



THE PRICE OF REBIRTH

EXPANDED INJURY, RESURRECTION, AND LICHDOM RULES

COMPATIBLE WITH SWORDS & WIZARDRY: WHITE BOX™

By Omer Golan-Joel

THE PRICE OF REBIRTH

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The Price of Rebirth

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Required Materials	3
About The Author	4
Critical Injury	5
Defying Death	8
Variant Reincarnation Rules	10
Lichdom	11
Open Game License version 1.0A	14

Tables

TABLE 1 – Treating Critical Injury	6
TABLE 2 – Variant raise Dead	8
TABLE 3 – Variant Reincarnation	10
TABLE 4 – Lichdom	12



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The Price of Rebirth

Introduction

Death lies in wait for the hapless adventurer in the dark corners of the dungeon, amidst the gnarled trees of the forest, and even in the halls of mighty kings. Even the strongest adventurer faces a constant threat of death, as the adventuring profession is not for the timid. According to the default *Swords & Wizardry™: White Box™* rules (S&W 16), characters and creatures die when their **Hit Points** reach zero (0). In many cases, failing a **Saving Throw** might also kill a character or creature. However, not all heroes and villains die so quickly, even in the absence of powerful magic capable of raising or resurrecting the dead. Instead, this supplement proposes a possibility for first aid – or even ordinary healing magic – to bring back a character from the brink of death if applied in a timely fashion. But such lucky escape from the maws of hell is not without consequences. Wounds severe enough to bring a character to zero **Hit Points** are not to be taken lightly, and the character will typically be scarred – or even crippled – by these injuries. Powerful magic, indeed, may repair a broken body, but even it has limits.

Under the default *Swords & Wizardry™: White Box™* rules (S&W 27), a powerful **Cleric** may raise any dead character within an allotted time limit without undue consequences. Similarly, a powerful **Magic-User** may cause a dead character to reincarnate in a new body (S&W 28), again without negative consequences. However, in some worlds, the gods will look unfavorably upon such magic which tampers with mortality and the natural order of things. Therefore, the optional rules included in this supplement allow for circumstances – ranging from mild to harsh – of the use of such mighty spells: bringing a dead person back will not always be a great success, and reincarnation will not always bring back a character to their original sex and race.

Finally, a powerful **Magic-User** – especially of **Chaotic** alignment – may attempt to transcend mortality and become a Lich. This is not always successful, and in many case comes at a terrible price. The end result is an intelligent spell-casting undead creature; great success in this transformation will allow the player to retain their vile character and play them even in undeath!

Note that all rules presented in this product are optional variant rules, to be used at the **Referee's** discretion.

Required Materials

To get the most from this book you will need at least two dice of various sizes and some pens/pencils and paper or a computer.

This book requires access to a copy of the *Swords & Wizardry™: White Box™* rules by Mythmere Games™. Page notations in this product refer to those in the First Printing Edition from 22 January 2009, available for free at the Mythmere Games™ web-page at the following address:

<http://www.swordsandwizardry.com/whitebox.htm>

References to Other Books

In this book, references to specific pages in other books and products are shown as the code for the relevant book followed by the page number, both in italics, thus: *S&W x* or *(S&W x)* for *Swords & Wizardry™: White Box™*.

The Price of Rebirth

Die Throw & Notation Conventions

The die throw and notation conventions used in this book are the same as those described on *S&W 1*.

Combat

Wherever this book refers to combat, you can use the Combat chapter on *S&W 14-16*.

About the Author

Omer Golan-Joel is a 34 years old freelance English-Hebrew-English translator and an avid sci-fi and fantasy gamer from the town of Yavne, Israel. He lives with his beloved fiancée and his two cats Saki and Chicha – the real masters of the house – as well as an entourage of lizards, from the gang of house geckos to the large Star Agama who graces the wall of his home in the warm and hot months. Omer is a fan of science-fiction, fantasy and history, an amateur cook, and a hobbyist herpetologist. He also writes role-playing gaming material, including **Outer Veil**, a full-scale campaign setting for **Traveller™** published by **Spica Publishing®**.

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The Price of Rebirth

CRITICAL INJURY

According to the *Swords and Wizardry™: White Box™* rules (S&W 16), a character dies when their **Hit Points** reach zero (0). Here we present a slightly more complex alternative, with more varied results aimed at adding more variety and color to your campaign – and of course allowing villains to come back and exact vengeance on the player characters who have seemingly slain them many game sessions ago.



