 points of Constitution drain per day. This effect can be overcome via the spell *remove curse*, requiring a caster level check with a DC equal to this effect's initial DC. (CR +0)

**Frightener (Su):** The ghost's unique personality manifests even in death. The ghost gains a number of spell-like abilities equal to its Charisma modifier. It may select these abilities from the following list: *animate rope*, *chill metal*, *control undead*, *dancing lights*, *entangle*, *faerie fire*, *fog cloud*, *ghost sound*, *heat metal*, *hideous laughter*, *invisibility*, *minor image*, *open/close*, *pyrotechnics*, *scare*, *sleep*, *spiritual weapon*, *soften earth and stone*, *summon swarm*, *warp wood*, or *whispering wind*. A ghost may use each of these abilities 3 times per day. The DCs are 10 + spell level + the ghost's Charisma modifier. (CR +0)

**Grave Trappings (Su)** The ghost died with a strong attachment to a specific item or set of objects. A ghost with this ability may choose a number of items it died with equal to its Charisma modifier to carry with it into death. The ghost continues to be able to use and benefit from these spectral



duplicates just as though they were the real things. Weapons and armor are treated as having the *ghost touch* special ability, while other items act as being incorporeal themselves and can be manipulated by the ghost. Regardless of the type of object, all selected items are treated as being part of the ghost's form and cannot be disarmed or removed from the ghost (even by the ghost). Should a ghost be destroyed, its equipment reappears with it upon rejuvenating. (CR +0)

Occasionally, and at the GM's discretion, the transition into death might imbue a single ghostly item with strange powers, granting it powers comparable to a magic item suited to the ghost's character level.

**Phantasmagoria (Su):** The ghost died as a victim of its own delusions or folly. A number of times per day equal to the ghost's Charisma modifier, the ghost can create an elaborate illusion. This illusion functions similarly to the spell *mirage arcana* in combination with multiple *major images*, allowing the ghost to recreate any scene, setting, or characters it wishes. The ghost can even incorporate itself into the effect, appearing as it wishes within the illusion as if it were under the effects of *alter self*. The entire illusion can be disbelieved with a Will save. The illusion is treated as a 6th-level spell created by a caster with a level equal to the ghost's CR. If any part of the illusion is dispelled, the entire illusion fades. (CR +0)

**Reinvigoration (Su):** The ghost died in the throes of a terrible fear, and is desperate for any way to escape its fate, both perceived and actual. Once per round a ghost can possess an adjacent corpse, merging with the remains and reanimating them as a skeleton or zombie. The skeleton or zombie animated by this ability may be no higher than the ghost's CR minus 2. If the animated corpse is destroyed, the ghost reappears in the corpse's square and cannot possess another body for 1d4 rounds. (CR +0)

**Vehemence (Su):** A ghost with a powerful connection to a specific location gains a measure of mastery over the objects in that place. Once per round, a ghost can possess an object of size Large or smaller, giving it life as an animated object. This animated object's CR can be no higher than the ghost's CR minus 2. If the target object is being held by a creature, the object can make a Will save using its bearer's saving throw to resist possession. If the animated object is destroyed, the ghost reappears in its square and cannot possess another object for 1d4 rounds. (CR +0)

## KNOWN GHOSTS

All manner of geists and apparitions linger in the dark, ancient, and mysterious places of Golarion. A handful of some of the best-known local ghosts follows.

**Coath, The Wight Whale:** Tales along the eastern coast of Garund have long told of Coath, the Black Whale, a murderous leviathan that seemed to take umbrage at man's incursion into its watery realm. For years, the gigantic, dusky whale roamed the seas and brought ruin to even the

best-armed vessels, typically under the cover of starless night. Finally, whalers from Ilizmagorti managed to coax the beast into a stretch of sandy shallows, and with blade, poison, and great loss of life finally laid the monster low. Soon after, a gigantic ghost of radiant darkness was spotted near Mediogalti Island, seeming to circle the vast landmass in search of land-bound prey, with several able ships disappearing soon after. Claimed by pirates to be the vengeful spirit of that hateful sea beast Coath, many sailors of Ilizmagorti fear to travel on moonless nights, when the sea proves darker and the stars less bright, out of fear of what they call the Wight Whale, the king of the stormy seas returned to take revenge on not just its killers, but all who sail.

**Lord Carnavy Trou:** In life, the good-natured Lord Trou straddled Oppara's social and scholarly world, being a gentleman antiquarian of some repute. The third son of a minor noble family, he filled his sumptuous home with room upon room of bookshelves, creating a maze-like library mansion. When Trou finally took a wife (late in life and at his family's insistence), Lady Sharrine Lemmor, it was for show and entirely loveless. Lemmor, a vain and moody woman, demanded Carnavy dote on her, giving him little peace and coming to resent his historical pursuits. In her instability and bitterness, it was little problem to murder her husband by crushing him under a stack of his beloved tomes. In death, however, the timid nobleman found himself free of the demands of standing and courtesy, taking to haunting his terrible former wife with zeal. The Trou Manor, a half-day's travel from Oppara, is now a deadly trap of winding halls and shifting tomes wherein lurk the thoroughly insane Lady Sharrine Lemmor and the spirit of her vengeful husband.

**Ordellia Whilwren:** Tales in the Varisian city of Magnimar tell of the ghost of one of the city's first leaders, Mistress Ordellia Whilwren, who aided in establishing friendly relations between the fledgling city and the region's Varisian wanderers. Magnimarians have long claimed that during poor fishing seasons, at the threat of war, or when the people seem lost, a vision of the dead leader appears upon the towering Arvensoar, her comforting ghost often leaving some token to aid the city through its need, such as a historical relic or an encouraging Harrow card. The sightings and tokens often serve to hearten the people and comfort the city with the knowledge that the spirits of the past still watch over their descendents.

## SAMPLE GHOST

From the taprooms and firesides of Galt comes the tale of the spirit known as Maven Mossflight. A modest maiden from an esteemed family, she led a fairytale life that fell under the shadow of a careless romance. Smitten with Lord Reneis Whitchaste, Maven confessed her intentions to tame his wandering ways. To her downfall, one who heard her avowal was the lowborn and envious servant Sylnia, a maid

in Maven's family's employ who physically resembled the young lady. Long obsessing over Lord Whitchaste herself, Sylnia coaxed Maven into inviting the nobleman on a secret spring dalliance. As the women traveled by skiff to the twilit rendezvous, Sylnia remarked on the fairy-like fish that seemed to guide their craft. Raising her lantern to see the fictitious creatures, Maven never saw the hefted oar her servant brought crashing down upon her, sending her headlong into the murky river.

Under the pretense of being Maven, Sylnia met and eloped with Lord Whitchaste that very night, the dastard never knowing the ruse. Maven's body was never discovered, but for decades since, a soggy soul has wandered the mossy shores of the Boarwood, a mournful maiden with a lantern who ever seeks a lost love and leads all perceived imposters to a watery grave.

**MAVEN MOSSLIGHT****CR 10****XP 9,600**

Female human ghost sorcerer 9

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, incorporeal)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +21**DEFENSE****AC** 19, touch 19, flat-footed 15; (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 deflection)**hp** 94 (9d6+63)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation; **Resist** cold 20;**Immune** undead traits**OFFENSE****Speed** fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** corrupting touch +7 (10d6, Fort DC 19 half)**Ranged** elemental ray +7 (1d6+4 cold)**Special Attacks** elemental blast, telekinesis (CL 12th, Will DC 19)**Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th)

8/day—elemental ray

1/day—elemental blast

**Spells Known** (CL 9th)4th (5/day)—*bestow curse* (DC 19), *elemental body*\*, *solid fog*3rd (7/day)—*protection from energy*, *ray of exhaustion* (DC 18), *stinking cloud* (DC 18), *water breathing*2nd (7/day)—*command undead* (DC 17), *gust of wind* (DC 17), *invisibility* (DC 17), *scorching ray*\*, *summon swarm*1st (8/day)—*animate rope*, *burning hands*\* (DC 16), *cause fear* (DC 16), *hold portal*, *sleep* (DC 16),*silent image* (DC 16)0—*acid splash*, *bleed* (DC 15), *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *open/close*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

\* These spells deal cold damage and have the water subtype.

**Bloodline** elemental (water)**STATISTICS****Str** —, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 21**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 23**Feats** Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Toughness**Skills** Bluff +12, Fly +8, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Perception +21, Stealth +15; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception, +8 Stealth**Languages** Common, Hallit**SQ** grave trappings**Gear** lantern of souls (grave trappings)**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Corrupting Touch (Su)** By passing part of its incorporeal body through a foe's body as a standard action, Maven inflicts 10d6 damage. This damage is not negative energy—it manifests in the form of physical wounds and aches from supernatural aging. Creatures immune to magical aging are immune to this damage, but otherwise the damage bypasses all forms of damage reduction. A Fortitude save (DC 19) halves the damage inflicted.

**Grave Trappings (Su)** Maven bears a ghostly lantern that sheds an unnerving glow. This light functions like a *candle of invocation*, causing all evil creatures that come within 30 feet of Maven to gain a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. Once per day she can use the candle to summon 1d4 will-o'-wisps. Maven can interact with the lantern as though it were incorporeal. If Maven is destroyed, the lantern is destroyed as well, and reforms with her upon rejuvenating.

**Rejuvenation (Su)** If "destroyed" through combat, Maven restores herself in 2d4 days. She can only be put to rest if her sunken, fish-eaten remains and the richly interred corpse of Lady Sylnia Whitchaste have their places swapped.

**Telekinesis (Su)** Maven can use *telekinesis* as a standard action once every 1d4 rounds (caster level 12th).





## Chapter five

# GHOUL

"THE SUBSIDENCE WAS EVIDENT IN EVERY GRAVE. A SUNKEN SCAR MARKED MANY OF THE TOWN'S BURIAL SITES, EACH FILLED WITH A MUDDY PUDDLE FROM THE AFTERNOON RAIN. YET MORE DISTURBING WERE THOSE GRAVES WITHOUT PUDDLES—FOR THESE GRAVES WERE SCARRED INSTEAD BY GAPING HOLES INTO THE DARKNESS. A TERRIBLE SMELL ROSE FROM THOSE HOLES, A SMELL OF DEATH AND DECAY FAR TOO PUNGENT AND STRONG TO COME FROM THE RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF BODIES LIKELY BURIED IN THE BONEYARD, AND FAR TOO FRESH TO COME FROM ANYTHING MORE THAN A WEEK DEAD. YET WORST OF ALL WERE THE SOUNDS COMING FROM THOSE GRAVEYARD HOLES, SOUNDS OF A SLOPPY, FRANTIC FEASTING PUNCTUATED ALL TOO OFTEN BY SCREAMS."

—OFFICER VADE ANDERMEN'S TESTIMONY RECOUNTING THE AFTERMATH OF THE CLOVER'S CROSSING TRAGEDY



The lonely graveyard that looms on the outskirts of the rural town has long been a place to haunt nightmares. By day, such sites carry with them an air of loss, mournful memory, and somber gloom. Those who visit usually seem eager to leave, either in hopes of leaving their grief for departed loved ones behind or out of fear of being caught within the yard after sun's ebb. Animals spied amid the tombstones and graves seem to carry with them a lurking threat, be they feral dogs merely passing through the yard in search of prey or dark raucous crows and ravens perched on statue angels and stone markers. Even trees seem more ominous when they grow from amid the stones of a graveyard, as if they might draw foulness from the surrounding soil, drinking deep with hungry roots.

Yet these subtle terrors are nothing compared to what many graveyards hide. Stories of lone mourners going missing when a trip to pay respects occurs too close to nightfall, of graves mysteriously sagging as if collapsing from within, of uncounted tunnels and warrens winding maze-like below the graves themselves, and darker tales of hauntings and hideous coffin-births are unnervingly common as a traveler moves from township to township. In many cases, these legends and tales are simply the by-product of the grim power of a graveyard's mystique, but in a few, there is a very real and very dangerous source for the graveyard's ill reputation.

For not all the dead remain dead.

Tales of necromancers instilling a fell unlife in dead bodies and sinister ghosts with a vengeful hatred or jealousy of the living are common, yet undead created in this manner are, for all the horror their shambling frames hold, limited in number and hampered by madness or mindlessness. Zombies and skeletons are little more than the tools of evil, and possess no drive of their own. Golems crafted from the dead have something more of a mind, yet most remain under their creators' control, and of those who escape, most do not carry in their lumbering hearts an intrinsic evil. And wraiths and wights and spectres, for all their haunting malevolence, do not range far from the sites of their mortal end, bound to bone by lingering madness or mystic decree.

Viewed in this light, those among the undead who retain free will and a driving hunger for destruction are perhaps the most horrifying of the lot. And while the vampire might carry all the hallmarks of such horror, its evil is often of a more subtle nature—a vampire can mask its predation behind a veneer of civility and calm. Not so the ghoul, a feral, constantly ravaging glutton whose hunger compels it to seek out the living and whose curse is so horrifyingly fecund. Here, one sees the perfect synthesis of undead blasphemy and living cruelty—a death that brings no peace from madness or hunger.

## CREATION

Myth holds that the first man to feed upon the flesh of his brother was seized by a most uncommon malady of the intestinal tract, and after lingering for days in the throes of this painful

inflammation of the belly, he died, only to rise on the Abyss as Kabriri, the first ghoul. Whether the demon lord of graves and ghouls was indeed the first remains the subject of debate among scholars of necromancy, but certainly the methods by which bodies can rise as the hungry dead are myriad.

Necromancers have long known the secrets of infusing a dead body with this vile animating force. With the spell *create undead*, a spellcaster can waken a body's hunger and transform it into a ravenous ghoul. Stories abound as well of spontaneous transformations when a man or woman, driven by bleakest desperation or blackest madness, resorts to cannibalism as a means of survival. Whether the expiration that follows rises from further starvation or the death of the will to carry on in light of such atrocity matters not, for when death occurs after such a choice, a hideous rebirth as a ghoul may occur.

In the Darklands, yet another route to ghoulishness exists—lazarite. This strange, magical ore, thought to be the remnant of a dead god who staggered through the Darklands and left behind black bloodstains upon the caverns of the Cold Hell, appears as a thin black crust where it is exposed. The white veins of rock in which it often forms are known as marrowstone. Lazarite itself exudes a magical radiation that gives off a strong aura of necromancy. Any intact corpse left within a few paces of a significant lazurite deposit for a day is likely to rise as a ghoul or ghastr, often retaining any abilities it had in life. The vast majority of non-humanoid "ghouls" in the Darklands rise from such conditions. Ghouls often build lairs near lazurite deposits, for its radiation bolsters them against holy energy.

Yet the most common route to transformation is through violent contact with other ghouls. Called by a wide variety of regional names (such as gnaw pangs, belly blight, or Kabriri's curse), this contagion is known in most circles simply as "ghoul fever." Transmitted by a ghoul's bite (or, more rarely, through the consumption of ghoulish flesh), ghoul fever causes the victim to grow increasingly hungry and manic, yet makes it impossible to keep down any food or water. The horrific hunger pangs caused by the sickness rob the victim of coordination and cause increasingly painful spasms, and eventually the victim starves to death, only to rise soon thereafter as a ghoul. That those who perish from ghoul fever invariably animate as undead at midnight has long intrigued scholars of necromancy—the general thought is that only at the dead of night can such a hideous transformation complete its course. Fortunately, ghoul fever can only be transmitted from ghoul to victim, not between the infected and the rest of their community—for if the ailment could be so spread, the ghoul apocalypse could be but one bite away.

## NECROLOGY

Ghouls are somewhat unusual among the undead in that they have a strangely lifelike defining feature—their hunger. No

## FACETS OF FEAR

Two particularly hideous fears lie at the rotten core of ghoulish genesis: the fear of cannibalism and the fear of disease. That a ghoul's bite can transform the victim, through a strange disease, into one of the ravenous undead plays to primal taboos and gut-churning horror. Being eaten alive is bad enough, but what about being eaten alive by a person? What if that person were a loved one, like a mother or wife or child? And would it be worse if *you* were the one doing the eating?

While ghoulish traditions have roots in Arabian folklore, where they were demons who haunted graveyards, the classic concept of what a "ghoul" is often has more to do with vampire or zombie myths. Stories like Lovecraft's "Pickman's Model" and "The Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath" (which introduces the concept of ghoulish nations and powerful ghosts) and many of Clark Ashton Smith's stories of Zothique (a realm where necromancers rule ghoulish empires) give us great sources of inspiration. Yet it is to filmmaker George Romero that the game's ghouls owe their greatest debt. *Night of the Living Dead* and *Dawn of the Dead* are popularly known as zombie movies, but the monsters featured in them have less to do with zombies than they do with ghouls. Zombies in this game (yes, even the fast ones) are really little more than mindless automatons, yet these movies have starving undead creatures that not only hunger for the flesh of the living, but whose bites result in a terrible infection that causes the victim to rise as one of the undead. While the mechanic of why the dead come back to life in zombie movies is often never explained, the end result is the same.

You cannot trust the dead.

natural biological functions continue within a ghoul's body, and to a ghoul, hunger is a constant sensation. Only during the actual act of consuming humanoid flesh does the hunger abate, and it returns immediately upon the end of the grisly meal, typically forcing the ghoul to seek out new prey immediately. A ghoul forced to go without food does not suffer for its fasting—its hunger remains as constant as ever, but does not grow in power. A ghoul could dwell in a crypt for ages with nothing to feed upon without suffering for the passage of time. Effectively, a ghoul's hunger represents the limit to which the sensation can go—there is no greater hunger than that of a ghoul.

Fortunately for the living, the ghoul is also an intelligent creature and not a feral beast or mindless automaton. As a creature of intellect, a ghoul has other needs than satisfying its hunger. It does not constantly seek to satiate itself, for hunger is such an abiding reality that, to a ghoul, it is the norm. Ghouls spend long hours decorating their underground lairs, tormenting prisoners, reading ancient texts, or simply exploring the remote corners of their territories. As a general

rule, a ghoul seeks to satiate its hunger once per day, often emerging from its warren at nightfall to seek out prey. Even then, each ghoul's tastes can vary widely, and these preferences can further limit violent interactions with the living.

The question of what exactly happens to all the meat ghouls eat has fascinated necromancers for ages. No natural digestive process operates in a ghoul's dead body, just as a ghoul has no need to breathe and its heart pumps no blood through its veins, thus ghouls do not excrete solid or liquid wastes. Nor do they become bloated with undigested food building in throats and bellies. *Something* happens to the meat. Although the exact process is still not understood, it seems that the act of swallowing carrion or fresh flesh causes the meat to be absorbed directly into the ghoul's decaying flesh. As a ghoul exists, it constantly sheds bits of flesh as its undead body endlessly rots away, yet over time, a ghoul's size does not diminish. Thus, the necromantic animating force somehow uses consumed flesh to replace what drops away in corruption. A ghoul forced to go long without feeding is correspondingly less likely to have parts of its body drop away, as if the process of decay were, ironically, fueled by the same mechanism that replaces spent flesh.

Beyond its hunger and the virulent disease it can inflict on the living, one other quality defines the dangers a ghoul presents: its paralytic touch. Mere touch is not enough to visit this doom on a foe, the ghoul must pierce flesh with tooth or claw and actually inflict damage before the paralysis can seize the victim's body. Victims of this hideous affliction who survive describe it as a sudden and overwhelming hunger that causes the limbs to go limp with weakness—while paralyzed by a ghoul, a victim can do little but lie in a nerveless heap of incapacitating hunger. Unfortunately, the paralysis afforded does not deaden physical sensation, and the despair and horror of those who are eaten by ghouls while paralyzed must be terrible indeed. The fact that elves have an unusual immunity to this paralysis is curious indeed, but most point to Kabriri's form (and to the almost elven features of most ghouls) as the answer. They say that before he succumbed to his cannibal urge and became a demon, Kabriri himself was an elf. The long ears and slender bodies that most ghouls develop, despite their original race, is thus an echo of Kabriri's legacy—and the fact that their paralytic hungers have no effect on elves is but another manifestation of this strange bit of history.

It should be noted that not all who begin the transformation into ghoul become actual ghouls. Particularly hearty humanoids (often those with racial Hit Dice, or who in life were already gluttons or cannibals by choice) often become ghosts, which are similar in many ways to ghouls but are generally more powerful and more aggressive. This increased aggression has the side effect of forcing them into confrontations with the living, and as a result, ghosts generally do not exist for long once created. Lacedons are another variant, ghouls who rise from the bodies of starving humanoids who died from



drowning, often as a result of a shipwreck. (See the nearby sidebar for an exploration of other variant forms of ghouls.)

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Although a ghoul's basest urge, to feed on humanoid flesh, might seem savage and bestial, the ghoul itself is an intelligent and often imaginative creature. They temper their insatiable hungers with other desires that are all-too-human: a need for companionship, entertainment, education, and comfort. Yet one would be foolish to assume that these traits instill in the ghoul a chance at redemption or peaceful coexistence with the living. For a ghoul, companionship means either time spent with others of its kind or time spent conversing with prisoners the ghoul fully intends to feed on. Entertainment is focused on grisly "dinner parties" where meals are served raw or rotten direct from coffin, or from tombstones serving as platters and plates. Education manifests as an urge to study the dark secrets, be they necromancy, demonology, torture, or some other vile pursuit. And comfort, to a ghoul, means the pursuit of the most grisly and hideous accouterments imaginable—chairs made of bones, curtains made of flesh, and decorations made from parts of the body a particular ghoul might find distasteful to eat.

Ghouls have a discerning taste. Despite (or perhaps because of) their horrific diet, all ghouls have favorite flavors of flesh. Some feed only on the most rotten of corpses, while others prefer flesh stripped fresh from living bone. All ghouls maintain that the nature of a creature's death infuses the flesh with a different flavor—and among most ghouls, flesh salted with fear and despair is the most delicious of all.

Ghouls dwell in large communities, a mocking parody of the societies to which they once belonged. A ghoul warren can extend for miles underground, although most are limited by the size of the graveyards under which they become established. In the Darklands, though, ghouls build towns or even cities in which they dwell, often around prominent repositories of lore or temples devoted to the worship of Kabriri. The greatest of these cities is deep under the nation of Osirion, a city of bone-white towers called Nemret Noktoria.

In rare cases, ghouls (particularly those who prefer the flavor of bodies who died of natural causes or old age, or that have been given ample time to ripen) can establish peaceful alliances with living evil allies. The ghouls of Nemret Noktoria maintain trade with several living cities, as an example. Ghouls are often unusually literate for undead, and many learn multiple languages as a result. Obscure languages of the Darklands (such as Gug or Orvian) are popular choices, as are ancient languages like Aklo or Draconic. The ghouls of the Darklands even speak their own language, a tongue called Necril that mixes elements of Aklo, Undercommon, and Osiriani with a long tradition of ghoulish interests and development.

## VARIANT GHOULS

The typical ghoul is assumed to have come from a Medium humanoid like a human, half-elf, dwarf, or elf. Yet some humanoids have remarkably different characteristics that make these ghouls more or less powerful.

**Larger Ghouls:** A giant that succumbs to ghoul fever retains its larger size, its higher natural armor bonus, and all of its racial Hit Dice, but is otherwise treated as a ghoul advanced to its new Hit Dice and size.

**Smaller Ghouls:** Small humanoids who become ghouls have 1 HD and all of the appropriate bonuses and penalties for dropping from Medium to Small size (−4 Str, +2 Dex, +1 size bonus on attack rolls and to AC, reduced natural attack damage, etc.). A Small ghoul is CR 1/2.

**Unusual Ghouls:** Some humanoids transformed into ghouls have unusual advantages.

*Boggard, Merfolk:* These races always spawn into lacedons.

*Bugbear, Lizardfolk, Troglodyte:* These races always spawn into ghouls.

*Ettin:* An ettin ghoul has two bite attacks, in addition to being advanced to Large size and 10 HD.

*Fire Giant:* A fire giant ghoul gains the Fire subtype.

*Frost Giant:* A frost giant ghoul gains the Cold subtype.

*Lycanthrope:* While a ghoul cannot become a lycanthrope, a living lycanthrope who succumbs to ghoul fever could rise as a ghoul. In most cases, this transformation removes the lycanthropic curse, resulting in a standard ghoul, but in rare events the resulting monster is a true ghoul lycanthrope. To create stats for such a creature, simply apply the lycanthrope template to a ghoul—this is an exception to the general rule that you can normally only add the lycanthrope template to a humanoid.



## GHOUL FEATS

The following feats are intended to be used by ghouls (including ghastrs and lacedons), but could make interesting options for many other types of undead as well.

### BRAIN EATER

You gain some of the skills and knowledge of a consumed foe by eating its brain.

**Prerequisite:** Ghoul, Intelligence 17.

**Benefit:** If you eat a portion of the brain of a creature with Intelligence 3 or higher, you gain a +2 insight bonus on all skill checks and Will saving throws for 1 hour. Eating a brain is a full-round action, and the target must be dead or helpless. If the target is living, you may attempt to eat its brain as a coup de grace attack on the target, but you gain the insight bonus only if your attempt results in the victim's death.

### CIVILIZED GHOULISHNESS

Although undead, you can easily pass as living.

**Prerequisite:** Ghoul, Charisma 18.

**Benefit:** Your appearance is such that, while pale-skinned and gaunt, you can pass as a living humanoid of your choice. You gain a +10 racial bonus on Disguise checks made to appear human, and your channel resistance increases by +2. Ghastrs with this feat can activate or suppress their stench ability as a free action.

### WARREN DIGGER

You can burrow through soil and dirt.

**Prerequisite:** Ghoul, Strength 17.

**Benefit:** You gain a burrow speed of 10 feet through earth, sand, or soil.

**Special:** You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time you take it, add 10 feet to your burrow speed, up to a maximum of your base land speed.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Ghouls make excellent foes for both low- and high-level play. At low level, they serve as horrifying foes for their mix of disease and paralysis abilities, and a single ghoul can remain a dangerous foe for even the largest of parties. Ghouls' intellects and natural predisposition toward necromancy make them excellent subjects for advancement via class level, particularly as clerics, rogues, sorcerers, and wizards. Finally, a nation of underground-dwelling ghouls can make for a refreshing change from the norm. (See *Pathfinder Chronicles: Into the Darklands* for an extensive discussion of such a ghoulish society.)

## KNOWN GHOULS

Although one might expect the majority of powerful ghouls to rise from the naturally more dangerous legions of ghastrs, in fact the opposite is true. Ghouls seem more capable of

retaining the shreds of civilization and sanity required to look beyond the constant hunger and seek more out of their unives. This is particularly true of those who dwell in the Darklands, where ghastrs are little more than man-sized feral beasts and the ghouls themselves rule an empire.

**Captain Irnesee:** Irnesee didn't begin her undead life as the captain of the *Avenaria*—she earned it. A stowaway aboard the merchant ship *Red Razor*, she was forced to abandon ship when it burned to the waterline. After many weeks adrift, the survivors in Irnesee's boat were forced to draw lots to determine who would be executed and provide food for the survivors. Eventually Irnesee was the only survivor, a desperate woman in a boat filled with the gnawed bones of her onetime fellow survivors. When the whaler *Avenaria* found her adrift, she was strangely quiet—the whalers assumed her necessary cannibalism had broken her mind. In truth, she had died of starvation just before the *Avenaria* “rescued” her, and had transformed into a ghoul. That night, her hunger wakened fully and she slew the *Avenaria*'s crew but was unable to gorge on them all before they rose as ghouls themselves. The *Avenaria* never returned to port, but whispered stories of the “ghoul ship” continue to this day, with sailors predicting that the night the *Avenaria* makes call in a port shall presage the end of that city and the dawn of an empire of ghouls.

**Kortash Khain:** Priest-King of the ghoul city of Nemret Noktoria and high priest of the cult of Kabriri on Golarion, Kortash Khain is a towering figure of power and tradition. One of the most powerful creatures in the Inner Sea region, Kortash Khain rarely leaves the city he founded so long ago. Kortash maintains open trade with the nations of Thuvia and Geb, and secret trade with many others, and periodically wages war on his Darklands neighbors or the sands of Osirion above, but his true desire is to see Nemret Noktoria become an unliving copy of Kabriri's Abyssal realm.

## SAMPLE GHOUL

While the Priest-King of Nemret Noktoria only rarely leaves his haunted palace, the same cannot be said for his ambassadors, assassins, diplomats, and spies. These agents are universally powerful ghoul necromancers, and while they are common on the streets of Nemret Noktoria where they might also serve as judges, executioners, or seers, the most dangerous are those found beyond Nemret Noktoria's walls. While some such ghouls might be on legitimate pilgrimages or missions to allies, the majority, like the one presented here, are dangerous exiles forced to relocate to the surface world.

In Ehrimun's case, this exile was self-inflicted. Always discontent with what he viewed as a lingering existence in the bowels of the world, he longed to dwell on the surface and devour all the flesh that its diverse nations could offer. Ehrimun can be an undead warlord or master necromancer—using a powerful ghoul like this instead of a lich gives an adventure against an undead lord a different flavor and style.

**EHRIMUN**

CR 14

**XP 38,400**

Male ghoul necromancer 14

CE Medium undead

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., life sight 20 ft. (14 rounds/day); Perception +22**DEFENSE****AC** 24, touch 18, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)**hp** 152 (16 HD; 2d8+14d6+94)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +17**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +2**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** bite +13 (1d6+1 plus disease and paralysis), 2 claws +13 (1d6+1 plus paralysis)**Special Attacks** power over undead 8/day (DC 21), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 15, elves are immune)**Necromancer Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 14th)8/day—*grave touch***Spells Known** (CL 14th)7th—quicken *dispel magic*, *finger of death* (DC 24)6th—*circle of death* (DC 23), quicken *false life*, *summon monster IV*5th—*magic jar* (DC 22), quicken *shield*, *teleport*, *telekinesis* (DC 20), *waves of fatigue*4th—*arcane eye*, *black tentacles*, *contagion* (DC 21), *fear* (DC 21), *stoneskin*, *summon monster IV*3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 18), *gaseous form*, *haste*, *stinking cloud* (DC 18), *vampiric touch*2nd—*acid arrow*, *blindness/deafness* (DC 19), *cat's grace*, *detect thoughts* (DC 17), *extended mage armor* (already cast), *resist energy*1st—*chill touch*, *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *grease* (DC 16), *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*, *reduce person* (DC 16)o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *read magic***Prohibited Schools** enchantment, illusion**TACTICS****Before Combat** Ehrimun summons a minion and casts *stoneskin*, *cat's grace*, and *protection from good*.**During Combat** Ehrimun leads with *circle of death* to eliminate many foes, then uses area spells to eliminate survivors.**Morale** Ehrimun relies on his *contingency* to save him from destruction.**STATISTICS****Str** 13, **Dex** 20, **Con** —, **Int** 20, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 18**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 33**Feats** Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Command Undead, Defensive Combat Training, Dodge, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Quicken Spell, Scribe**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Climb +6, Fly +17, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +24, Knowledge (religion) +24, Linguistics +14, Perception +22, Spellcraft +24, Stealth +23**Languages** Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Gug, Necril, Orvian, Osiriani, Undercommon**SQ contingency****Combat Gear** *wand of fly* (25 charges); **Other Gear** staff (arcane bond), *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +2, diamond worth 1,500 gp, diamond dust worth 750 gp**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Arcane Bond** Ehrimun's staff is a unique magic item, capped with the skulls of several halflings and a rune-etched nightmare's skull. It allows the use of the following spells: *magic missile* (1 charge), *ray of enfeeblement* (1 charge), *ray of exhaustion* (2 charges), *dimension door* (3 charges), and *enervation* (3 charges).**Contingency** If Ehrimun is reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, a *dimension door* spell activates and removes him from battle.



## Chapter Six

# HAG

WHEN THE BOATS HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP ON SHORE, AND THE DAY'S CATCH HAS BEEN HUNG IN THE SMOKING SHED, THE FISHERFOLK LIGHT THEIR PIPES AND GATHER CLOSE ROUND THE FIRE, WHISPERING TALES OF THE WITCH WHO DWELLS IN THE FLOODED SEA CAVE. "SHE'LL CALL UP STORMS AND DASH YOUR BOAT TO SPLINTERS 'GAINST THE ROCKS," ONE OLD-TIMER TELLS A YOUNG MAN JUST BACK FROM HIS FIRST OUTING. "AYE, AND SHE'LL DRAG YE DOWN 'NEATH THE WAVES AND HAVE HER WAY WITH YE BEFORE YE DROWN," ANOTHER ADDS. A WOMAN MENDING HER HUSBAND'S NETS TELLS HER CHILD TO BE GOOD, "OR THE WITCH'LL COME IN THE NIGHT AND TAKE YE FROM YOUR BED, THROW YE INTO HER STEW AND MAKE A SHAWL FROM YOUR SKIN," LEAVING THE POOR GIRL AWAKE LONG INTO THE NIGHT, STARING WIDE-EYED AND FEARFUL INTO THE DARK. AND FOR GOOD REASON—FOR IN CHILDREN'S STORIES LIE TRUTHS THAT ADULT MINDS DARE NOT ACKNOWLEDGE.

—FROM *FOLK TALES OF THE LOST COAST*



If dryads, nymphs, and sprites represent the grace and beauty of unspoiled nature, then surely the annis hag, green hag, and sea hag embody its savage, destructive side. Though not fey themselves, hags appear to be somehow tied to nature, even if no more than as a distorted reflection of it. Hags are foul, wicked creatures, warped with cruelty and evil. Uniformly female and invariably repulsive, these misshapen crones plot dark deeds over bubbling cauldrons, either singly or in sinister triads known as covens.

Hags have appeared in tales dating back to the earliest ages of history, leading many sages to speculate that hags may have come from the First World long ago. The famed Taldan scholar Nikephoros of Oppara even went so far as to claim that hags were once beautiful, benevolent fey themselves, who were cursed for their vanity and fell from grace, becoming the twisted crones they are today, but his claims are widely discredited. Although the actual specifics of their origin are unknown, no one can deny that some hags are ancient beyond reckoning. Cunning and devious, they are the remnants of an earlier age, possessed of powers that few now understand and that most people fear. Bitter and resentful that the world has passed them by, hags seek revenge on all living things, but focus their rage especially on those of great beauty or purity.

Annis hags, also known as black hags or iron hags, are the most physically powerful of their kind. Annis tend to disdain the malevolent machinations of their sister hags, preferring to revel in more visceral pleasures such as torture and murder. Their warty skin proves resistant to damage and their iron claws are capable of shredding those unfortunate enough to fall into their clutches. Annis are able to cloak themselves in cloying mists or illusion, appearing as harmless children, damsels in distress, or delicate fey creatures to lure their unsuspecting prey to their dooms.

Although weaker than their annis sisters, green hags command a variety of magic powers. They are stealthy and deceptive, preferring to manipulate from the shadows, their insidious whispers and uncanny mimicry driving men to madness and the pure of heart to blasphemy. More than any of the hags, green hags hate things of beauty and work tirelessly to destroy or despoil them. While they prefer to strike from hiding, green hags are capable of holding their own in combat, and their claws sap the strength of anyone they touch.

Sea hags are the most hideous members of the hag sisterhood—just gazing upon their horrific appearance can bring a strong man to his knees. While they don't have the spell-like abilities of the other hags, the evil eye of a sea hag is powerful enough to kill. Sea hags are aquatic, and are known to destroy ships and drown sailors, causing suffering to those poor folk living near the water's edge.

## ECOLOGY

The fact that hags possess some tie to the natural world is indisputable, although poorly understood. Similar in some

ways to that of fey creatures (perhaps reflecting a First World origin for these crones as well), this connection is also strikingly different, for hags have no interest in preserving or protecting nature, only in possessing it for its own sake and twisting it to their own ends. Practitioners of ancient, esoteric witchcraft, hags are holdovers from a world of untamed savagery and ferocity that is long gone (and perhaps the loss of that feral time and place is what drove them to their madness and hate).

Physically, hags display great differences among themselves. Annis hags are almost giantesses, standing over 8 feet tall and weighing 300 pounds or more. Annis have warty, toad-like skin that ranges in color from deep blue to purple and black, as well as long, tangled hair. Their jagged black teeth can crunch through bone, and their claws resemble rusty knives, though they are as sharp as any honed blade. Green hags are similar in size to human women, appearing sickly and emaciated, with dark, knotted hair and sagging skin tinged green with a variety of clinging molds and fungi. Sea hags are of human size as well, though many weigh more than their annis sisters as a result of their insatiable gluttony. Their hair resembles rotting seaweed, and rank algae grow on their flesh, exuding the foul stink of waterlogged corruption and decay.

Hags are all female, requiring males from other races to propagate their own. Hags can breed with virtually any human-like creature, including some monstrous humanoids and debased fey. Because of their repulsive appearance, however, hags must often use trickery or force to seduce or coerce men to impregnate them, although some degenerate races and tribes have been known to willingly mate with hags.

Upon giving birth, a hag secretly exchanges her child for one of its father's species. After finding a suitable family with a newborn, the hag creeps into the house in the dead of night, steals the family's baby, and leaves the hag-child in its crib. These changelings are known as killcrops, or wisselkind, and appear as perfectly normal specimens of the father's race. Most families don't even realize that a switch has been made, and raise the killcrops as their own children, relieving the hag birth mother of all responsibility for rearing the child, and freeing her to pursue her own dark plots. The unfortunate babies stolen from their homes usually end up in the hag's stew-pot, never to be heard from again.