Under this optional rule, a character does not die when they reach zero (0) **Hit Points**. Instead, the fallen character hovers at the gates of death – they may or may not be dead, and are possibly mortally injured. Do not count **Hit Points** below zero (0), unless the attack which knocked out the character caused more damage than the character's **Constitution** score in a single attack after subtracting any remaining **Hit Points**, in which case the character is mauled beyond any chance of recovery even by high magic, save for reincarnation. The character remains unconscious, or maybe dead, until someone tries to heal the fallen character by first aid, herbalism, or magic. When another character makes this attempt, the stricken character must make a **Saving Throw** vs. **Death**. Note by how much the character has succeeded in this **Saving Throw** or failed in it, and consult the table on the next page.

The Price of Rebirth

Saving Throw...	Result
Failed by 10 or more points	The character is dead and their body is almost irrecoverably crushed, sliced, or otherwise beaten almost beyond recognition. Raise Dead will not work in such a case, though Reincarnation will.
Failed by 9-8 points	The character is dead and severely mauled. Raise Dead will work on the character, though if you are using the optional Raise Dead rules in this booklet, he will roll with a -5 penalty. Reincarnation will work normally.
Failed by 7-6 points	The character is dead. Both Raise Dead and Reincarnation will work normally on him or her.
Failed by 1-5 points	The character is critically injured and will die unless treated by a skilled healer (at the Referee's discretion) or healed by magic within an hour. Once treated, roll 1d6: 1-2, the character loses a leg; 3-4 the character loses an arm; 5 the character loses both eyes; 6, the character suffers brain damage. In any case, the character will have to rest for a whole month before returning to adventuring.
Exact saving throw number	The character is critically injured and will die unless treated by a skilled healer (at the Referee's discretion) or healed by magic within an hour. Once treated, roll 1d6: 1-2, the character loses his hearing; 3-4, the character loses one eye; 5, the character loses one hand; 6, one of the character's legs is crippled. In any case, the character will have to rest for two weeks before returning to adventuring.
Succeeded by 1-5 points	The character is severely injured and will die unless treated by a skilled healer (at the Referee's discretion) or healed by magic within 24 hours. Once healed, roll 1d6: 1-2, the character is horribly scarred; 3-4, the character loses 1d3 fingers; 5, the character loses one ear; 6, the character loses most of his or her teeth. In any case, the character will have to rest for a week before returning to adventuring.
Succeeded by 6 or more points	The character is injured and will awaken with 1 Hit Point and will recover normally. Roll 1d6: on 1-3, the character will suffer a major and easily recognizable scar; on 4-5, the character will suffer a minor scar; on 6, he or she was lucky – and came out of the ordeal completely intact!
Modifiers: +1 if given first aid by a skilled herbalist (Referee's discretion); +2 if healed by magic; -4 if not treated within 1 Turn of the end of combat; cannot heal if not triaged within 3 Turns of the end of combat.	

TABLE 1: Treating Critical Injury

Bodily Harm

Here we list the effects of the various inflictions caused by rolling on **TABLE 1**. Note that unless otherwise noted, ordinary magic cannot heal this kind of damage, but a **Ring of Regeneration** (*S&W 58*) will restore the organs and limbs to normal functioning, and so would a **Wish** granted by a magic item or a powerful creature.

Brain Damage: The character's brain is impaired. Halve their effective **Intelligence** score, and they suffer a -4 penalty to all rolls – **Saving Throws** included – related to mental abilities and resisting mental powers.

Crippled Leg: The character walks with a marked limp, reducing movement by half (usually to 6).

Lost Arm: The character loses an arm and obviously cannot use two-handed weapons or do any other action requiring both arms.

The Price of Rebirth

Lost Eye: The character loses an eye and loses depth perception and suffers from reduced visual perception, leading to a -2 penalty to hit rolls and other rolls related to sight, as well as a -1 penalty to **Surprise** rolls.

Lost Fingers: The character loses one or more fingers and their grip loses its firmness. The character suffers a -1 penalty to hit with two handed weapons and a -2 penalty to hit with any weapon held in the stricken hand. At the **Referee's** discretion, the character might also suffer other ill effects from losing fingers.