While outwardly identical to other children, killcrops tend to grow more slowly than normal. They are likely to develop unusual physical traits and strange behaviors, such as oddly colored eyes, pointy ears, or tangled, fast-growing hair, as well as voracious appetites, vicious tempers, and a casual cruelty that sets them apart from other children (though in some primitive humanoid tribes these qualities are not that unusual). These are the children who like to experiment on small animals, and accidents and bad luck seem to happen more frequently around them. These qualities become more noticeable as the child matures, until the killcrop reaches

## THE THREE SISTERS OF SIMARRON

One of the oldest fables of the fey tells of three alluring faerie princesses who lived in three magnificent palaces in the idyllic forest of Simarron, a fabled location in the First World. The three sisters, Caillea, Jurissa, and Neithrope, lived a carefree, idyllic life, full of poetry, song, and games. They were renowned for their beauty and grace, and wealthy and charming princes from faerie courts throughout the First World flocked to Simarron to seek the sisters' hands in marriage.

At first, the princesses accepted their suitors graciously, and competed good-naturedly with one another for the most handsome prince, the most lyrical compliments, and the finest gifts. But as more and more suitors vied for the sisters' hands, they became ever more vain and self-important, and their friendly rivalry turned wicked and bitter.

The three princesses became jealous of one another, but even more so of any other living thing that dared to overshadow their beauty, and in time the sickness within them turned outward. The ancient, verdant forest of Simarron was reduced to a nightmarish place of twisted, blackened trees and wilted flowers, and the few animals who escaped the sisters' wrath fled to more hospitable regions. The three girls, once so beautiful and elegant, became repulsive and grotesque mockeries of their former selves.

Eventually, the blight that was Simarron threatened to expand further into the First World, and a council of faerie courts was called to deal with the sisters once and for all. Powerful fey sorcerers cursed the sisters for their vanity and wickedness, and banished them to Golarion, where Caillea became the first annis, Jurissa the first green hag, and Neithrope the first sea hag. The forest of Simarron and the princesses' palaces were razed to the ground, wiping away any trace of the sisters' existence forever.

adulthood and finally discovers its hag heritage. At this time, the killcrop's birth mother might even return to reclaim her child and initiate it into hag society.

Hag births are overwhelmingly female; hags usually kill and devour any rare male children. Any male hag-children that survive look like their father's race, but are often sterile and display no trace of their mother's powers, only a certain "wrongness" to their appearance and behavior.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Hags usually dwell in wild, untamed locales far enough from civilization to offer isolation and security, but close enough to settled areas that they provide ample opportunities for hunting or the corruption of innocents. They prefer to lair in sites that were once beautiful or picturesque, but have now fallen to the ravages of time and decay, such as diseased forest thickets or crumbling ruins. Annis prefer colder climates,

inhabiting dank caves or cursed ruins in gloomy fens and dark forests. Green hags are most often found lurking in the fetid marshes and tangled woods of more temperate regions, while the amphibious sea hags haunt deep, stagnant lakes or the stormy, windswept coastlines of salt seas.

Solitary by nature, hags do not usually tolerate others of their kind for very long. An established hag who discovers another hag in her territory will attempt to drive away the intruder with shouted insults and curses. If the interloper does not get the message, the conflict can turn violent, and hags squabbling over territory have no scruples about killing their own kind. Some scholars of hag lore believe such territorial aggression to be an archaic form of ritual combat that serves some forgotten purpose. Others theorize that the presence of one of her sisters reminds a hag of her own twisted, corrupt form, a reflection of her own base nature she can't bear to face.

When hags put aside these petty differences, they can become a powerful force of discord and malevolence, forming fell trios known as covens. Hag covens always contain three hags—no more, no less—but can include hags of any type. Green hags are the most amenable to forming such groups. Annis are more solitary and tend to prefer direct action to the subtle trickeries of their sisters, so they rarely join covens unless coerced. More so than any other hag, annis hate their own kind, and almost never join a coven that already includes another black hag. Sea hags rarely join mixed covens, mainly due to their aquatic nature, but two sea hags may form a coven under the leadership of a green hag who lives in a coastal salt marsh. Even the terrifying, plane-traveling night hags occasionally join covens of their world-bound sisters, for hidden reasons of their own.

Hag covens frequently employ ogres and giants as bodyguards and minions, and hags with access to illusion magic often cloak these guards in disguises to help them act as spies. Marsh giants (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #5) are especially favored, but brutish hill giants and even degenerate ogrekin (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #3) can be found serving hag covens.

When hags deign to revere beings greater than themselves, they most often follow Mestama, the Mother of Witches, demon lord of hags and deception. Others worship Gyronna, the Angry Hag, particularly in the River Kingdoms, with hags taking positions of leadership in many cults. Individual hags or covens might also venerate Calistria, Lamashtu, or Zon-Kuthon, or even the female aspect of the ogre god Haggakal.

## NIGHT HAGS

Of all the breeds of hags, the depraved night hags are perhaps the most terrifying. Mercantile and greedy, night hags are also consummate predators in search of very particular prey—mortal souls. Using periapts known as *heartstones*,



night hags infiltrate the dreams of mortals and pervert them into nightmares. The hag rides her chosen victim's back all night, tormenting the person over time and slowly draining his health and sanity, giving rise to the description "hag-ridden." Eventually, the hag steals the unfortunate mortal's soul to sell in corrupt planar markets.

Like all hags, night hags tend to be solitary creatures, but they do join covens, either of their own kind or in mixed covens with their mortal sisters. Night hags often ally with nightmares, which carry the evil crones on their plane-spanning hunts for fresh souls. Although native to the mist-shrouded expanses of the Ethereal Plane, night hags can be found virtually anywhere, collecting or trading their dreadful wares.

Most night hags pay homage to a being known as Alazhra the Dream Eater, possibly one of their own who achieved some semblance of godhood, though others might worship Zon-Kuthon or Lamashtu. Night hags hate Desna, goddess of dreams, and take great pleasure in corrupting and stealing the carefree souls of her followers.

Exactly where night hags come from is a hotly contested topic among planar scholars. It is not known whether night hags are an offshoot of worldly hags who ventured forth into the outer planes, or whether these extraplanar soul-traffickers spawned mortal hags on the Material Plane. Night hags themselves claim to be the favored daughters of their patron Alazhra, but they are hardly a credible source as to their origin.

## HAG MAGIC

Hags are the witches of the wild places, sorceresses of lost lore, and mystics of the moon, wind, and water. Their rituals and enchantments are of a primeval tradition long forgotten or ignored by modern spellcasters. Although their magic superficially resembles the most ancient elven spellcraft, these powers come to hags innately, without long years of study and practice, and are devoid of wonder and beauty.

Individually, hags possess only minor magics of illusion, deception, and transformation. But when gathered into covens, hags can command truly formidable supernatural powers. Working together, hags can control the weather, create powerful illusions, and divine the future. They can make people their willing slaves, curse them with hexes, turn men into mice, or enter their dreams. Hag covens can speak with the deceased, animate corpses, and even bring the dead back to life.

Depending upon a coven's specific members, they can call upon other spell-like abilities as well. Green hag covens

sometimes possess powers that warp and twist the natural world, such as *creeping doom*, *entangle*, *insect plague*, *spike growth*, and *wall of thorns*. Annis covens favor abilities that increase their physical prowess, such as *mass bull's strength*, *rage*, *giant form*, and *iron body*, and can cast enhanced mist spells such as *acid fog*, *solid fog*, and *cloudkill*. Sea hag covens can call up powerful storms with *call lightning storm* and *whirlwind*, and

disable or slay opponents with *eyebite*, *finger of death*, and *power word blind* and *stun*. Particularly powerful

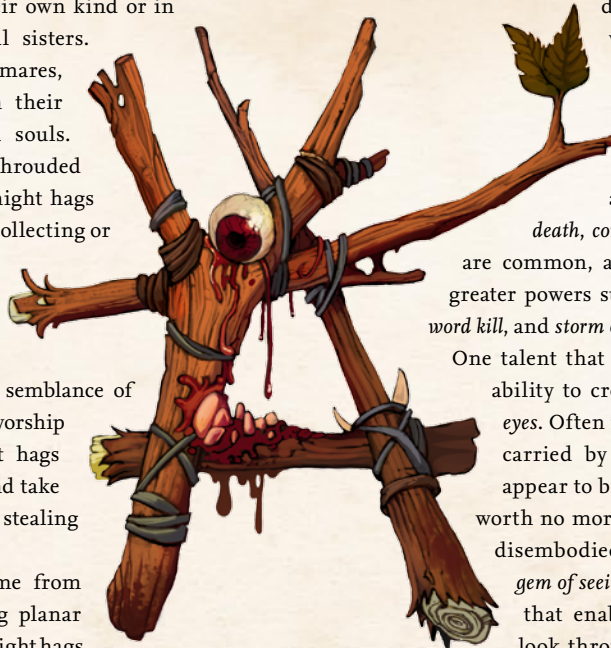
mixed hag covens exhibit a wide variety of additional abilities. Reports of *circle of death*, *contagion*, *insanity*, and *nightmare* are common, and some tales speak of even greater powers such as *dominate monster*, *power word kill*, and *storm of vengeance*.

One talent that all hag covens possess is the ability to create magical gems called *hag eyes*. Often mounted in rings or brooches carried by a coven's servants, *hag eyes* appear to be normal semiprecious stones worth no more than 20 gp, but are actually disembodied eyes (visible as such with a *gem of seeing* or spells such as *true seeing*) that enable the hags of the coven to look through the gem as a free action, so long as it is on the same plane. Some

covens have even learned how to channel their cooperative spellcasting through their *hag eyes*, allowing them to wreak havoc at great distances from the safety of their lairs. Destroying a *hag eye* can have detrimental effects on the coven that created it, inflicting damage and temporary blindness on the unlucky hags.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

With the possible exception of the annis (who may be encountered alone, with a coven, or leading a gang of ogres, trolls, or giants), hags are best used as behind-the-scenes manipulators rather than face-to-face combat encounters. Their strengths lie in stealth, deception, and trickery, not physical battle. A nervous mother could approach the PCs, worried that something has happened to her child. Upon investigation, the PCs discover the child is a killcrop, and must track down the hag responsible (and perhaps rescue the swapped baby before the hag consumes it, assuming the swap was recent). A series of attacks by goblins, ogres, and giants might be traced back to a hag coven seeking to destroy the town. A hag could become jealous of a beautiful PC, cursing the unfortunate character and throwing obstacles in the party's way, or could trick and seduce a male PC into siring her child. Alternatively, the PCs might



## FACETS OF FEAR

The village wise woman who spends all her time in the woods, gathering strange herbs and fungi for her remedies and tonics; the aged midwife who seems to know more than the university-trained doctor; the eccentric old woman who lives alone in the dilapidated cottage on the outskirts of town, said to know all the old superstitions, wards, and curses—are these just normal women, with no children of their own, no husbands, and no family, or are they something more—something worse? Is your own family safe? Is your husband faithful? Is that *your* baby asleep in its crib?

Hags are the embodiment of man's fear of women, and a reflection of women's jealousy for each other. In many medieval societies, women are poorly educated and fulfill a very traditional role: that of wife and mother. Women who exclude themselves from that role, either through knowledge and education, or by exclusion from the reproductive cycle, are easily marginalized and become natural targets for intolerance. Men are intimidated by what they see as a threat to their own dominant position in the social order, and women resent other women who have escaped the traditional role imposed on them by society.

Finally, tales of hags are used to frighten children. Ancient, withered crones are the antithesis of lively youth, and having no children of their own, provide the basis for horrible stories of wickedness and depravity to scare children into behaving well or avoiding certain areas.

need information that can only be gleaned through the divinatory powers of a hag coven. The party must decide whether to trust the wicked crones, who might twist the threads of fate for their own fell purposes.

## KNOWN HAGS

The following are some of the known hags of Golarion.

**Peg o' Ness:** Also known as Peg Powler, this obese sea hag inhabits a seaweed-choked sea cave off of Hag's Plummet on Varisia's Lost Coast. She haunts the coastline between Sandpoint and the Foxglove River, alternately extorting tribute from the fisherfolk with false promises of good weather and bountiful catches or sinking their boats for the perverse pleasure of it. Said to be responsible for most of the shipwrecks off Grubber's Hermitage, Peg occasionally swims inland along Cougar Creek and the Soggy River in search of innocent children, her favorite delicacy. In recent years, Peg has become more domestic, breeding with local fishermen and leaving no less than half a dozen killcrops to be raised by unsuspecting villagers up and down the coast.

**The Stroud Sisters:** This coven of green hags inhabits a dank swamp known as the Ditches in the central River Kingdoms. The three ogre-born Stroud Sisters are Demelza,

Elsbeth, and Mairghread—triplets who miraculously recovered after stillborn births, which mysteriously granted them sorcerous powers over the undead. The sisters are disturbingly fertile, and have no compunctions about breeding with any male that happens by, whether an unfortunate explorer, a wandering ogre, or their own brothers and sons. Demelza Stroud is the clan matriarch and leader of the coven, presiding over an incestuous brood of over a dozen deformed and degenerate ogrekin, along with one exceptionally dull-witted marsh giant called Brother Grunt. The Stroud clan preys on unsuspecting travelers and marsh dwellers, and the Sisters take particular pleasure in tormenting the desperate exiled Galtan nobles of Gralton.

**Ulla Jarnrygg:** This powerful annis makes her home in an enormous, ice-rimed hollow tree in the depths of the Grungir Forest in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. Said to be an exile from Irrisen, Ulla is a winter witch of some power, feared as much for her wintry magic as for her iron claws. Known to consort with frost giants and ice trolls, Ulla is often accompanied by a flock of undead crows on her hunts. While she normally prowls the dark woodlands, she sometimes ventures into the frozen marshes surrounding the forest to raid isolated farms and steadings. Ulla takes pernicious delight in terrorizing poor peasants by night, then stealing their livestock, or even better, their children, before vanishing back into the woods before morning.

## SAMPLE ANNIS HAG

The iron hag Ulla Jarnrygg claims to be the daughter of a mighty frost giant jarl, and certainly her sorcerer powers reflect an icy heritage well suited to the frigid Lands of the Linnorm Kings. Once a member of a formidable coven of winter witches in Irrisen, Ulla had a falling-out with her sisters and was exiled to the west.

From her lair deep within the Grungir Forest, Ulla stalks lone hunters who brave the winter woods in search of game. When in the mood for deception, Ulla disguises herself as a tall, beautiful Ulfen huntress seeking companionship on a cold night, a sight most hunters find hard to resist. Otherwise, she uses *dancing lights* and *ventriloquism* to lure her prey to an isolated spot where she can ambush them at her leisure. When traveling or meeting with others to barter, bargain, or plot, she uses *alter self* to appear as a pale-haired human woman, a green hag, or even as a common hobgoblin or orc.

Although she is a sorcerer, Ulla relishes the savage struggle of physical combat. When her blood is up, she often forgoes her magical powers completely and tears into her victims with tooth and claw until she is drenched in the blood of her enemies.

Once her prey has been caught, Ulla spikes them to an ancient, gnarled oak tree where she can stretch out their torture for days to relish their screams. Only when her hunger





has grown into a gnawing fire in her belly does she grant her victims release, though even that can take some time, as Ulla much prefers the taste of still-living flesh.

Ulla's thick skin is the deep blue of a starless winter's night, and her hair is the yellow-white of dirty snow. Ulla is almost 9 feet tall, and her long, clawed arms hang to her knees. Dressed in smelly, uncured furs, she wears a cloak woven from human hair and a girdle made from the skin of slain babies round her waist.

### ULLA JARNRYGG

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female annis sorcerer 9

CE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

#### DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 13, flat-footed 24 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 149 (7d10+9d6+80)

Fort +13, Ref +14, Will +13

DR 2/bludgeoning; Resist cold 20; SR 17

#### OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +18 (1d6+8), 2 claws +18 (1d6+8 plus grab)

Ranged ray +13 (by spell)

Space 10 ft.;

Reach 10 ft.

#### Special Attacks

bloodline arcana (change energy damage spells to cold damage), elemental blast (9d6 cold, Reflex half DC 17, 1/day), elemental ray (1d6+4 cold, 6/day), rend (2 claws, 2d6+12)

#### Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th)

3/day—*alter self*, *fog cloud*

#### Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 8th)

4th (4)—*elemental body I*, *greater invisibility*, *ice storm*

3rd (7)—*haste*, *protection from energy*, *ray of exhaustion*, *sleet storm*

2nd (7)—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *gust of wind* (DC 15), *scorching ray* (cold)

1st (7)—*burning hands* (cold, DC 14), *chill touch* (DC 14), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *ventriloquism* (DC 14)

o (at will)—*acid splash*, *bleed* (DC 13), *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *mending*, *ray of frost*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Ulla keeps *mage armor* active at all times, recasting it as needed. When she has time to prepare for combat, Ulla casts *bull's strength*, *bear's endurance*, *greater invisibility*, and *haste*.

**During Combat** Ulla hits massed foes with area effect spells like *ice storm* and *sleet storm*, and targets strong warriors with *ray of exhaustion* or *ray of enfeeblement*. She uses *scorching ray* and *magic missile* against ranged attackers. Once in melee combat, Ulla combines her hasted claw attacks with *chill touch*, making use of *greater invisibility* to cast spells safely before attacking again with surprise. If surrounded by enemies, she makes use of her elemental blast ability.

**Morale** If reduced to below 30 hit points, Ulla casts *elemental body I* and flees, using *fog cloud* to cover her escape, returning later to exact revenge on her attackers.

#### Base Statistics

Without *mage armor*, Ulla's stats are as follows: AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 20.

#### STATISTICS

Str 27, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 16

Base Atk +11; CMB +20; CMD 34

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Skills Bluff +16, Fly +0, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (planes) +4, Linguistics +1, Perception +18, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +15

Languages Common, Giant, Hallit, Skald

SQ elemental bloodline (water)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds* (3), *potion of fly*;

Other Gear *ring of protection* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *boots of the winterlands*, *brooch of shielding* (80 charges), large sack, flensing knives, hammer and iron spikes, iron pot, whetstone, block of salt, 300 gp





Chapter Seven

# MUMMY

AND SO BEAUTEOUS WAS MY QUEEN THAT I REFUSE TO BE WITHOUT HER. SO BESIDE ME FOREVER SHALL SHE LIE, A SPRIG AMID DUST, A LOTUS AMONG ASHES. THOUGH THE SKIES BREAK, AND THE OCEANS GROW PARCHED, AND THE MOON FALLS AS TEARS FROM THE SKIES, FOREVER IN OUR PARADISE BEYOND THE DAWN'S HORIZON SHALL WE KNOW BOUNTY, AND SPLENDOR, AND SERENITY. AND WOE TO THOSE WHO, EVEN IN DEATH, WOULD TEAR US FROM OUR ENDLESS EMBRACE, FOR OUR LOVE WILL KNOW NO MORTAL DISTANCE AND OUR WRATH WILL NOT COME GENTLY. I HAVE PROMISED MY QUEEN ETERNITY. AND MY QUEEN IS NEVER DENIED.

—TRANSLATED FROM THE EMPTY SARCOPHAGUS OF SHIELSEIS III,  
THE QUEEN OF ASPS

In forgotten tombs and prisons of nature lie the preserved corpses of the ancient and honored dead. From such crypts spring the warnings of scholars and poets, cautionary tales of terrible curses and the vengeance of souls interrupted in their eternal rest. Much has been made of the depredations of the dead, the hunger of those that feast upon the quick and make prey of the living. Yet, in the case of the deathless princes misleadingly generalized as “mummies,” their curses rarely come undeserved and their predations carry the justice of those who themselves have faced the ultimate judgment.

The very term “mummy” in reference to the vengeful dead is a gross misnomer. While cultures that practice mummification do often inadvertently aid in such beings’ creation as a result of their preoccupation with the afterlife and the increased importance they place upon physical remains, the spontaneous reanimation of corpses might be witnessed among the ancient dead of numerous societies, including those with no complex burial rites. Unfortunately, terms like “vengeful souls,” “ancient dead,” or “terrestrially obsessed animates” prove misleading in their own rights and far less understood, so the inaccuracy regrettably stands.

To a large degree, the confusion regarding mummies relates to the popularization of a single description coupled with the scholarly difficulty in finding uniform physical characteristics between individuals. In other words, one cannot identify a mummy based on linen wrappings alone. Even an undead being that bears no resemblance to a stereotypical enshrouded cadaver might in fact possess the powers and prowess of a mummy. The vagary proves frustrating in research and potentially life-threatening in the field. As countless adventurers can doubtlessly attest, many mummies appear just as popular fiction and theater describe: dry, withered corpses bound in age-haunted wrappings and prayer strips bearing appeals to long-forgotten gods. But not all. Skeletons fleshed in mud and primeval ichor, frozen ancients more beast than man, and corpses buried in the furs of revered chiefs, the holy feathers of high priests, or the jade-inlaid armor of imperial lords—these, too, might all be mummies. Thus, a mere glance cannot be relied upon to identify these undead. Rather, it is by its curse and the vigor by which it wreaks its revenge that a mummy makes itself known.

Fortunately, even among the accursed dead, these horrors prove exceptionally rare, as the circumstances necessary for such beings’ resurrection prove elaborate and, in many cases, quite expensive. Also, should one discover a mummy and find himself the target of its wrath, the creature’s immortal ire likely comes deservedly—few such beings make the spiritual return to the mortal world lightly, typically only doing so in response to a trespass or desecration of the most fundamental and vulgar kind.

## GENESIS

Like all sentient undead, mummies possess a chthonic vice, one that proves so powerful that it might stretch beyond the veil of natural death. In this case: covetousness. This might seem like a strange distinction, for what undead creature is not possessed by powers or obsessions that act beyond death? Yet in numerous cases involving mummies, the uncovered corpses were not animate upon discovery. No mere trickery, in such situations not only were the remains not animate, but they were not undead before being disturbed. Although research into dark lore reveals that mummies might be created through necromantic magics, those that spontaneously manifest do so as a result of some outside influence—typically the desecration of a burial place, violation of physical remains, or conveyance of some terrible revelation. As such, the attachment between a departed soul and its immortally coveted remains, possessions, or—most intriguingly—philosophies proves so strong that the undermining of these fundamentals draws the spirit back across the gulf of mortality to defend that from which its life and death took meaning.

What might provoke a mummy’s resurrection varies widely, though cultural generalities exist. The most important requisite appears to be a lifelong preoccupation with death, typically held by an individual and compounded by his society. Populations who believe in the finality of death or the dissolution of the mortal spirit rarely produce mummies. Even believers in more traditional myths of the afterlife and the one-way progression of souls to a final reward or punishment infrequently breed such horrors. Those societies who tie their eternal rewards to the state of their physical remains or other monuments to their lives and believe that departed spirits might return to interact with the living unwittingly inflict a self-fulfilling curse upon themselves. Should one spend an entire life convinced that death does not sever his connection to the mortal realm, a belief compounded by his survivors who seek to elaborately placate his spirit, events that compromise the individual’s interests in the living world make it possible for the soul to return to seek retribution. As such, the animating spirits of mummies retain a fixation on the world of the living, coveting aspects of their long-ended lives far past the point of reason—and prove all the more dangerous for this dementia. Fortunately, just as the resurrection of a mummy might prove swift, so too might its return to peace should the animate corpse or another party restore or correct whatever disturbance provoked the deathless zealots in the first place. Even mummies restored to peace still harbor potential for great danger, though, as once it’s been provoked, time and greed rarely leave a corpse to rest peacefully forever.

Aside from mummies obsessed with their past lives, a second classification exists: the cursed. Not drawn back to the world by their own vices, these beings have their undead state forced upon them. In the most basic form, necromantic

magics empower a corpse with the traits of a mummy, granting such a creature the abilities of such ancient dead but without the fanaticism that make the most legendary examples so deadly. These creatures prove hate-filled but bestial, knowing only the will to destroy and the whims of their masters. Other cursed mummies typically spawn from excruciating deaths, curses of immortal suffering, and the wrath of ancient deities. On several occasions, such afflicted mummies have been unleashed from tombs meant to serve as eternal prisons, dusty vaults scored with damning confessions and vengeful prayers for eternal torment. These mummies lack the perverse protectiveness of their self-resurrecting cousins, replacing it instead with ancient plots, murderous obsessions, or ages-induced madness. The release of such vile beings, shunned even in the era of their creation, never proves kind to the modern age, time and insanity increasing the deadliness of these cursed dead countless times over.

## NECROLOGY

Regardless of the way in which these horrors come into being, all mummies share two common traits: the horror they inspire in the living and their terrifying disease.

Power over irrational fear is not unique to mummies, though it is a trait more typical of spectral undead. Although these corpses vary in appearances—as do most bodied undead—the sight of a mummy provokes an overwhelming sense of dread and despair. While encountering the walking dead might reasonably shock anyone, the horror provoked by these wandering cadavers typically proves disproportionate to their appearance, especially when compared to similar and arguably more unnerving creatures. Such is this unnatural, unreasonable fear that only the most iron-shod souls might tamp down their horror and face a mummy with control of their faculties. In most cases, though, witnesses freeze with terror, becoming prisoners of fright and ready victims for the undead's whims. Such paralyzing unease appears to have less to do with what a viewer sees and more with a pervasive aura of negative emotions or an instinctual perception of the being's foul intent. Perhaps this mortal fear stems from the creature's ability to force its dire will upon the living or the exploitation of some power gleaned in its soul's travels beyond mortality. Or perhaps this is not a power of the dead, but rather a weakness in the living. Maybe a viewer understands on some level that before him treads a being that has seen the other side of death, knows its secrets, and through force of will alone has managed to return—and so, like a child abandoned before a runaway carriage, the witness stands slack-jawed and uncomprehending, preparing for what must seem an inevitable end. In any case, even the most courageous cannot hope to rely upon their bravery in the face of such potent horrors, for mummies are masters of fear and foul truths mortal minds balk to comprehend.

A more understandable fear rises from the horrific, magical malady that mummies carry. Blurring the distinction between disease and curse, the legendary affliction known as mummy rot is aptly named, as victims face a swift, grotesque, and notoriously incurable wasting ailment. The specifics of the disease vary from mummy to mummy, seemingly based upon cultural lore retained from the creatures' lives. While many victims of mummy rot waste away as if beset by disfiguring dehydration and blistering sunburn, mummies from non-desert climes might afflict their victims with illnesses that gradually reduce flesh to ooze, cause chilling water to leak from the body, mimic the effects of rapid aging or rotting, or any of a myriad of other terrifying fates. In the end, however, most who suffer from this dreadful curse meet a grotesque end, being reduced to little more than ashes and muck, components too insignificant for any but the most accomplished clerics to restore.

Only the intervention of a deity or significant magics can save one afflicted with mummy rot, as victims are not simply infected by the disease, but rather cursed by it. Such misunderstanding of the ailment's origin has led dozens to waste away even under the ministrations of the most accomplished healers. Only by first removing the curse might one then treat the ailment, though even banishing the afflicting curse is no assurance that the disease might naturally release its host. Only the combination of potent abjurations and healing magics can assure recovery from a mummy's touch, though such treatments often prove too rare and expensive to be reliably obtained before the affliction finally metes out a mummy's dreadful justice.

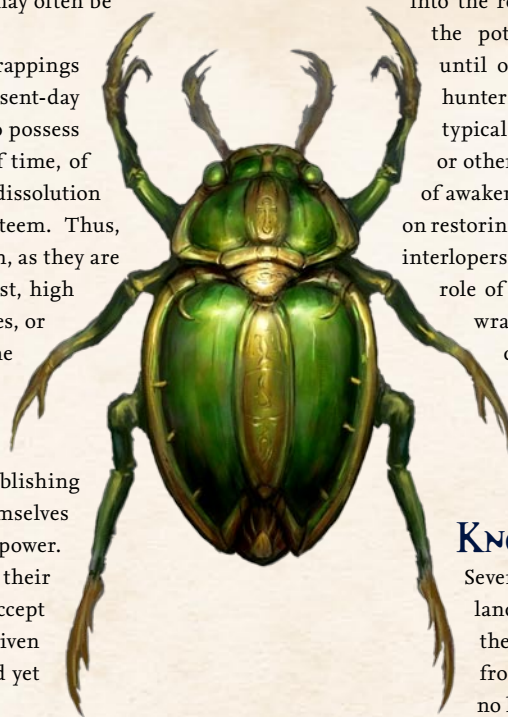
## HABITAT & SOCIETY

While mummies notoriously haunt the hidden pyramids and buried necropolises of ancient cultures, such locations are not requisite to their resurrection. Most mummies created by powers other than foul magic possess connections to their resting places, perceiving such places as sanctuaries or prisons granted to them by their descendants. The form of such places means little; it is the spiritual connection and the importance the deceased places on such locations that hold significance. Thus, mummies are just as likely to rise from hidden barrow mounds, ancient catacombs, or acres of holy mud as from more majestic tombs. That being said, cultures that place such importance on the dead as to monumentalize the resting places of the deceased predispose themselves to the curse of mummies.

Upon reawakening, mummies typically retain a sense of the roles they occupied in life—such as fallen pharaohs, interred champions, or disgraced priests—and seek to carry out either their vengeance or their reawakened ambitions in fashions reminiscent of those from their past lives. Thus, a mummy's *modus operandi* proves more a product of its life than its undead form, its unpredictability adding to the difficulty in

both identifying and combating such a horror. For most such undead, no time seems to have passed since their deaths, and the secrets of their age remain fresh in their rotted minds. Thus, mummies often carry with them the knowledge, weapons, and magic of ages lost to history, yet even the most sage of these resurrected figures rarely shows any interest in passing along the lore of its era. Understanding what tools an ancient mummy has at its disposal may often be the key to defeating it.

Just as a mummy might utilize trappings of the past against which present-day cultures have little defense, they also possess the frustration of individuals out of time, of powerful figures made weak by the dissolution of all that once granted them esteem. Thus, many viciously seek a return to death, as they are god-kings of empires reduced to dust, high priests who have outlived their deities, or the great otherwise made weak by the irreconcilable passage of time. The most maniacal of the ancient dead might overcome their histories or seek to recreate them anew, establishing mockeries of eras past with themselves occupying their former positions of power. As mummies draw their power from their moot obsessions, none can merely accept the loss of what they once had, driven forward with all the vigor of deluded yet immortally powerful fanatics.



## CAMPAIGN ROLE

History, not linen wrappings, separates mummies from more anonymous undead. While the most blasphemous necromancers might raise mummies from any corpse, those cursed to their fate by ancient punishments or who rise in response to modern violations bear with them not merely the powers of the ancient dead, but the full might of resentful traditions, gods, and determination.

The introduction of a mummy villain allows a GM to bring the world's history to deadly life. Garbed in the raiments of fallen societies, mummies are time travelers of a sort, carrying with them the trappings of their past lives—treasures, sorceries, and weapons forgotten or abandoned in modern day. The ancient dead also retain their memories, methods, and expectations, many conflicting violently with the truths of a world that has moved on. Their attempts to recreate the world they held power within might unleash all manner of forgotten dangers, from mythical summoned creatures to servants and beasts buried along with their masters. Such maniacal undead might even attempt to bring the past back to life in their new time, possibly through elaborate recreations, the resurrection of dead cults and

power structures, or even magic gates to ages past. Such machinations resurrect the past more significantly than mere ruins and ancient treasures, allowing epics long forgotten to invade the present through the plots of their most notorious and fanatical villains and masterminds.

Aside from using mummies as a method to revive whole histories, they also give GMs the opportunity to throw PCs into the role of the invader. Most corpses with the potential to be mummies lie quietly until outside forces disturb them. Treasure hunters, tomb robbers, and explorers—all typical roles for adventurers—who steal from or otherwise upset ancient vaults run the risk of awakening and unleashing a mummy intent on restoring what has been spoiled and punishing interlopers. In such cases, the PCs are put in the role of offenders facing severe yet righteous wrath. Such might also lead to a party's choice of setting right its offenses—possibly meaning abandoning some fantastic treasure—or doing battle with a being seeking only what is its by right.

## KNOWN MUMMIES

Several mummies are known to walk the lands of Avistan and Garund, and from the deserts of mysterious Osirion to the frosty reaches of the Crown of the World, no land is safe from the avid desires of the ancient dead.

**Alexayn the Miser:** When Jhandorage Vaulnder Alexayn finally died, he did so a fantastically wealthy man. One of the founders of the now-notorious Aspis Consortium, Alexayn spent nearly half his considerable, unscrupulously gained fortune during his waning years, assuring his remembrance through construction and memorials across his home city of Ostenso. When the miser died, as per his wishes, he was interred in a towering mansion of a mausoleum along with his renowned collection of exotic objects d'art. Yet in the 108 years since his death, most of Alexayn's works have been overshadowed, and the business he founded has forgotten him. When an attempted grave robbing roused the mogul's corpse—covetous even in death—the discovery that his memory had already faded infuriated the newly risen mummy. Now, clad in the dated finery of a Chelish nobleman, the corpse Alexayn works to remind the world of his deeds, and assure that his name will linger for all time—in infamy if needs be.

**The Harlot Queen:** This creature is the only known mummy created from the mortal remains of a goddess. In life she was Arazni, warrior-herald of Aroden, who ascended when she passed the test of the *Starstone*. The Whispering

### FACETS OF FEAR

The horror of the mummy springs from more than merely its state as a walking corpse, its existence intrinsically tied to matters ancient and mysterious. Creatures born of faith in cultures, divinities, and traditions that, in many cases, undeath has cursed them to outlive, these ancient dead carry with them the secrets and powers of ages past, inscrutable plagues and righteous curses from which the living have little defense. Their terror is the fear of the dark and forgotten, of bitter cultures crumbled to dust, of vengeful deities and atrocious worship, and of a sacrosanct path to death upon which the living have no right to interfere. Grave robbers intruding upon the resting places of these ancient dead face not just the dangers and traps associated with forgotten crypts, but immersion in a realm of death intended to be sacred and inviolable—a home not just for a corpse, but for an immortal soul. Should such trespasses rouse the fury of the tomb's resident, in their final moments interlopers realize the blame for their own deaths falls not entirely on foul magics or the curse of unlife, but upon their own hubris for intruding upon the kingdom of the dead.

Tyrant killed her during the Shining Crusade, and though her allies the Knights of Ozem buried her with full honors, the necromancer-ghost Geb stole her remains and animated her as a mummy, believing her the only creature worthy to rule beside him. He rarely manifests in the world anymore, and she is little more than a figurehead. None can say how much she remembers of her former life.

**Ossa Stormseer:** At a young age, the raider princess Ossa nearly died from frostbite, losing six of her fingers and her right eye, which her chieftain father replaced with a brilliant blue iolite. This eye was said to grant her the power to see storms, and as she rose as a priestess among her people, she became known as a favorite of, even kin to, the spirits that stir the depths of the seas. After a long life devoted to her people's brutal gods of the oceans, Ossa fell in battle, her funeral barge sent to sail to the horizon to rejoin the revered denizens of the sea. But the fickle tides claimed the priestess's ship and swept it north, where it wrecked upon a glacier, never to sink into the depths. Her body frozen amid the rich offerings of her longship, Ossa's spirit returned, animating her corpse as a mummy. Having been trapped for centuries, the raider witch has gone mad with frustration, believing herself punished for some spiritual dishonor. She now lies imprisoned, seeking only to redeem herself in battle so she might be granted another, honorable burial at sea.

**Walkena:** In an odd reversal of Arazni's story, Walkena was a mortal boy prince of the original Mwangi society. Now the undead prince's followers worship him as a god, and the cruel boy-mummy is somehow able to grant spells like any deity.

### AWAKENING THE DEAD

Not just any corpse can spontaneously manifest as a mummy. GMs interested in creating mummies resurrected "naturally" (rather than by spells like *create undead*) should consider the passion and force of will of the would-be mummy. By and large, a corpse should be of a creature with a Charisma of 15 or higher and possessing at least 8 Hit Dice. In addition, it should have a reason for caring about the eternal sanctity of its remains in excess of normal mortal concern. As such, priests of deities with the Death or Repose domains, heroes expecting a champion's burial, lords of cultures preoccupied with the afterlife, or individuals otherwise obsessed with death or their worldly possessions all make suitable candidates for resurrection as mummies—though countless other potential reasons for resurrection exist.

### AN ACCURSED FATE

Easily the most feared ability of mummies is their notorious curse: mummy rot. Both a disease and a curse, this affliction proves exceptionally difficult to cure, even for accomplished healers. Part of this blight's infamy comes from the specifics of its symptoms. While many mummies cause a curse that gradually withers away its victims till nothing but desert sand remains, the affliction itself proves highly variable and unique to many atypical individuals. In each case, the effects prove the same, but the symptoms can be wildly distinctive.

**Corpse Chills:** Those cursed with this form of mummy rot find themselves afflicted with an intense cold and a spreading frostbite that proves resistant to all nonmagical treatment. This curse usually originates from bodies mummified by extremely cold, dry conditions or buried in ice.

**Grave Ichor:** Someone cursed with this form of mummy rot finds his skin loosening and slipping as if over-soaked with water. Eventually, in its most fatal stages, the victim's flesh begins dripping from his body.

**Phantom Infestation:** The victim of this form of mummy rot bears the marks of one whose flesh is beset by worms or parasitic vermin. Though the skin breaks with scars, verminous trails, and minute bites, no infestation is ever witnessed, at least until the body bursts in an eruption of scarab beetles upon the victim's death.

**Swamp Crumble:** Typically transmitted only by mummies created by bog burial, victims of this affliction take 1d3 Dex, 1d3 Con, and 1d3 Cha instead of the normal effect of mummy rot. The disease causes the victim's bones to become brittle and dissolve; upon death, only the skin, internal organs, and other soft tissues remain. A side effect of swamp crumble is the victim's hair becomes tinged with red, with light-colored hair turning as red as fresh blood.