Lost Hearing: The character cannot hear spoken language and other sounds and will suffer related effects at the Referee's discretion. The character is also **Surprised** on 1-3 rather than the usual 1-2.

Lost Leg: The character cannot walk and can only crawl. With a crutch costing 5sp, the character can move at a speed of 2. A peg leg costing 20gp will also allow a speed of 2, but will be less unwieldy than a crutch.

Lost Hand: The character loses one hand and obviously cannot use two-handed weapons or do any other action requiring both hands. A hook hand costs 25gp and allows basic grappling but little else.

Lost Sight (both eyes): The character is blind. They treat all opponents as invisible (*S&W 15*) and is otherwise impaired as a blind person (**Referee's** discretion applies). The character is also **Surprised** on a roll of 1-5 on 1d6 rather than the usual 1-2.

Lost Teeth: The character has lost most of their teeth and is unable to chew, has difficulties speaking and an impaired appearance. Exact effects in the game are left to the **Referee**.

Scarring, Horrible: The character's face and other obvious parts of their body bear monstrous scars, causing a -4 penalty to any rolls related to diplomacy or persuasion and a +2 bonus to any roll related to intimidation. The character is also very easy to recognize.

Scarring, Major: The character bears a major, obvious scar on one of the body parts easily recognized by onlookers, causing a -2 penalty to any rolls related to diplomacy or persuasion and a +1 bonus to any roll related to intimidation. The character is also very easy to recognize.

Scarring, Minor: The character bears an obvious but small scar. This makes recognition easier but does not affect persuasion or intimidation attempts. **Cure Wounds II** (*S&W 21*) can remove this kind of scarring.

The Price of Rebirth

DEFYING DEATH

Powerful magic – namely the **Raise Dead** spell (S&W 27) – can bring back characters from the dead. However, in some worlds, the jealous gods of death loath to give up the precious souls collected by them after death; in other worlds, the gods see such resurrection as a violation of the natural order of life, death, and rebirth. For any such setting, or if the **Referee** wishes to insert an element of risk and horror to such spells in his world, we suggest the following rules.

When a **Raise Dead** spell is cast on them, the dead character must make a **Saving Throw vs. Death**. Note by how much the character has succeeded in this **Saving Throw** or failed in it, and consult the following table.

Saving Throw...	Result
Failed by 10 or more points	The gods refuse to let go of the character's soul and they remain dead for eternity. No further attempts may be made to bring the character back to life.
Failed by 8-9 points	The character indeed arises from the dead, but instead of rising as a normal mortal, the eternal powers of Chaos curse them with undeath! The character rises as a Ghoul (S&W 40), under the Referees control, who will attack any nearby characters and attempt to eat them. The only exception is in the case of Elven characters, who rise as Banshees (S&W 36).
Failed by 6-7 points	The spell fails. Further Raise Dead attempts may be made, but at a -4 on this table. Penalties are cumulative for repeated attempts, e.g. a third attempt after failing twice at this level will suffer a -8 penalty.
Failed by 1-5 points	The character is restored to life, but at a bad state – they will require 1d6 months of rest. Roll 1d6: 1-2, the character loses their memory; 3-4, the character is part alive and part dead; 5-6, the character is possessed by a demon will suffer from sudden and unexpected fits of murderous rage.
Exact saving throw number	The character is restored to life, though still bearing marks of terrible injury – they will require 1d3 months of rest. Roll 1d6: 1-2 the character suffers from partial memory loss; 3-4, the character has passed through Hell (or whatever terrible afterlife your setting has) and will have severe recurring nightmares; 5-6, the character will undergo a profound personality change.
Succeeded by 1-5 points	The character is well-restored to life, and will make a full recovery within 2 weeks as per the default spell. Roll 1d6: 1-2, the character will be sickly for the rest of their life; 3-4, the character suffers attribute loss; 5-6, the character remains cold as a corpse and will suffer sudden shivers.
Succeeded by 6 or more points	The character is blessed by the gods and awakens fully restored with 1 Hit Point , ready to adventure right from the Cleric's hands!
Modifiers: +2 if raised by a Level 8 (or higher) Cleric ; -2 if dead for over a week; -4 if dead for 4 or more weeks.	

TABLE 2: Variant Raise Dead

The Price of Rebirth

Raise Dead Spell Effects

Here we list the effects of the various inflictions caused by rolling on **TABLE 2**.