### SAMPLE MUMMY

The tale of Pharaoh Sharsqa II and Shielseis, his dedicated concubine, is one of the greatest and darkest love stories of

ancient Osirion. Beautiful beyond words and vain beyond measure, Shielseis was accused of slowly poisoning her lord's first and second queens as well as his entire harem, leaving herself the sole recipient of his affections. When her murderousness was revealed by the pharaoh's chief advisor, the harem girl was condemned to death by a hundred snake bites. With her final words, she dramatically professed her love for the pharaoh before leaping into a pit of asps. Yet, despite her being waisted deep in vipers, the asps refused to bite. Overwhelmed by the miracle and moved by her devotion, Sharsqa fell madly in love with the girl and lifted her from the pit, pronouncing her his new queen. When the pharaoh's advisor spoke out against Shielseis's low birth, a tiny asp slithered from her gown and struck the aged counselor, killing him instantly.

Eight years ago, grave robbers discovered the tomb of Sharsqa II and haphazardly plundered it, leaving behind the sarcophagus of Shielseis. Rising soon after as a elegant mummy clad in a beautiful ivory mask, the queen now seeks out both those who despoiled her beloved crypt and the unawakened mummy of Sharsqa II. Her search has led her across northern Garund, where she has fostered a network of agents and informants who know her only as the Queen of Asps.

### SHIELSEIS, QUEEN OF ASPS CR 11

XP 12,800

LE female mummy cleric 9/aristocrat 2

**Init** +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.;

Perception +16

**Aura** despair (30 ft., paralyzed for 1d4 rounds, Will DC 19 negates)

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 26, touch 13, flat-footed 23; (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural)

**hp** 199 (19 HD; 8d8+9d8+2d8+114)

**Fort** +13, **Ref** +7, **Will** +20

**DR** 5/—; **Immune** undead traits

**Weaknesses** vulnerable to fire

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** slam +21 (1d8+10 plus curse)

**Special Attacks** channel negative energy (5d6, DC 21, 8/day)

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 9th)

5th—*flame strike*, *greater command*<sup>D</sup> (DC 20), *summon monster V*

4th—*air walk*, *discern lies*<sup>D</sup>, *inflict critical wounds* (DC 19), *tongues*

3rd—*animate dead*, *bestow curse* (DC 18), *nondetection*<sup>D</sup>, *speak with dead* (DC 18), *summon monster III*

2nd—*enthrall*<sup>D</sup> (DC 17), *inflict moderate*

*wounds* (2, DC 17), *resist energy*, *spiritual weapon*, *undetectable alignment*

1st—*command* (DC 16), *comprehend languages*, *doom* (DC 16), *disguise self*<sup>P</sup>, *divine favor*, *protection from good*, *shield of faith*

0—*bleed* (DC 15), *create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*

**D domain spell**; **Domains** Nobility, Trickery

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 24, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 21

**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 33

**Feats** Alignment Channel, Command Undead, Deceitful, Dodge, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Persuasive, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)

**Skills** Bluff +16, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +15, Heal +13, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +16, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +13

**Languages** Osirian

**Gear** bracers of armor +3, headband of alluring charisma +2, robe of blending

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Despair (Su)** All creatures within a 30-foot radius that see Shielseis must make a DC 19 Will save or be paralyzed by fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be

affected again by her despair ability for 24 hours. This is a paralysis and mind-affecting fear effect.

The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Curse (Su)** *Mummy Rot*: slam—injury; *save* Fort DC 16; *onset* 1 minute; *frequency* 1 day; *effect* 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha; *cure* —. Mummy rot is both a curse and a disease and can only be cured if the curse is first removed, at which point the disease can be magically removed. Even after the curse element of mummy rot is lifted, a creature suffering from the disease cannot recover naturally over time. Anyone casting a conjuration (healing) spell on the afflicted creature must succeed on a DC 20 caster level check, or the spell is wasted and the healing has no effect. Anyone who dies from mummy rot turns to dust and cannot be raised without a *resurrection* or greater magic. The save DC is Charisma-based.





## Chapter Eight

# VAMPIRE

"WHAT? I DON'T COMPARE TO THE BEAUTIES OF CALIPHAS?" SHE DARED, HER COOL BREATH ON MY NECK, STARTLING ME WITH HER CLOSENESS.

IN TRUTH, SHE DIDN'T COMPARE. EVEN THROUGH HER ARRESTING VERMILION GOWN SHE WAS NAKED, HER BOLDNESS AND FIRE MAKING HER SO, NOTHING LIKE THE PRECOCIOUS, EMPTY-HEADED DEBUTANTES OF THE CAPITAL WITH THEIR PAINTED-ON FACES AND POISONOUS WHISPERS. HER INTENTIONS WERE OBVIOUS AND OVERWHELMING, AND WITH THE WOUND OF DURISTAN'S LOSS THERE WAS LITTLE I COULD DO TO RESIST THOSE EYES, THAT SKIN, THOSE LIPS. I TRIED TO MUTTER SOMETHING, BUT EVEN TO MYSELF IT SOUNDED LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN A MOAN OF CONSENT.

THE LAST THING I REMEMBER WAS GLIMPING THE GLOW OF JAUNDICED EYES THROUGH THE CRAZED SALON GLASS AND A FANGED SNEER THAT FOLLOWED ME EVEN INTO DARKNESS.

—AILSON KINDLER, *GALDYCE'S GUEST: FEAST OF THE NOSFERATU*





Priests often call death a release, a liberation from the bonds and concerns of life, allowing one to pass on into a state of rapture. In the vampire, such comforting words take on a terrifying cast, for once freed from the fears and cares of the living, only the basest hunger and unsatisfied lusts survive, desires that transform even the most virtuous souls into monsters.

Any discussion of vampires is one tainted by ages of lore and fiction, where superstition and fantasy muddle life-sparing fact. The truths of these horrors lie riddled with contradiction: vampires are dead, but live on; their bodies are cold, yet their beauty never fades; they sow suffering and death, yet they bear the faces of friends. While much is made of the ability of holy talismans, coffin dirt, hawthorne stakes, and sunlight to combat and destroy these undead, in practice there is no such thing as a common vampire, nor one that is not aware of its vulnerabilities and won't summon lifetimes of experience to continue its deathless rampage. Only an understanding of the goals and fundamental natures of these elusive undead might aid one in deterring their undying appetites, yet even then, all the resources of the living stand wanting when compared to the unnatural might and ages-old cunning of these princes of the undead.

## NECROLOGY

Even given the wide range of folklore and legends in various cultures, few fail to possess at least passing knowledge of the vampiric cycle of predation and rejuvenation. While fireside tales do much to spread general details, such can hardly be relied upon when identifying one of these undead, and even less so when combating them.

The ultimate fear of vampires rises from their storied kiss, the bite and telltale marks that spread death and the dark curse of unlife. As the most discussed and feared power of these unliving hunters, vampires' pronounced fangs draw the blood of the living, allowing the vampire both to feed upon the vital fluid and, more terrifyingly, to create more of its kind from its victims. Though this is not an uncommon trait of the undead, in vampires such corruption finds refinement, affording them the choice of slaying their victims outright or resurrecting them, as either deathless thralls or true vampires. The distinctions between these similar abominations escape most would-be hunters, yet two distinct types of vampire exist: true vampires and vampire spawn (also known as vampire thralls, slaves, or brides). While details of true vampires dominate discussions of these terrors, the secondary vampire spawn is often entirely overlooked. These lesser yet still exceptionally dangerous vampires possess many of the strengths and weaknesses of their creators, yet lack true vampires' lordly domination over base creatures of the night, their power to transform into beasts, and their ability to create more of their kind. Typically, too, these spawn come from mortals without the willpower or

exceptional character that would attract vampires to remake them as peers rather than servants. Thus, vampire spawn are bound to the will of their masters, being slaves to their whims, typically exhibiting no more control or ambition of their own than feral ghouls or untamed hunters without the control and foresight of their masters.

Much mystery surrounds the properties of a vampire's bite, the fanged kiss through which they drain the blood of the living. Debates extend even unto the manner in which vampiric fangs aid in feeding, whether they merely serve as tools to start blood flowing or siphon blood themselves. Regardless of such particulars, the effects of a vampire's bite remain the same: gradual weakening unto death. While most vampires visit their victims night after night, draining them of their vitality little by little, some gorge themselves, drinking away an entire life in a single feast. It is from such deaths that new vampires might arise—though victims physically unfit for the transformation might still resurrect as mere vampire spawn. With such in mind, many vampires drain mortals near to death, but allow them to succumb to death from mere weakness and wasting, not the act of being drained directly. Thus, vampires choose who they pass their curse onto, avoiding the hindrances and evidence that multiple members of their kind sometimes present.

Draining blood is not the only way new vampires are created, however. Little known is the fact that the very touch of the vampire can drain one's power and weaken one's resolve—a condition that seems to be more a manner of fundamental deterioration than mere physical draining. Rarely used by vampires except in desperate conflicts, as it supplies them with no vital blood, their energy-sapping touch can easily extinguish a life, and from such withering deaths new vampires arise, cursing even the most exceptional souls to an existence as undead slaves.

The act of draining blood serves vampires as more than merely a method of creating new servants. Although none can truly say what drives these undead to thirst for blood, a vampire's lifelike appearance and the liquid source of mortal vitality are inseparably intertwined. Despite their own confessed need for blood, even unto nightly feeding, vampires held captive can seemingly go for months, even years, without drinking—yet the transformation this hunger causes is terrifying. Vampires deprived of blood gradually lose their lifelike appearance, withering into corpses ravaged to the extent time would naturally intend. In addition, the obsession with blood comes to dominate their starved psyches, driving them to the brink of madness and, in cases of extreme deprivation, irretrievably over it. Although their physical abilities seem unimpeded, their ravenous states cause them to forget much of the pomp and charm associated with their kind, revealing them for the nightmarish ghoul-kin they truly are. Those allowed to drink over the course of several nights regain their appearance and control, but the experience proves so physically and





psychologically painful—likened to dying again with every moment—that no vampire would willingly endure it.

Beyond the need for sustenance, vampires possess baser requirements to continue their undead existences. To rest, heal, and avoid the destructive properties of sunlight, vampires keep coffin sanctuaries. These resting places serve as a place for the undead to reconstitute if wounded and find a measure of the death-like repose they require to sustain their nightly hunts. All vampires have a unique connection with their coffins, preventing any common wooden box from sustaining them. Such a resting place must hold a personal connection for its user, typically being the coffin it was interred within, that of a family member, one that bears the grave dirt of its homeland, or a perfect facsimile of a lost coffin. Should its coffin be destroyed, a vampire goes to great lengths to find or create a new one that satisfies its deathly needs. Exactly what such needs are, however, varies between individuals, and only a tenacious hunter might reveal the specific mystery of a vampire's resting place.

The powers and methods of destroying a vampire also vary widely, both among individual vampires and in tales of these creatures. These undead are often described as holding power over vermin and nocturnal beasts, summoning such creatures forth and transforming into their shapes, or even discorporating into creeping mist. More exotic reports even tell of vampires controlling the weather, spreading disease, or taking on the appearances of living individuals. Such abilities and mastery of form make these undead notoriously difficult to detect, track, and defend against. Those who must, however, are confronted with equally varied advice on these menaces' vulnerabilities, ranging from wooden stakes through the heart to the abjuring properties of certain plants. Although no weakness can be called universal, most vampires truly are scorched by sunlight, weakened by rushing water, and immobilized—but not vanquished—by a stake through the heart. Yet even these supposed truths cannot be relied upon in every case, as vampires make for cunning, adaptable, and varied opponents. Typically, a vampire's weakness lies within its own history, and while the accounts of successful vampire hunts might suggest tools and practices to prepare those who would combat these horrors, in truth, little besides a patient mind, tenacity in the face of terror, and the grace of the gods can assure a vampire's final destruction.

### HABITAT & SOCIETY

Just as the facets of the vampiric mindset defy reliable generalization, so too do details of their nightly habits. Perhaps the sole truth that applies to all vampires is their fundamental difference from other undead. While lingering souls and unquiet corpses typically tarry in haunts forsaken by the living, vampires seek out avenues coursing with vitality, their existences sustained by robbing life from the living one sanguine splash at a time. Thus, just as vampirism

might be likened to a disease, vampires plague mortal civilization, following, feeding upon, and spreading through it wherever it might arise. Typically, vampires prefer to hunt within sizable urban centers where they might blend in and their depredations might be disguised. Smaller communities can rarely satisfy a vampire's hungers, and feeding upon or driving away all the residents of an area serves these predators no better than a farmer who consumes his entire harvest before winter. As such, all but the most feral vampires strive to exercise subtlety and self control when it comes to their nightly feasts, so as not to deny themselves future prey. Only in the rarest situations might a vampire be able to exist in seclusion, and typically only then with complex arrangements to provide them with the endless stream of living blood they require.

In their interactions, either with the living or others of their kind, vampires prove just as likely to parody what they remember of mortal relations as to abandon such conventions entirely. Such translates into the manner in which these terrors hunt, either hiding as serpents within the shadows of mortal society, or prowling like wolves at the edge of civilization, picking off the weak and unwary who cross their paths.

In the case of vampires who infiltrate the streets and shadows of their former homelands, many go to great lengths adhering to what they perceive as the height of their chosen culture's society. In their undead egotism, most remake themselves as aristocrats or other elite, allowing themselves to hollowly enjoy in death what petty comforts they relished or longed for in life. In their socialization, such vampires wear the facade of dignity and culture, many becoming quite adept at passing as obscure nobility through centuries of such mimicry—though their manners often seem outdated or from another time. Yet even such etiquette merely serves as a mask, a pleasing visage that, when exposed by hunger or rage, reveals the unnatural predator within.

At the other extreme, many vampires completely divest themselves of their past mortality, letting all suggestion of reason, patience, and presentation drop away. While some continue to exist merely for themselves, becoming lords of their own private worlds, others lack the ambition or desire to master even themselves, degrading into little better than beasts, driven on only by their nightly hungers.

Which path a vampire chooses to spend its immortality pursuing varies largely depending on its psyche in life. Most fail to acclimate to their unliving states, especially those turned to undeath against their wills. Individuals with hearts and mindsets too virtuous or rigid to survive by feeding upon their former families and neighbors often starve, murder themselves, or go insane, rampaging until their hungers or conspicuousness destroy them. Such crazed undead might be pitiable, but rarely does any vestige of their former mortality survive, granting such terrors merely additional masks behind which to hide their monstrous hungers.



With powers godlike in comparison to those they possessed as mortals, most vampires are arrogant to the extreme. Such extends to their interactions with both the living and the dead. As such, vampires rarely fraternize with one another except in a master-slave arrangement. Should two vampires meet by happenstance, differences of personality and methodology typically predispose these undead to rivalry if not barefaced loathing. Should two vampires manage to overcome their initial distaste, seeing their own hungers reflected in another typically leads to deep-seated revulsion, both for their companion and themselves, which might only be satisfied by distance, or better, destruction. Thus, only when a vampire can look upon others of its kind as inferior servants, masters to replace, or evils to temporarily suffer might such abominations survive one another.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

With their innate strength, powers of manipulation, and elusive natures, vampires easily find their ambitions leading them into a diverse array of nighttime plots. While many monstrous creatures have limited possibilities for lairs and menace, vampires offer great range with both their variety of forms and their ability to hide among the living. When considering how to introduce vampires into a campaign, the GM should choose which form he wishes these undead stalkers to take, the most typical options being hunter or mastermind.

As hunters, vampires take the form of predators classically found in folklore, corpses driven by their lust for blood to prey upon the living. Both vampire spawn and full-fledged vampires fill this role well, hunting the living with either bestial savagery or the cunning of an ancient assassin. In most such plots, survival motivates these deathless killers, their predation either blatantly suggesting the modus operandi of their kind or being intentionally disguised and thus mysterious. The mere revelation of a vampire within a community's midst easily flows into a hunt for the creature's identity and subsequent slaying, drawing elements of urgency and mystery into any campaign. GMs might tailor the resulting evidence to the personality and goals of their vampiric villains, leading their PCs into the chateaus of sinister recluses, the haunted ruins of supposedly dead families, or even the forgotten warrens of feral vampiric clans.

As masterminds, vampires might become as deadly and varied in their goals as any other high-powered monster or villain. The type of creature a vampire was in life and the skills it possessed often color its plots in undeath: a warrior turned into a vampire might still attempt to bring ruin by the sword, while a vampiric wizard might prove as magically adept and knowledge-hungry as any lich. By warrant of their variety, true vampires better fulfill the role of schemer and manipulator than their more feral spawn. When in such a role, a vampire's hungers are typically secondary to their greater

plots, and as such, these needs are less likely to be given away, often fulfilled quietly or by the hands of a subordinate. Thus, only once a party is well invested in combating the depredations of such a villain might they come to realize his accursed nature.

## VAMPIRIC BREEDS

Unlike the appellations of many undead, the name "vampire" can apply to a wide variety of terrible creatures, this

undead affliction proving variable to such an extent that numerous distinct types of vampires reputedly exist. While these unusual vampires might pervade the tales and fears of secluded or exotic regions—and even outnumber more typical vampires in such areas—they are generally far more reclusive than their better-known and more populous cousins.

**Aswang:** A terrifying breed of vampire typically haunting lands of the distant east, aswangs only arise from female victims. While these cunning undead predators fear no light and appear relatively human by day, they possess significant shapeshifting powers, undergoing a monstrous transformation, in which they grow terrible wings, claws, and a long, sharp tongue which they use to feed upon flesh and hearts—especially those of the young or unborn. Seemingly related to these grotesque undead are the dismembered *manananggal* and *penanggalan*, horrifying vampiric witches that respectively abandon their lower bodies or all but their heads and dangling entrails as they take to the hunt.

**Dhampir:** Known as ghoul-blooded or half-vampires, those cursed to live as dhampirs know a miserable half-life. Born from mothers infected with vampirism in the final days of their pregnancy or sired by freshly spawned vampire fathers, dhampirs live with the curse of vampirism in their mortal blood. Although the taint grants these rare souls eerie abilities, such as sensing nearby undead, so too are they cursed with a measure of their accursed parents' ravenous natures, making many just as dangerous as vampires themselves. (The dhampir appears in the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary II*.)

**Nosferatu:** Thought by many to be bearers of an ancient strain of vampirism, nosferatu possess many traits common to vampires, yet notably lack the immortal youth and vigor of other breeds. With strange similarities to and powers over beasts and vermin, these reclusive, withered vampires typically avoid interactions with the living except those who fall victim to their eerie powers of mind control. Yet, despite their age and dreadful manipulations, nosferatu are a waning breed,



with none known to be able to pass on their monstrous curse and thus create more of their kind. (Nosferatu are described in detail in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #8.)

**Vrykolakas:** Bestial creatures, vrykolakas lack all the pride, romanticism, and seductive qualities of other vampiric breeds. Similar to ghouls yet far more cunning, these animalistic, shape-changing corpses rise from their graves by night to haunt the living and spread a terrifying, life-draining disease. Bereft of numerous vampiric weaknesses, they prove notoriously difficult to kill and can easily scour the life from overconfident hunters or entire unwary communities. (The vrykolakas appears in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #29.)

## VARIANT VAMPIRIC ABILITIES

Just as various breeds of vampires exist, so too does diversity exist within regional or otherwise related groups of such undead.

**Ancient Youth (Su):** A vampire with this ability transformed into one of the undead at a very young age, and has been trapped within an adolescent body for an existence possibly measuring in centuries. Vampires with this ability are size Small and gain a +4 bonus on all Bluff checks. (+o CR)

**Mastermind (Su):** Vampires with this ability can have a number of enslaved spawn totaling four times its total Hit Dice. In addition, the vampire chooses one of the following three abilities: clairaudience, clairvoyance, or telepathy. Depending on the ability chosen, the vampire can hear what its spawn hears, see what it sees, or communicate telepathically with it. The vampire may exercise or end its use of this ability as a standard action and maintain its connection to its spawn for as long as it wishes. A vampire may only use this ability with one spawn at a time. The vampire and vampire spawn must be on the same plane for this ability to function. While using this ability, the vampire enters a catatonic state similar to its daily rest and is treated as helpless, though it is alerted to any jarring noises, the presence of any visible creature within 5 feet, or any damage that befalls its body. (CR +o)

**Noble Dead (Su):** A vampire with this ability possesses an ancient and legendary bloodline. He gains a +2 bonus on all Diplomacy checks, which increases to +4 if being utilized against another undead creature. In addition, he gains channel resistance +6, and the DC of his dominate ability increases by +2. (CR +o)

**Sunlight Resistance (Su):** This ability provides a vampire a measure of resistance against sunlight. On the second and all later rounds of exposure to direct sunlight, the vampire takes damage equal to one-third of its maximum hit points and is destroyed if this brings it to 0 hit points. The vampire is staggered on any round it is exposed to direct sunlight. (CR +o)

**Swarm Form (Su):** As a standard action, a vampire with this ability can change into a bat swarm, centipede swarm, rat swarm, or spider swarm. The swarm has a number of hit points equal to the vampire, and any damage done to the swarm affects the vampire's hit point total. While in swarm

form, a vampire cannot use any of its natural or special attacks, although it gains the movement, natural weapons, and extraordinary special abilities of the swarm into which it has transformed. The vampire also retains all of its usual special qualities. While in swarm form the vampire is still considered to be an undead creature with its total number of Hit Dice. A vampire can remain in swarm form until it assumes another form or retakes its original form (a standard action), or until the next sunrise. (CR +o)

## KNOWN VAMPIRES

Untold populations of bloodthirsty undead hunt Golarion by night. Noted here are but two of these undying predators.

**Galdyce:** The aged viscount of the Ustalavic county of Amaans long sated his lusts among the peasantry of that mountainous region, claiming bride after ill-fated bride in a supposed attempt to father a male heir. Revealed as a nosferatu, Galdyce was supposedly slain in 4685 by the adventurers Duristan Barlhein and Ailson Kindler, leaving the Vale of Red Breath and the nearby village of Sen's Pass to return to a sleepy existence. In recent months, though, mysterious lights have been spotted among the half-ruined Castle Galdyce, leading many to fearfully whisper that the dreaded viscount or one of his terrible brides have returned home.

**Jhalhasef:** The Merchant of Life serves as a broker between the traders and alchemists of Merab and the ghouls of Nemret Noktoria in the Darklands deep below Thuvia. The dark-robed vampire seeks out dread secrets among the ghoulish scholars, trading them to the surface for prices paid in gold bars, amphoras of human blood, and veiled wagons bearing moaning cargo.

## SAMPLE VAMPIRE

Few could conceive of a more charming, high-spirited pair than the aristocratic artist Lady Lauris Sankairn and her lifelong friend and bodyguard Aubrey Aldamori. Supposedly the last heir of a tragically small Galtan family, Lauris claims to be touring the finest cities of Taldor, Andoran, Cheliax, and points beyond in indulgence of her life-loving, adventuresome spirit. The pair have become popular additions to many a posh social circle, proving adept at art, drink, song, and whiling away evenings with tales of scandals and misadventures past. Despite their charm, the dotting couple—quick to note their not wholly platonic yet still welcoming relationship—have greater goals than merely an endless stream of freewheeling revels. In truth, Lady Lauris is the vampiric spawn of Aldamori, a vampire who had preyed upon the aristocrats of Galt for centuries. With the coming of the Red Revolution, though, the vampire found much of the noblesse—the only mortals he deigned to dine upon—carted off as fodder for the guillotines. After abandoning the country, he and his most beautiful slave have continued to tour the Inner Sea under the guise of avant-garde fops for over 40 years, sampling the elite of numerous counties and leaving a trail of misfortune in their wake.



**AUBREY ALDAMORI, VAMPIRE ARISTOCRAT CR 14**

**XP 38,400**

Male human vampire fighter 11/aristocrat 2

LE Medium undead (augmented)

**Init** +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 28, touch 18, flat-footed 22 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

**hp** 145 (11d10+2d8+76); fast healing 5

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +7; +3 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4; **DR** 10/magic and silver; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10

**Weaknesses** vampire weaknesses

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *keen rapier* +23/+18/+13 (1d6+11/15–20) or slam +19 (1d4+7 plus energy drain)

**Special Attacks** blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 20), energy drain (2 levels, DC 20)

**TACTICS**

**During Combat** Aubrey first attacks spellcasters using energy drain and then uses dominate on melee targets.

**Morale** Aubrey fights until forced into gaseous form.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 22, **Dex** 20, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 18

**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 36

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Bleeding Critical, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Critical Focus, Dazzling Display, Deadly Stroke, Deceitful, Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Greater Weapon Focus (rapier), Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Lightning Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Mobility, Power Attack, Shatter Defenses, Spring Attack, Step Up, Toughness<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier)

**Skills** Bluff +29, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +13, Fly +9, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (nobility) +15, Perception +26, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +24, Survival +10;

**Racial Modifiers** +8 Bluff, +8 Perception, +8 Sense Motive, +8 Stealth

**Languages** Common, Hallit

**SQ** armor training +3, bravery +3, change

shape (dire bat or wolf, *beast shape II*), *gaseous form*, shadowless, *spider climb*, weapon training (light blades +2, natural +1)

**Combat Gear** *potion of inflict moderate wounds* (3), *potion of nondetection*; **Other Gear** mithral shirt, +1 *keen rapier*, cloak of elvenkind, belt of incredible dexterity +2, brooch of shielding (101 charges), ring of protection +2

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Blood Drain (Su)** Aubrey can suck blood from a grappled opponent; if he establishes or maintains a pin, he drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution damage. Aubrey heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a 145 temporary hit points) each round he drains blood.

**Change Shape (Su)** Aubrey can use change shape to assume the form of a dire bat or wolf, as *beast shape II*.

**Children of the Night (Su)** Once per day, Aubrey can call forth 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms, or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve him for up to 1 hour.

**Create Spawn (Su)** Aubrey can create spawn out of humanoids he slays with blood drain or energy drain. The victim rises from death as a vampire in 1d4 days. This vampire is under Aubrey's command and remains enslaved until its master's destruction. Aubrey may have enslaved spawn totaling no more than 26 Hit Dice; any spawn he creates that would exceed this limit become free-willed undead.

Aubrey may free an enslaved spawn in order to enslave a new spawn, but once freed, a vampire or vampire spawn cannot be enslaved again.

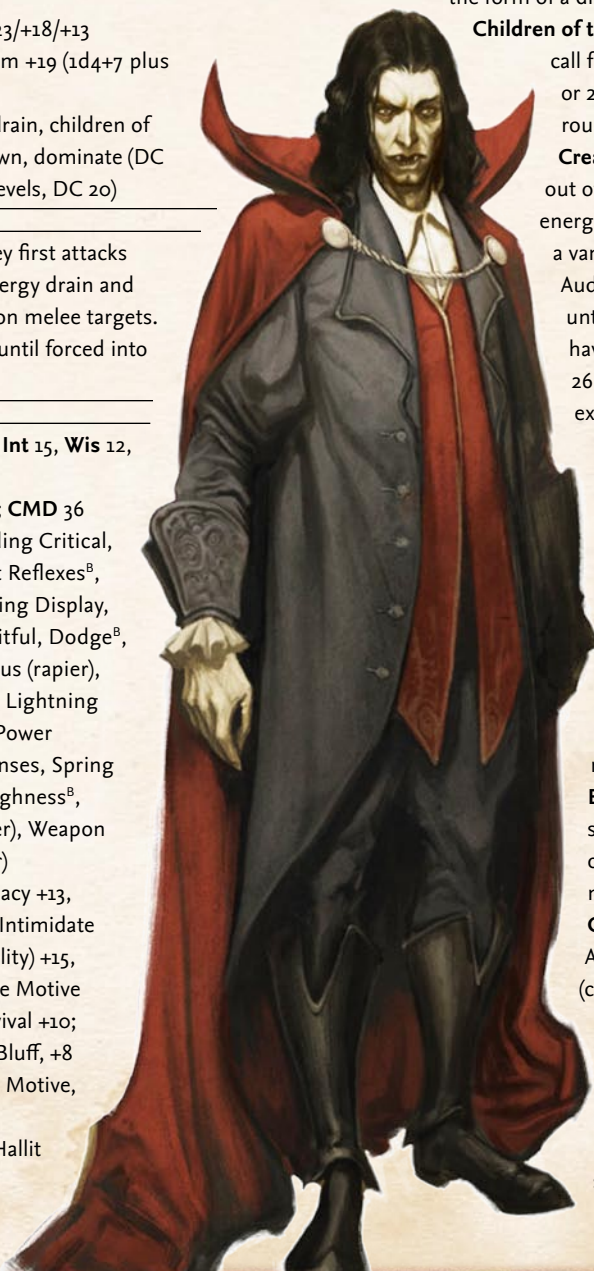
**Dominate (Su)** Aubrey can crush a humanoid opponent's will as a standard action. Anyone he targets must succeed on a Will save or fall instantly under his influence, as though by a *dominate person* spell (caster level 12th). The ability has a range of 30 feet.

**Energy Drain (Su)** A creature hit by Aubrey's slam gains two negative levels. This ability only triggers once per round, regardless of the number of attacks Aubrey makes.

**Gaseous Form (Su)** As a standard action, Aubrey can assume *gaseous form* at will (caster level 5th), and can remain gaseous indefinitely, with a fly speed of 20 feet and perfect maneuverability.

**Shadowless (Ex)** Aubrey casts no shadows and shows no reflection in a mirror.

**Spider Climb (Ex)** Aubrey can climb sheer surfaces as though under the effects of a *spider climb* spell.





Chapter Nine

# WALKING DEAD

"YOU WANT TO DIG A GRAVE GOOD AND DEEP, SO'S THEY DON'T HAVE TOO EASY A TIME CLIMBING BACK OUT. AND MAKE SURE THAT COFFIN'S NAILED TIGHT BEFORE YOU DROP IT IN. HARDWOOD'S BEST, GOOD OAK OR CEDAR, BUT MOST FOLKS'LL WANT TO SAVE A FEW COPPERS AND JUST GO WITH PINE. I'D SAY MORE THAN HALF THE WALKING DEAD IN THESE PARTS CAME OUT OF SHODDY COFFINS AND SHALLOW GRAVES, BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO? NOW IF YOU SEE ONE OF 'EM WANDERING AROUND, DON'T LOSE YOUR WITS. THEM ZOMBIES'RE USUALLY PRETTY SLOW, AND A GOOD WHACK OR TWO TO THE SIDE OF THE HEAD WITH A SHOVEL'LL USUALLY PUT 'EM DOWN AGAIN. O' COURSE, IF IT'S ONE OF THE FAST ONES, THERE'S NAUGHT ELSE TO DO BUT RUN AND HOPE YOU'RE FASTER THAN IT IS. HOW FAST YOU THINK YOU ARE, BOY, EH?"

—EFRAM GALL, GRAVEDIGGER, TWISTED TREE NECROPOLIS



**G**rinning skulls of bleached bone. Empty eye sockets aglow with pale, unholy light. Slack masks of rotting flesh, devoid of human emotion and intelligence. These are the faces of the walking dead, clattering skeletons come to life and corpses risen from the grave, shambling mindlessly forward, hungry for human flesh.

Skeletons and zombies are the most simple, and therefore the most widespread of all the undead. Little more than dead bodies animated through foul necromantic rituals, skeletons and zombies are usually just unthinking automatons, mindlessly following their creators' commands. Fearsome exceptions do exist, however—skeletons and zombies who have somehow managed to retain the intelligence and cunning to fanatically wage war against the living.

The walking dead normally serve as the simple tools of evil priests and wizards who have animated cadavers through the use of spells such as *animate dead*. While most skeletons and zombies are the products of such necromantic magics, other methods of creating the walking dead have been recorded. Rare alchemical concoctions can rot the flesh or melt it from bone, and give the corpse some semblance of life. Certain powerful curses can also cause a person to rise as a zombie upon death, often to take revenge on those still living.

However, skeletons and zombies have also been known to arise spontaneously, usually as a result of another powerful undead creature nearby. Certain areas with a strong necromantic aura or a history of killing—such as battlefields and long-forgotten sacrificial altars—or places where a significant number of people have died violently, as with a mass grave or the sites of massacre, can spontaneously produce the living dead as well. Undead generated by such processes are masterless and follow no commands, though they may display an instinctive ability to work together or with more intelligent undead, at least as far as their simple consciousnesses can comprehend.

## NECROLOGY

An animated skeleton looks exactly like the skeleton of the creature it was in life, completely stripped of all muscles, organs, and flesh. If a corpse is animated as a skeleton, all of the flesh falls from its frame, leaving just bare bones. In some cases, the skeleton's empty eye sockets glow with a pale, sickly light. Beyond that, there can be considerable differences in the appearance of skeletons. The bones of newly created skeletons may shine white and smooth, while those of older skeletons are often cracked and yellowed with age. Zombies, on the other hand, keep the flesh on their bones, but it often festers and rots, becoming chunks of putrescence that eventually fall from their bodies.

Skeletons are surprisingly quick, and some still bear broken armor and weapons. In contrast, most zombies are sluggish and slow, but incredibly tough, and rely on their

fists to bludgeon opponents. Both types of walking dead are difficult to hurt—swords do little against the hardened bones of skeletons, while bludgeoning and piercing weapons have little effect on a zombie's decaying flesh. These undead monstrosities typically ignore wounds that would kill a human, and must literally be dismembered before the negative energy animating them dissipates.

The walking dead have little impact on their environment, unless ordered to scour an area by their creators. Although unintelligent, they do seem to possess an instinctive hatred for the living, and usually attack even if not given the order to do so. As undead, skeletons and zombies have no need of food, but unsettling reports continue to surface of zombies devouring the brains of those they kill, though the reasons behind such disturbing behavior are not clear.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Zombies and skeletons frequently inhabit the same environments they did in life, although they are most commonly found in crypts, tombs, ruins, graveyards, and necropolises. Cheap and relatively easy to create, the walking dead are often used by evil necromancers to guard their lairs, and are a regular feature of evil temples, particularly those dedicated to gods of death. An overzealous creator may end up with more undead than he can control, resulting in "wild" undead that roam far from where they were created.

As mindless corpses, skeletons and zombies possess no social structure. Everything they do is at their creators' whims. In the absence of a master, a solitary individual may claim territory of a sort—a single crypt or a short section of dungeon hallway—guarding it and attacking any living thing that trespasses. Zombies often congregate in packs, but this seems to be an instinctive hunting reflex rather than a conscious decision, as even when found together, the walking dead do not coordinate their actions or attacks.

Occasionally, a large mixed group of skeletons or zombies spontaneously arises, usually at the site of a particularly bloody battle or other scene of carnage. These armies of the walking dead, known as legions, are rolling catastrophes that massacre everything in their path. With no living master to direct them, the army's deceased generals often become skeletal champions, holding fast to their intelligence and leading the legion as they did in life. In some cases, they continue to follow the orders they were given while still alive, but more commonly they set out on a campaign of senseless slaughter and destruction. Living armies frequently prove no match for the relentless, untiring onslaught of an undead legion, which can devastate vast swaths of countryside, depopulating entire villages and adding the slain to their ranks. Fortunately, such spontaneous legions are rare occurrences, and usually disband of their own accord once their mindless fury has been spent, or when they have achieved whatever mysterious goal was the impetus behind their genesis in the first place.

## THE NATURE OF EVIL

“Skeletons and zombies are evil, even though they are mindless. This is because undeath itself is a naturally evil force, just as fire is naturally hot. While life and death exist in a cycle, neither is inherently good or evil, for creatures must die to feed others and make room for new life, which in turn must die to make room for even newer life. Undeath, by contrast, is a perversion of the natural order; an endless state that is neither life nor death, and a power that only corrupts and consumes. Vampires and brain-hungry zombies cannot create new life or sustain other life, they can only destroy life and propagate their kind until the world is filled with undying predators and no prey. Even things built with the power of undeath are merely perversions and mockeries of life, whether an animate corpse or an intelligent palace made of bones.

“This is not to say that all necromancers are evil or the school of necromantic magic is inherently evil. Necromancy spells manipulate the power of death, unlife, and the life force—the magic of death and the magic of undeath are two different things. A *circle of death* spell uses the power of death to snuff out life, but it is no more evil than stabbing a creature with a sword. Some argue that magic is just a tool, and how a tool is used determines whether the act is good or evil, but a counterargument holds that some tools are specifically designed to be used for evil, like implements of torture. Worse, some tools are inherently evil, and want to be used for evil. If fire always burned the innocent and spared the guilty, fire would be evil. Undeath is an inherently evil source of power, designed to corrupt and destroy life for no purpose other than hatred and because it can. There are exceptional, intelligent undead that are not evil, just as there are extremely rare demons and devils who become good, but evil is the norm because their essence is evil.”

—Dhauken Tor, First Speaker of the Wise Council of the Arcanamirium, Absalom

While the mindless undead themselves worship no gods, those who create them commonly venerate one of three unholy faiths. The Pallid Princess Urgathoa, goddess of disease and undeath, remains the most popular choice among necromancers, and many of her priests regularly create undead, particularly favoring plague zombies. Other necromancers pay homage to Orcus, the Prince of Undeath, demon lord of necromancy and the undead, though his cult is small in comparison with Urgathoa's. Finally, many necromancers seeking eternal unlife, as well as those few walking dead who have retained their minds, often follow the tenets of the Whispering Way in their quest to achieve the ultimate state of lichdom. Of course, the follower of any evil deity (or tolerant neutral one) may create undead, resulting in Abadaran vault guardians, Gorumite war-skeletons, and so on.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Traditional humanoid skeletons and zombies are most frequently used as low-level minions, disposable enemies that heroic PCs can destroy without remorse or quarter. They offer little threat at higher levels, and are often easily destroyed by the channeled energy of a party's cleric. Used properly, however, the walking dead can be challenging opponents at all levels of play. Besides using variant skeletons and zombies with new abilities to surprise players, remember that other non-humanoid monsters can become walking dead as well. Skeletal champions mounted on warhorse skeletons, demonic or infernal zombies, skeletal dinosaurs come to life, giant zombie rocs, or even intelligent skeletal dragons might make for interesting undead opponents.