Attribute Loss: The character was not completely healed and suffers from reduced abilities. Roll 1d6: 1, the character loses 1d3 points of **Strength**; 2, the character loses 1d3 points of **Intelligence**; 3, the character loses 1d3 points of **Wisdom**; 4, the character loses 1d3 points of **Constitution**; 5, the character loses 1d3 points of **Dexterity**; 6, the character loses 1d3 points of **Charisma**. The **Attributes** cannot go below 1.

Memory Loss, Full: The character suffers from complete amnesia, though he or she will retain basic life skills and partial adventuring capabilities. The character only retains half of his or her **Level**, rounded down, to a minimum of **Level 1**.

Memory Loss, Partial: The character loses part of his or her memory but retains a general idea of his or her identity, as well as most adventuring capabilities. The character loses one **Level**, to a minimum of **Level 1**.

Partially Alive: The character is neither alive nor dead, and teeters constantly on death's door, held alive only by divine magic but at the same time constantly called back to the afterlife (or hell) by the gods of death. The character suffers a -4 penalty to all actions and **Saving Throws** and only has half of their movement rate (in most cases, 6). The character must also make a **Saving Throw vs. Death** every month, with the above penalty, or die as the gods of the underworld reclaim their soul.

Personality Change: The character retains their memories intact, but will change personality in a profound manner, as negotiated between player and **Referee**.

Recurring Nightmares: The character suffers from memories of being dead and in a dreadful afterlife - and other negative visages. They will invariably suffer from severe recurring nightmares every night, preventing healthy sleep. The character will suffer severe insomnia as a result, causing a constant -2 penalty to all actions and **Saving Throws**. Spellcasters will only be able to cast spells as if they were one half their level, rounded down - if this is rounded down to zero, the character loses their spellcasting ability.

Sickly: The character's body does not fully recover from being dead and its life force is far weaker. Natural healing takes twice as long, and magical healing heals only half the damage (rounded down, to a minimum of 1 **Hit Point**). The character also suffers a -2 penalty to **Saving Throws** against poison, acid, and disease.

Shaking: The character is as cold and pale as a corpse and constantly shivers. They thus suffer from constantly shaky hands, causing a -2 penalty to all attack rolls and other actions requiring steady hands.

Sudden Murderous Rage: The character awakens as normal but is possessed by a terrible demon. At times left to the **Referee's** discretion (recommended every week or every month, depending on how much the **Referee** is merciful), the character must make a **Saving Throw** or fly into murderous bloodlust lasting 2d6 **Rounds**, doing their best to kill any living being in reach. After this period, they will return to normal functioning but will not remember any of the actions under this rage. A **Cleric** may attempt to use the **Remove Curse** spell (S&W 28) to exorcize the demon; in this case, the character makes a **Saving Throw vs. Death**; if successful, the **Cleric** drives away the demon; if failed, the character becomes permanently controlled by the demon - and is from now on a monster controlled by the **Referee**.

The Price of Rebirth

VARIANT REINCARNATION RULES

The *Reincarnation* spell (*S&W* 28) allows a powerful *Magic-User* to bring back a dead character's soul into a newly formed body. However, if you wish to make things more varied and somewhat risky in your setting, you may wish to use the following rules for a more complex version of this spell.

Under these variant rules, a character is reincarnated into a new body – but this may or may not be similar to their original body. The soul remains the same, but the flesh appears anew – at the whim of the gods. First and foremost, roll 1d6; on 1-3, the new body is male; on 4-6, it is female. Additionally, while the character retains their mental and spiritual *Ability Scores*, they must re-roll the three physical ones – *Strength*, *Constitution*, and *Charisma* – as they are rolled when creating a new character. Finally, the character must roll on the following table – based on their alignment – to find out into what kind of creature he or she has reincarnated:

D100	Lawful	Neutral	Chaotic
1-50	Human	Human	Human
51-65	Elf	Elf	Goblin
66-80	Dwarf	Dwarf	Kobold
81-90	Halfling	Halfling	Orc
91-95	Gnome	Lizardman	Hobgoblin
96-99	Centaur	Dryad	Bugbear
00	Other (<i>Referee's</i> discretion)	Other (<i>Referee's</i> discretion)	Other (<i>Referee's</i> discretion)