Large numbers of undead can be an additional challenge. A skeleton may have only 4 hit points, but when the PCs are all that stands between a horde of a hundred skeletons and the residents of a hapless village, they may not seem like such easy foes after all. A whole crypt or dungeon full of undead soon exhausts a cleric's channeled energy, requiring the PCs to come up with more inventive ways of overcoming the infestation of walking dead.

## FACES OF DEATH

The simple, tottering skeleton and mindless, shambling zombie are the stereotypical image of the walking dead, but these undead horrors come in highly variable forms. Bloody skeletons, burning skeletons, fast zombies, plague zombies, and deadly intelligent skeletal champions are the best-known variants, but the walking dead are a diverse lot, and many more varieties might stalk moonlit graveyards and haunted crypts, each possessing its own strange and unique abilities. Although some common forms are listed below, in many cases these variant abilities may be applied to either skeletons or zombies, unless common sense dictates otherwise (such as a gasburst skeleton). Likewise, except as noted, the following variations can be stacked with one another—it's possible to have an exploding acid skeleton, for example.

**Acid Skeleton:** The bones of an acid skeleton constantly ooze caustic acid. An acid skeleton's melee attacks deal an additional 1d6 points of acid damage, and anyone striking an acid skeleton with an unarmed strike or natural attack takes 1d6 points of acid damage. Acid skeletons lose their immunity to cold but gain immunity to acid. An acid skeleton's Charisma is 12. Other energy types, such as electric skeletons or frost skeletons, can be applied in a similar fashion. (CR +1)

**Alchemical Zombie:** This zombie has been created through alchemical processes rather than necromantic magic. As such, positive energy has less effect on it, giving it channel resistance +2. Its alchemically treated flesh is also more resistant to damage, granting it an additional +2 bonus to its natural Armor Class above that which it gains based on its size. (CR +1)





**Brain-eating Zombie:** These terrifying zombie variants feed on humanoid brains. They gain a bite attack that deals damage based on the zombie's size, and the grab special attack, usable against opponents of the zombie's own size or smaller. When an opponent dies, the zombie uses its next turn to feast upon its victim's brain, making spells that require a complete corpse (such as *raise dead*) useless. Anyone killed after being bitten by a brain-eating zombie rises as a brain-eating zombie in 2d6 hours unless the corpse is blessed or similar preventative measures are taken. (CR +0)

**Cursed Zombie:** Created as the result of a powerful curse rather than through necromantic spells, cursed zombies can bestow a curse upon their victims. A cursed zombie gains the curse special attack, delivered with its slam attack. **Zombie curse (Su) slam;** *save* Will DC = 10 + 1/2 the zombie's Hit Dice + the zombie's Cha modifier; *frequency* —; *effect* as *bestow curse*; *cure* —. (CR +1)

**Exploding Skeleton:** Also called "bone bombs," an exploding skeleton detonates in a burst of razor-sharp bone fragments when it dies. Anyone within 10 feet of the skeleton when it is destroyed takes 1d6 points of damage per hit die of the skeleton (minimum 1d6). A Reflex save (DC 10 + 1/2 the skeleton's Hit Dice + the skeleton's Cha modifier) halves this damage. Bloody, burning, and multiplying skeletons cannot be exploding skeletons. (CR +0)

**Gasburst Zombie:** These bloated zombies are filled with toxic gas. When a gasburst zombie dies, it explodes in a cloud of noxious vapors which fill a 10-foot cube surrounding the zombie. Gasburst zombies are commonly filled with burnt othur fumes or ungol dust, but any poisonous gas may be used. Gas burst zombies have DR 5/piercing instead of DR 5/slashing. (CR depends on poison used, usually +1)

**Host Corpse:** This skeleton or zombie has been infested with a swarm of vermin or Tiny undead creatures that it releases from its body. Skeletal hosts often hold carrionstorms (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #2) or bat swarms in their rib cages, while zombie hosts frequently carry locusts or flesh-eating cockroach swarms (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #13) inside their rotting husks. Acid, bloody, and burning skeletons cannot be host corpses. (CR +0, with the swarm's CR counting as a separate creature)

**Magus:** These variant skeletal champions and zombie lords are minor spellcasters (typically 5th-level or less) that have retained both their intelligence and their spellcasting abilities. Magus skeletons and zombies gain Silent Spell as a bonus feat. (CR +1 plus caster level)

**Mudra Skeleton:** Sometimes known as "whirlwind skeletons," mudra skeletons are created with four or more arms, each capable of wielding a weapon. A mudra skeleton's Dexterity increases by +4 (instead of +2), and it gains Multiweapon Fighting and Weapon Finesse as bonus feats. (CR +1)

**Multiplying Skeleton:** This fearsome skeleton variant grows into more skeletons if destroyed. When a multiplying skeleton is destroyed, its bones reform 1d4 rounds later into two smaller multiplying skeletons with half the Hit Dice of the original. Each resulting multiplying skeleton continues to reform into smaller and smaller sizes. A Colossal multiplying skeleton splits into two Huge skeletons, a Gargantuan skeleton becomes two Large skeletons, a Huge skeleton reforms as two Medium skeletons, and so on, until the skeleton's Hit Dice can no longer be halved or the resulting skeletons would be Diminutive or smaller, at which point the skeletons are finally destroyed. Bloody, burning, and exploding skeletons cannot be multiplying skeletons. (CR +1)

**Relentless Zombie:** These have all the powers of fast zombies, and also gain a Climb speed equal to half the base creature's land speed, the scent special ability, a +4 racial bonus to Survival checks to track by smell, and two additional Hit Dice. (CR +1)

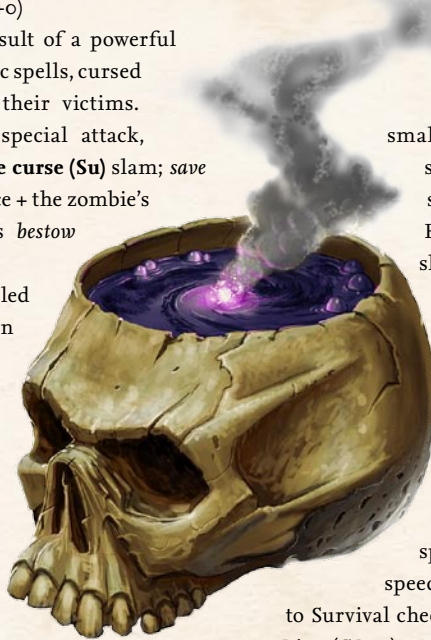
**Skeletal Archer:** While not as intelligent or skilled as skeletal champions, skeletal archers are nevertheless a welcome addition to any undead army. Skeletal archers gain Point-Blank Shot and Precise Shot as bonus feats. (CR +0)

**Zombie Lord:** Zombie lords are the fleshy counterparts to skeletal champions, rare zombies who have somehow managed to retain their intelligence. Use the normal zombie template for the zombie lord's Armor Class, base save bonuses, speed, melee attacks, base attack bonus, and damage reduction. Use the skeletal champion template for the zombie lord's Hit Dice, skills, and ability scores. Zombie lords gain channel resistance +4 and Toughness as a bonus feat. A zombie lord does not gain the staggered special quality. (CR as a zombie of the same Hit Dice +1.)

## KNOWN WALKING DEAD

The following are some of the more notorious walking dead of Golarion.

**The Army of Erlexian Thool:** Known as the Sorcerer of Barrow Knoll, this tiefling necromancer claims to be the scion of a powerful Gebbite Blood Lord and the demon lord Zura, the Vampire Queen. Regardless of the veracity of such grandiose assertions, Erlexian is obsessed with all things undead. Driven



## FACETS OF FEAR

As plague ravages a town and the bodies of loved ones, friends, and neighbors pile up in the streets, what could be more natural than the fear of those corpses somehow coming to life, rising from the dead to claim you as one of their own? Death is the great unknown, the one thing all people fear, and the concept of returning from such a state turns the hearts of men and women to ice.

In areas devastated by pestilence and disease, the dead can sometimes outnumber the survivors, leading to the fear that the walking dead will overrun the living in a “zombie apocalypse.” And as more people fall victim to the terrifying plague, the number of walking dead continues to increase. Civilization is a fragile thing, and in the face of such an unprecedented, unstoppable threat, can society truly hold itself together? Or is it doomed to fall beneath the claws and teeth of the dearly departed?

The fear of the walking dead is also the fear of becoming one of them—a mindless slave under the control of someone else. A person transformed into a zombie loses his freedom, his individuality, his conscience, and some might say his very soul. And not even death can save you from such a fate, because your final reward—a peaceful death and a heavenly afterlife—is also taken from you. Becoming a member of the walking dead means nothing less than a horrific, unending life without hope of rest.

from a succession of cities across Avistan for grave robbing and suspected murder, Erlexian now makes his home in a crumbling tower on the outskirts of the River Kingdoms village of Barrow Knoll. Having exhausted the supply of cadavers from the many surrounding tombs that give the village its name, Erlexian turned to the living inhabitants of the town, demanding each household supply him with one fresh body or face retribution. Fearing the powerful wizard within their midst, the terrified villagers had little choice but to comply. Barrow Knoll is now a gloomy, troubled place, almost deserted, as Erlexian’s undead minions patrol the village every night, capturing anyone who strays out of doors in order to fuel their master’s mania. Meanwhile, Erlexian concentrates on his depraved experiments, surrounding himself with zombie footmen and skeletal servants created from the village’s unfortunate populace.

**The Blazing Cavalier:** Though his original name has been lost to history, the burning skeletal champion known as the Blazing Cavalier was once a hero of the Shining Crusade, a member of the famed Knights of Ozem. In one of the Knights’ many battles against the Whispering Tyrant, the warrior was slain by the witch-king, incinerated in eldritch fire until nothing but charred bones remained. So dedicated was he to his cause, however, that not even death could stop the knight’s righteous fury. His skeleton rose from where it had fallen, still burning, and he rejoined the fight. After Tar-Baphon’s eventual defeat,

the Blazing Cavalier vanished into the Hungry Mountains, but reports of a flaming, armored knight patrolling the mountains and fighting orcs, undead, and other evil creatures have surfaced again and again over the centuries. Popular tales in Lastwall say that the Blazing Cavalier is waiting for Tar-Baphon’s inevitable return, at which time the knight will face the Whispering Tyrant before the gates of Gallowspire one last time and slay the lich lord once and for all. Only then will the Blazing Cavalier crumble to dust, finally at peace.

**The Gillamoor Plague:** Following the Goblinblood Wars, many of Isgar’s villages fell to fire or the sword. Gillamoor, near the charred eaves of the Chitterwood, was one of the lucky ones to survive that devastation, but recent reports from merchant caravans reaching Elidir bear disquieting news. Something evil has befallen the village of Gillamoor, and the normally fearless caravan guards of Druma’s Mercenary League turn white-faced and trembling as they recount how the village’s residents have apparently transformed from simple peasants into ravenous, undead monsters, fiendishly quick and devilishly hard to kill. Rumor now has it that Gillamoor has been quarantined, and that the Isgeri army is looking for volunteers to enter the village to end the threat.

**Leylani Marakhoum:** Fifty years ago, the young, beautiful, and narcissistic Gebbite aristocrat Leylani Marakhoum was horrified to see her beauty fading with age. A casual follower of the Whispering Way, Leylani decided to preserve her beauty by becoming a lich. Unfortunately, having dropped out of the Mortuarium, Leylani’s magical skills never surpassed those of an apprentice, and her amateur rituals only resulted in transforming her into a magus zombie, a rotten corpse with none of the power or prestige of a lich. No longer the popular socialite of her youth, Leylani now spends her days religiously applying *unguent of revivification* and other more mundane cosmetics in a vain attempt to stave off the decay of her disintegrating, putrid flesh. Insane with jealousy, Leylani has begun secretly murdering attractive young debutantes and animating them into ghastly, mindless zombies under her control.

**The Sleeping Knights of Ras-Jajan:** When the self-styled Necromancer-King Ras-Jajan attacked Absalom in 3692 AR, he and his undead army were soundly defeated. Although the would-be conqueror’s body was never found, he left behind his fortress, one of the many siege castles littering the Cairnlands around the city. The sole survivor of an adventuring band that braved the depths of Ras-Jajan’s Refuge reported seeing row upon row of skeletal warriors, archers, and charioteers in a vast chamber beneath the siege castle, armor and weapons in perfect condition, apparently waiting for their master’s command to rise and march upon the city once again. Rightly concerned with the threat this undead legion poses, the Church of Pharasma sent two expeditions into Ras-Jajan’s Refuge. When both of them failed to return, the Chamber of Ecclestials washed their hands of the matter, leaving Absalom’s Grand Council and the Eagle Garrison to deal with the Sleeping Knights and the siege castle’s many wards and guardians.



## SAMPLE WALKING DEAD

The Iseri village of Gillamoor has been afflicted with a horrifying plague that is quickly turning the entire populace into mindless, ravenous zombies. Unknowingly carried by an itinerant Ustalavian peddler, the affliction spread quickly through the town, infecting nearly everyone who came into contact with it. The few surviving residents huddle fearfully inside their homes behind makeshift barricades, while the undead corpses of their former neighbors prowl hungrily outside in search of fresh brains to devour.

On the orders of the Steward of Iser, the Drumish merchant caravan who first brought word of the plague was slain to a man to prevent the spread of the contagion. Fortunately, Gillamoor sits well away from the vital trade routes of the Conerica Straits, so the authorities believe the plague is still constrained to the village itself. Already undermanned and underfunded, the Iseri army has been unable to do anything to address the problem, other than to post notices at crossroads that Gillamoor is under quarantine, and offer a reward of 5,000 gold pieces to anyone who can cleanse the village of infection. Of course, destroying over 500 zombies is no mean feat even for a skilled adventuring group.

### GILLAMOOR PLAGUE ZOMBIE

**CR 1**
**XP 400**

Relentless brain-eating plague human zombie

NE Medium undead

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +0

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**DEFENSE**


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**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

**hp** 22 (4d8+4)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

**Immune** undead traits

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**OFFENSE**


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**Speed** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Melee** slam +6 (1d6+3 plus grab), bite (1d6+3 plus grab)

**Special Attacks** brain-eating, create spawn, death burst, disease, grab, quick strikes

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**TACTICS**


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**Before Combat** Gillamoor plague zombies shamble about like normal zombies, only using their full speed if attacked or if they are in charge range of an opponent.

**During Combat** A Gillamoor plague zombie focuses all of its attacks on a single opponent, attempting to bite and grab the victim to feed upon its brain. It pursues its chosen quarry until either the prey or the zombie is dead.

**Morale** Gillamoor plague zombies fight until destroyed.

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**STATISTICS**


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**Str** 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18

**Feats** Toughness<sup>B</sup>
**Skills** Climb +11, Survival +0 (+4 when tracking by scent)

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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**


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**Brain-eating (Ex)** After killing a target, the zombie uses its next turn to eat it's victim's brain. This prevents raising the body from the dead by any method that requires an intact corpse.

**Create Spawn (Su):** Anyone killed after being bitten by a Gillamoor zombie rises as a Gillamoor zombie 2d6 hours later unless the corpse is blessed or similar measures are taken.

**Death Burst (Ex)** When the zombie dies, it explodes in a burst of decay. All creatures adjacent to the zombie are exposed to its disease as if struck by a slam attack and must make a Fortitude save or contract zombie rot.

**Disease (Su)** The zombie's natural attacks carry the zombie rot disease. *Zombie rot*: slam—injury; *save* Fort DC 12; *onset* 1d4 days; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d2 Con, this damage cannot be healed while the creature is infected; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. Anyone who dies while infected rises as a Gillamoor zombie in 2d6 hours.

**Quick Strikes (Ex)** Whenever the zombie takes a full-round attack action, it can make one additional slam attack at its highest base attack bonus.





**Chapter Ten**

**WEREWOLF**

"LOOK UP IN THE SKY AT THE MOON, FULL AND SWOLLEN LIKE A GRAVID BITCH. CAN YOU FEEL ITS PULL? CAN YOU FEEL THE BLOOD POUNDING IN YOUR VEINS, FULL OF LIFE, FULL OF POWER? IT WON'T BE LONG NOW. DON'T FIGHT IT. YOU CAN'T WIN. YOU ARE THE BEAST NOW. TAKE A DEEP BREATH. TASTE THE WIND. SMELL THAT? IT'S THE SCENT OF FRESH MEAT, THE SWEET REEK OF FEAR. FEAR OF YOU. THERE'S ONLY TWO KINDS OF CREATURE IN THIS WORLD FOR YOU NOW, BOY, PREDATOR AND PREY. YOU'RE THE PREDATOR, EVERYTHING ELSE IS PREY. SOON, YOU'LL FEEL THEIR HOT LIFEBLOOD GUSHING BETWEEN YOUR TEETH, THEIR FLESH RIPPING BENEATH YOUR CLAWS. GO, NOW. HUNT. REVEL IN THE SAVAGERY. SLAKE THE BLOOD-THIRST FOR TONIGHT. AND TOMORROW NIGHT, YOU'LL DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN."

—BROGAI NAVRATIL, ARTHFELL WEREWOLF, TO ONE OF HIS NEW "PUPS"



Men who can turn into beasts, werewolves prowl the dark fringes of civilization, culling the weak and unwary from the larger human herd. These ravenous creatures are victims of the curse of lycanthropy, consumed by a rage not unlike that of some barbarian warriors, but with a maleficent twist. The bestial desires of a rabid wolf course through their veins, driving them to acts of barbaric cruelty and animalistic fury. Most of these individuals embrace their savage hungers, becoming evil monsters that stalk the night. An unfortunate few vainly struggle to fight the curse, but these are inevitably consumed by the beast within, giving in to the thirst for blood and slaughter.

Werewolves come in two varieties, natural lycanthropes (those born with the condition) and afflicted lycanthropes (those who contract lycanthropy as a curse or disease from another werewolf). Natural werewolves have complete knowledge of their state and perfect control over their abilities. Afflicted werewolves, on the other hand, often change form involuntarily, an event usually triggered by the full moon. While in animal form, they frequently lose their identities and retain no memories of their actions.

All werewolves can change into three different shapes: a normal humanoid, a wolf form, and a terrifying hybrid humanoid-wolf shape. A werewolf in humanoid form blends easily into civilized society, and the simple peasants of frontier villages know that any stranger's face could hide the predator in their midst. In wolf or hybrid form, a werewolf becomes highly resistant to damage—only magic and weapons crafted of silver can harm them with any degree of success—but its humanoid shape possesses no such immunity. Regardless of its current shape, a werewolf reverts to its human form when slain.