TABLE 3: Variant Reincarnation

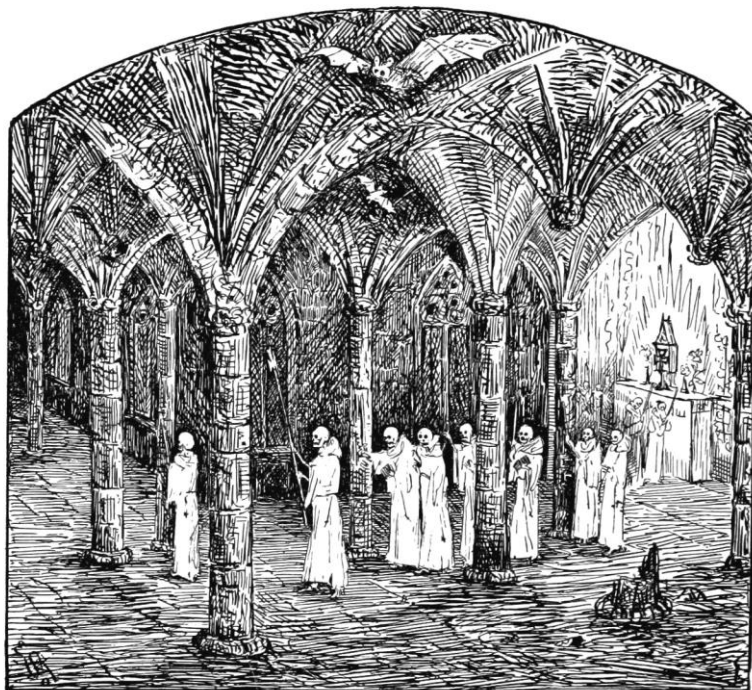
The character retains their memories and personality. Human characters reincarnated into a human body retain their class and level. When a character reincarnates into a different race, they will retain their level but change the class to reflect the new race; for example, a human reincarnated into a dwarf will follow the *Dwarf* rules (*S&W* 8). If the character's original level is higher than that of the target race's highest level limit, reduce the character's level down to that limit. If the character reincarnates into a creature for which there are no rules in the *Swords and Wizardry™: White Box™* rulebook, the *Referee* will determine the new race's abilities and other game features.

Note that the new body is perfectly fresh and healthy – any maladies or lasting injuries caused to the old body will not appear on the new, pristine one.

The Price of Rebirth

LICHDOM

A powerful **Magic-User** or **Elf** may attempt to use dark magic to transcend mortality and become a **Lich** (S&W 45). A level 10 **Magic-User** or an 8th level spellcasting **Elf** – unless playing an **Elven Fighter** (S&W 9) – may attempt to perform this horrid ritual. Lesser **Magic-Users** and weaker **Elves** may not attempt it, and non-Chaotic characters rarely attempt this process. To become a Lich, the character requires complex ritual supplies and unholy texts costing a total of 30,000gp, as well as at least a year of eldritch study and research. Finally, on a moonless night, the character may attempt this monstrous ritual. A **Lich** created by this way – if the ritual is successful – retains their full memories and abilities, including spellcasting abilities, and becomes an undead creature immune to age, poison, and disease. They do not need to sleep, eat, or drink – or even breath - but must meditate and pray to dark gods for 8 hours to regain cast spells. Any character turned into a **Lich** becomes irrecoverably **Chaotic** and may be turned as an undead of their **Hit Dice**. The **Lich** also gains a "natural" **Armor Class** (AC) of 4 (15) and the ability to paralyze any creature of 4 or less **Hit Dice** with their touch – no **Saving Throw** allowed, but their movement **Speed** falls to 6. In any case, any character performing this ritual cannot be **Raised** or **Reincarnated** at any point in the future.



When performing the ritual the character must make a **Saving Throw** vs. **Death**. Note by how much the character has succeeded in this **Saving Throw** or failed in it, and consult the table on the following page.