In contrast to other lycanthropes, werewolves take a much more direct interest in their victims. A wereboar might keep to its forest, attacking trespassers out of aggression rather than maliciousness, or a wererat may lurk in the sewers, only occasionally murdering an innocent when the opportunity presents itself, but werewolves stalk their prey with the chilling patience of a careful, intelligent hunter. They delight in terrorizing their victims, prowling around their villages and homes, or even better, hounding them to the point of exhaustion, howling dreadfully to the moon to instill debilitating horror before closing in for the kill.

For all their prowess at hunting, however, werewolves are also savagery and violence personified. When their urges overtake them, the quiet hunter becomes a mindless beast, reveling in wanton destruction. Like a rabid wolf who preys upon a flock of sheep, slaughtering far more than it can eat for the sheer pleasure of it, a werewolf doesn't need an external reason for its rampage—the hunt is the reason, and anything unable to defend itself from the werewolf's depredations is prey. A rough woodsman, a simple peasant girl, or an innocent child are all fair game for the werewolf's bloody sport.

## ECOLOGY

In their humanoid form, werewolves are indistinguishable from any other members of their race, although natural werewolves and those who have been afflicted for a long time may have or acquire wolfish features. According to folklore, natural werewolves tend to look somewhat feral, with a full head of shaggy hair and a wild look in their eyes. Other traits include eyebrows that meet together, index fingers longer than the middle fingers, curved fingernails, odd birthmarks on the palms, or a loping, lupine gait. Some superstitions even claim that a werewolf in its human form can be recognized by bristles of hair under its tongue, a vestigial tail, or cutting its skin to reveal fur in the wound.

In wolf form, a werewolf looks like a normal wolf, albeit a large and powerful specimen. A close look at the creature's eyes, however, may reveal its true nature, as they often glow red or yellow with an inner fire and display a spark of unnatural and cruel intelligence. In its hybrid shape, a werewolf resembles a human-sized wolf walking upright on two legs (but occasionally running on all fours). While a werewolf in hybrid form has the bite of a wolf and sharp claws, it is also able to wield weapons in its clawed hands.

Lycanthropy itself is an affliction somewhere between a curse and a disease. To a natural werewolf, of course, it is simply a trait inherited at birth, but to an afflicted werewolf, it's an unnatural malady. The curse of lycanthropy is transmitted through a werewolf's bite. Only a true, natural werewolf can pass along this curse; the bite of an afflicted werewolf is no worse than that of a normal wolf.

Once contracted, the disease shows no symptoms until the next full moon, when the beast within first overcomes the afflicted person and she changes into her animal form. The stress of combat can also trigger these changes. Most afflicted werewolves remember nothing of these episodes and wake up far from home the next morning, perhaps covered in the blood of those they slaughtered and with a profound feeling of melancholy or depression. Those few who do remember their actions and embrace their newfound power soon find themselves consumed by the evil and fury their new form incites. Once an afflicted werewolf truly accepts the curse, the beast has won.

Magic provides the best cure for lycanthropy. A *remove disease* or *heal* spell from a powerful cleric has the best chance of success, but such remedies must be sought within 3 days of infection. *Remove curse* and *break enchantment* magics can also be used, but they are only effective during the time of the full moon, when the werewolf is at its strongest. A dose of wolfsbane (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 560), also known as monkshood, can also cure the affliction, giving the target another saving throw against the affliction. Fresh wolfsbane works best, but the plant is poisonous and has a chance of killing the recipient rather than curing him. Of course, natural werewolves cannot be cured of their condition.

## SUPERSTITIONS AND SAFEGUARDS

Besides the standard cures, many folk remedies exist for curing lycanthropy, though most healers and priests discount such treatments as ignorant superstitions. One common belief is that exhaustion can cure a werewolf. Afflicted werewolves (or those thought to be infected) are often forced to toil at hard labor without rest, thus tiring the beast and purging it from the victim's body. Another commonly accepted remedy is immersing a werewolf in holy water during a new moon.

Other so-called "cures" include the presentation of holy symbols, particularly those of gods of animals or healing, such as Erastil and Sarenrae; driving nails (often silver ones) into the werewolf's hands or paws; striking the werewolf forcefully on the forehead with a dull knife; or even addressing a werewolf by its given name three times in succession.

A final remedy is skinning the werewolf in its hybrid or animal form, thereby separating the wolf from the man. One wonders, however, what sort of werewolf would be docile enough to allow such a procedure, or whether the unfortunate sufferer would survive the "treatment."

Many strange beliefs exist for safeguarding oneself from the predations of werewolves. Wolfsbane proves most successful, as it has a reputation for repelling werewolves as well as curing the affliction of lycanthropy itself. Holy symbols and holy water remain popular defenses, even though werewolves are not undead and have no known vulnerability to such instruments. Because silver is known to harm werewolves, some people favor wearing silver jewelry for protection from werewolf attacks. Wealthy villagers also spread powdered silver outside doors and windows to keep werewolves at bay. Rye, mistletoe, and the berries of the rowan tree or mountain ash are also believed to be effective. Whether these remedies and wards have any actual effect is up to the GM, though PCs should be able to research them and come to their own conclusions.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

While werewolves may live anywhere, from towns and cities to sparsely inhabited forests, natural and afflicted lycanthropes frequently lead very different lives. Afflicted werewolves, fighting a terrible disease that turns them into ravenous beasts, tend to be solitary individuals, living in self-imposed isolation either to avoid discovery or in an attempt to protect family and friends from their own bestial urges. Alone on the frontier, many turn to banditry to support themselves. Natural werewolves in human form live just as humans do, while those who prefer their beast shapes might live in a cozy wolf den, although the comforts of civilization, such as soft beds and warm fires, usually draw them back to human society.

A rare few afflicted werewolves manage to keep the beast at bay, retaining their own personalities and morals while struggling with the bestial urges that threaten to consume them 3 nights a month. Pariahs within werewolf society, these good-natured werewolves frequently lead lives just as secretive and hidden as their evil brethren, as few towns suffer the continued existence of a known werewolf in their midst. To their misfortune, most such werewolves find that people react with alarm and prejudice regardless of the werewolf's true intentions.

Natural werewolves have long since grown accustomed to the hatred and fear their presence engenders, and those who dwell in civilized lands often lead normal lives within human society, attempting to blend in as much as possible. Such quiet, peaceful existences are often short-lived, however, as the beast within cannot be denied for long, and these werewolves' idyllic lifestyles usually end in blood-drenched frenzies. In the hinterlands, natural werewolves habitually gather into packs, either of other werewolves in areas where lycanthropy is widespread, or as leaders of packs of normal wolves.

Whether in human, hybrid, or wolf form, natural werewolves can communicate with wolves and dire wolves, allowing them limited control over these beasts. Afflicted werewolves only have this ability in their hybrid and wolf shapes; in their human forms, they possess no special empathy with wolves. Stories persist of werewolves who can also talk to dogs and other canines, and legends speak of particularly powerful werewolves who are able to speak with more unusual lupines such as shadow mastiffs, winter wolves, and worgs.

Werewolves who have embraced their bestial nature sometimes worship the demon lord Jezelda, Mistress of the Hungry Moon. Especially prevalent among the werewolves of Andoran's Darkmoon Vale and Lozeri in northern Ustalav, Jezelda's faithful hate non-werewolf lycanthropes in particular, and go to great lengths to hunt and slay those heretical abominations. Less-devout werewolves may venerate other gods—Lamashtu, Rovagug, and even Urgathoa, in her aspect as goddess of gluttony.

Even rarer than afflicted werewolves who maintain their good alignment, a few legendary natural werewolves known as the Hounds of Good are said to exist. While not an organized order or society, these paragons of righteousness nevertheless dedicate themselves to the fight against evil. Most people dismiss them as myths, but ancient texts refer to the Hounds of Good as creations of the slain beast-god Curchanus, charged with hunting down and destroying demons, devils, and other creatures of evil.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Although werewolves are ravening killers, their role as deceitful hunters can also be played up in a campaign. PCs tasked with investigating a series of unexplained murders might, after a string of red herrings, find a werewolf



responsible—either a natural werewolf in full control of itself and willingly indulging its thirst for blood and mayhem, or an unfortunate afflicted werewolf with no recollection of its gruesome activities.

Alternately, a werewolf could stalk the party through the wilderness, making hit-and-run attacks (maybe picking off a hireling or two) before fading back into the darkness beyond camp. Even worse, one of the PCs' hirelings or cohorts could be afflicted with lycanthropy and be behind the attacks. The killer must be stopped, but now the goal becomes curing the enemy instead of killing it.

Infecting a PC with lycanthropy is another way of introducing werewolves into a campaign, but care should be taken to keep the game focused. The werewolf template provides a character with a great number of abilities and immunities that can soon overshadow other players' characters, but the werewolf and his allies must deal with his indiscriminate fury and lack of control over his form. Even the most tolerant allies are likely to grow tired when the werewolf turns on them in the middle of battle or runs off in the night during an unexpected transformation.

In these situations, the focus should be on curing the character of lycanthropy. Perhaps wolfsbane doesn't grow in the region, and there are no high-level priests available to remove the affliction. The PCs need to search for an alternative cure, perhaps even hunting down the werewolf responsible for the affliction in the first place. In this case, the search for a cure becomes a very personal quest. Of course, dealing with the effects of alignment change as a result of lycanthropy can be an interesting roleplaying opportunity as well, especially if the afflicted character is a good cleric or paladin who must atone for the crimes they committed while not in control of their actions.

## KNOWN WEREWOLVES

The following lycanthropes have a particularly bloody history or reputation.

**Brogai Navratil:** This blackhearted natural werewolf brigand ranges throughout Darkmoon Vale in central Andoran, occasionally retreating to the Wolfrun Hills for refuge during the vale's frequent purges of lycanthropes. A grizzled veteran of constant skirmishes with both the Fangwatch and the Diamond Regiment, Brogai once took a silver arrow in the eye, a wound that has never fully healed, leaving him with just one burning yellow eye in beastform.

Brogai delights in attacking isolated farms and logging camps, spreading his "gift" to unfortunate woodsmen and loggers, and forcibly inducting them into his pack of bandits when they change at the next full moon.

**Wolf's Ear:** The Varisian town of Wolf's Ear squats beneath the dark eaves of the Churlwood on the banks of Ember Lake.

Once a colony of relatively peaceful lycanthropes, Wolf's Ear was ravaged when Magnimar and the Church of Erastil "eradicated" lycanthropy in the town in a bloody pogrom. The fact that most were-creatures simply went underground is an open, though never spoken, secret. Werewolves make up the majority of lycanthropes in Wolf's Ear, and have become adept at keeping their true natures hidden from outsiders. Usually content to subtly undermine Magnimar's authority in the region, they could prove a serious threat if their territory or autonomy

were encroached upon, a fact not lost upon the lord-mayor of Magnimar. Recently, a rebellious pack of werewolves, led by a disgruntled young woman named Ruxandra Katranjiev, has begun calling for more open action against Magnimar as well as purges of non-werewolf lycanthropes from Wolf's Ear. While thus far only a fringe group, their influence on the future of the region remains an open question.

**Ylva Skallagrim:** A tall, red-haired Ulfen woman, Ylva is a natural werewolf said to take the shape of a mighty snow-colored wolf. A legend in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Ylva leads a dozen chosen berserker warriors she has afflicted with lycanthropy, called the *Ulfhednar*. Ylva and her band sail a longship decorated with a snarling wolf figurehead instead of the traditional dragon's head, raiding and plundering coastal villages from Kalsgard to Magnimar, along with their pack of winter wolf allies. Feared up and down the coast of the Steaming Sea, Ylva, according to some reports, has her eye on becoming a Linnorm King herself, and perhaps intends to claim the empty throne of Trollheim.

## OTHER LYCANTHROPES

Werewolves are not the only kind of lycanthrope, of course. Although similar in many ways (the ability to change forms, harmed by silver, etc.), these other lycanthropes have their own clearly defined roles, habitats, and societies.

Far to the north, great werebears prowl the cold forests and tundra, hunting and killing evil creatures wherever they find them. Though often irascible, most werebears are honorable and virtuous, and can make powerful allies for those able to get past their gruff exteriors.



## FACETS OF FEAR

Human beings are fond of taming nature, of leaving their mark on the wilderness in the form of farms cleared from primeval forest or towns and cities erected where once only animals used to live. But for all the trappings of civilization, the night still waits with hungry eyes and wicked claws. Werewolves personify the fear of the beasts that howl in the long, dark winter nights, and prowls hungrily outside doors and windows that are locked and barred against the savage wilderness.

From the harsh, frozen north to the gentle climes of the south, wolf attacks on livestock are a widespread fact of life in a fantasy world (though the number of non-rabid wolf attacks on humans is historically negligible). To the simple peasant or herdsman, wolves are a plague upon humanity, killing livestock and (reputedly) lone travelers gluttonously and without remorse. What could be worse, then, than a wolf who can take human shape?

In addition, people naturally fear those who are different in some way. An unfortunate person who has trouble controlling his emotions might be suffering from psychological problems, but to an uneducated villager, an easier explanation is that he is possessed—perhaps a wolf in human form. A cold, calculating, but all too human serial killer is hard to imagine, but fear and superstition can easily create a monster that stalks the night. Livestock die and people go missing, and everyone wants a scapegoat to hold responsible. Where a simple animal or human explanation no longer suffices, people turn to the supernatural, and werewolves are there to take the blame.

Wereboars are as ill-tempered as the wild swine whose shape they take. Preferring peace and solitude, wereboars are not normally evil, desiring only to be left alone, but ferociously charge and attack anyone disturbing them or invading their territory. Some clans of hill giants are known to suffer from the curse of lycanthropy, changing into gigantic, though dim-witted, dire boars.

The most urban of all lycanthropes, wererats frequently make their living on the fringes of civilization, skulking and scavenging in the sewers and slums of cities. Wererats are opportunistic assassins, and while they have no qualms about killing, they are a cowardly lot and attack only if they can do so with no danger to themselves, or if the odds are overwhelmingly in their favor.

These are simply the most common varieties of lycanthrope. Sleek and powerfully built weretigers stalk the jungles and tropical forests of the eastern lands of Vudra and Tian Xia, while wereleopards hunt the veldt of Katapesh and Nex. From Osirion and Thuvia come tales of werehyenas, werejackals, and even wererocodiles. Less credible rumors speak of goodly wereravens, dwarven and gnome werebadgers, and

alluring elven werefoxes, though the veracity of such claims is suspect at best.

## SAMPLE WEREWOLF

A resident of Wolf's Ear, Ruxandra Katranjiev was afflicted with lycanthropy at an early age. Always a rebellious sort, she chafed under the restrictions imposed upon the town's lycanthropes by its elders following Magnimar's "cleansing" of Wolf's Ear. A few months ago, Ruxandra claimed to have received visions from Jezelda, Mistress of the Hungry Moon, instructing her to drive out all non-werewolf lycanthropes from Wolf's Ear and throw off the yoke of Magnimarian imperialism. Banished by the town's more moderate leaders, Ruxandra now lairs in the tangled depths of the Churlwood, and has attracted a small but fanatical gang of followers who support her goals.

The pack commits heinous crimes that they can pin on non-werewolves, and use intimidation and fear tactics to cow the more peaceful residents of the town. Currently, Ruxandra is trying to collect enough silver weapons to arm her followers so they can purge Wolf's Ear of all non-wolf lycanthropes in an orgy of blood and carnage, leaving nothing but her own kind.

Ruxandra is a dusky Varisian woman, with dark hair and eyes, and intricate tattoos of glowering eyes, bloody teeth and claws, and wolf motifs covering her arms. She favors elaborately embroidered hunting outfits in red and blue, and wears many bangles and other jewelry. Always accompanied by her black wolf Fane, Ruxandra believes she has been chosen by Jezelda to do the demon lord's work on Golarion, and tolerates no challenges to her leadership or her visions.

### RUXANDRA KATRANJIEV (HUMAN FORM) CR 5

#### XP 1,600

Female human cleric of Jezelda 1/ranger 4

CE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

**Init** +7; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +9

**Aura** chaotic, evil

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex)

**hp** 36 (1d8+4d10+10)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 alchemical silver scimitar +5 (1d6+2/18–20), mwk

alchemical silver kukri +5 (1d4+1/18–20)

**Ranged** mwk composite shortbow +8 (1d6+2/x3)

**Special Attacks** channel negative energy (1d6, DC 10, 3/day),

avored enemy (humanoid [human] +2), favored terrain

(forest +2)

**Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 1st)**

1st—*magic fang*

**Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 1st)**





1st—*cause fear* (DC 12), *disguise self*<sup>P</sup>, *divine favor*  
 o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 11), *guidance*, *resistance*  
**D** Domain spell; **Domains** Animal, Trickery

---

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** Ruxandra casts *divine favor* and *magic fang* upon herself before combat.

**During Combat** A coward at heart, Ruxandra prefers to ambush foes and attack from a safe distance. If wounded, she flies into a rage and shifts into her hybrid form to attack in melee, focusing her attacks on any non-werewolf lycanthropes present. She normally casts spells only in her human form.

**Morale** If reduced to less than 10 hit points, Ruxandra flees.

---

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Double Slice, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting

**Skills** Intimidate +8, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (religion) +3, Perception +9, Stealth +11

**Languages** Common

**SQ** aura, change shape, copycat (1 rounds, 4/day), hunter's bond (wolf companion, Fane), speak with animals (4 rounds/day), track, wild empathy

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of longstrider*; **Other Gear** *ring of protection* +1, +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 alchemical silver scimitar, masterwork alchemical silver kukri, masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Str), arrows (20), 721 gp

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 11), *guidance*, *resistance*  
**D** Domain spell; **Domains** Animal, Trickery

---

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 17, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

**Feats** Double Slice, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting

**Skills** Intimidate +8, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (religion) +3, Perception +9, Stealth +11

**Languages** Common

**SQ** aura, change shape, copycat (1 round, 4/day), hunter's bond (wolf companion, Fane), speak with animals (4 rounds/day), track, wild empathy

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of longstrider*; **Other Gear** *ring of protection* +1, +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 alchemical silver scimitar, masterwork alchemical silver kukri, masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Str), arrows (20), 721 gp

**RUXANDRA KATRANJIEV (HYBRID FORM)**
**CR 5**
**XP 1,600**

Female human cleric of Jezelda 1/ranger 4

CE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

**Init** +7; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

---

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 23, touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+5 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +4 natural)

**hp** 41 (1d8+4d10+15)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

**DR** 5/silver

---

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 alchemical silver scimitar +6 (1d6+3/18–20), mwk alchemical silver kukri +6 (1d4+2/18–20), bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip)

**Ranged** mwk composite shortbow +8 (1d6+3/x3)

**Special Attacks** channel negative energy (1d6, DC 10, 3/day), favored enemy (humanoid [human] +2), favored terrain (forest +2), lycanthropic empathy

**Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 1st)**

1st—*magic fang*

**Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 1st)**

1st—*cause fear* (DC 12), *disguise self*<sup>P</sup>, *divine favor*



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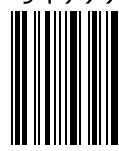
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