The Price of Rebirth

Saving Throw...	Result
Failed by 10 or more points	The character dies a horrible death. Their soul goes straight to hell or any other torturous afterlife.
Failed by 7-9 points	The ritual goes awry and the character returns as an insane Mummy (if human) or Banshee (if Elven). The character loses any previous spellcasting abilities and becomes a monster controlled by the Referee , possessing all the capabilities of a monster of that kind.
Failed by 1-6 points	The character rises as a Lich , but the ritual was not properly complete, and their transformation is partial and particularly accursed. Roll 1d6: on 1-3, the character rises as an insane monstrous Lich (<i>S&W</i> 45) controlled by the Referee; on 4-5, the character suffers from corpse rot; on 6, the character suffers from a terrible curse.
Exact saving throw number	The character rises as a Lich , but the ritual was far from perfect and the transformation is incomplete. Roll 1d6: on 1-2, the character suffers from a moderate curse; on 3-4, the character is surrounded by an accursed aura; on 5-6, the character becomes insane – even more so than the typical Lich .
Succeeded by 1-5 points	The character rises as a proper Lich , though not perfectly so. Roll 1d6: on 1-2, the character emanates the cold and the stench of death; on 3-4, the character suffers a mild curse; on 5-6, the character loses all flesh.
Succeeded by 6 or more points	The Dark Gods of Chaos have blessed the character! They rise as a perfect Lich , ready to wreak havoc on the world!

Modifiers: -4 if the character is **Lawful**; -2 if the character is **Neutral**; -2 if the character is an **Elf**; +1 if performed on an Equinox or a Solstice; +2 if the character sacrifices 10 innocent victims to dark gods immediately preceding the ritual.

TABLE 4: Lichdom

Lichdom Effects

Here we list the effects of the various inflictions caused by trying to become a **Lich**.

Accursed Aura: A curse lies on the character, emanating an aura of Chaos and Death around them. The aura has a radius of ten miles. Within this area, all life withers and dies: animals leave this area, trees die and rot, and other plants dry off. Any humanoid creature or character who dies in this area rises on the next dusk as a **Zombie** (*S&W* 51-52), but is not under the **Lich**'s control. And dead humanoid creature or character buried in this area rises similarly – but as a **Skeleton** (*S&W* 49).

Cold and Stench of Death: The character is a corpse and this is obvious to anyone within 30': their flesh rots, and even if they try to conceal this rot with a hood or other clothing, they emanate uncanny coldness and a horrid stench of dying flesh, easily recognizable by anyone around them. In addition to their inability to disguise their new nature, almost no living creature will agree to serve them and all henchmen and hirelings will desert him at the first opportunity, though at the **Referee**'s discretion, particularly vile monstrous beings will have no problem accompanying such an undead abomination.

Corpse Rot: The character is a walking corpse and continues to wither away with time, despite the dark magic keeping them alive. Every month, the character must make a **Saving Throw** vs. **Death**. If failed, they will

The Price of Rebirth

die immediately and irrecoverably. If successful, they will suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to all **Attack Rolls** and **Saving Throws**: for example, after three successful months, the character will suffer from a -3 penalty.

Curse, Mild: The gods have cursed the character for their transgression of mortality, though this curse is not particularly severe. The character suffers from a permanent -1 penalty to all **Attack Rolls** and **Saving Throws**.

Curse, Moderate: The gods have cursed the character for their transgression of mortality. The character suffers from a permanent -2 penalty to all **Attack Rolls** and **Saving Throws**. Furthermore, every time the character attempts to cast a spell, they must make a **Saving Throw** vs. **Magic**; if failed, the spell fails and has no effect, but is removed from the **Lich**'s memory as if it was cast.

Curse, Terrible: The gods have damned the character for their terrible crimes against nature and Lawful order. The character suffers from a permanent -4 penalty to all **Attack Rolls** and **Saving Throws**. Furthermore, every time the character attempts to cast a spell, they must make a **Saving Throw** vs. **Magic**; if failed, the spell will have the opposite effect from what the Lich has intended: for example, when casting a damaging spell, it will harm the **Lich** rather than its intended target.

Insanity: The character loses any vestiges of sanity. While the exact effects of this outside combat are at the **Referee**'s discretion, we suggest that in combat, the Lich will act as if they are permanently and fully under the effect of the **Confusion** spell (*S&W 20*).

Loss of Flesh: The character's flesh rots and withers away, falling from their body. Within 1d3 days, all that remains is an undead, sentient, spellcasting skeleton with an evil red spark in each eye. In game terms, this is indistinguishable from a "regular" **Lich**, but the **Referee** may decree on further effects of this state on the character in addition to his deathly appearance.

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