



VATHAK GRIMOIRES: Echoes of the Final Heartbeat

A SUPPLEMENT FOR THE COLONIES

Shadows
over
Vathak

A Campaign Setting Book of Lovecraftian Survival Horror

JACOB TRIER AND RICK HERSHEY



Shadows over Vathak Setting

Vathak Grimoires: Echoes of the Final Heartbeat

Author: Jacob Trier

Editor: John Bennett

Artist: Rick Hershey

Design and Layout: Rick Hershey

Fat Goblin Games Team Members: Chris Bayes, Eric Hindley, John Bennett, Justice Antonio Mora, Kalyna Conrad, Lucus Palosaari, Nick Esposito, Rick Hershey, Troy Daniels, Tyler Beck

Line Developer: John Bennett

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Introduction

The *Echoes of the Final Heartbeat* is a collection of texts containing the research of arcane scholar Gretha Heldesmarch (N middle aged romni Wizard [necromancer] 9). The widow of a minor noble from Sileasia, who was also a practitioner in the field of necromancy, Gretha fled to the Colonies after her husband was killed by vindari inquisitors for participating in heresy.

After settling in Skalan, Gretha attempted to resume her studies, but alone and without the resources that had previously been available to her and her husband, her progress was frustratingly slow. As such, she was quick to accept when she unexpectedly received an invitation from the alchemist Ivan Von Houlsmann to join the growing community of necromancers doing research in the village of Halsburg.

Gretha's research benefitted enormously from working with Von Houlsmann and the other arcane scholars in Halsburg. Recording her findings in a collection titled *Echoes of the Final Heartbeat*, Gretha frequently shared tales of new discoveries with her academic peers. Recently, she hinted strongly that she was on the verge of a major breakthrough. Unfortunately, Gretha, in her desire for knowledge, contacted alien powers beyond her control. *Echoes of the Final Heartbeat* was finished in a single, frenzied night with her own blood as the ink. The amount of blood required to pen spells beyond her ability to cast ultimately doomed Gretha. Her colleagues only found a shriveled, desiccated corpse in her quarters.

Spells

BLOODLETTING BLADE

School transmutation; Level antipaladin 2, inquisitor 2, magus 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (powdered dried blood)

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one slashing or piercing melee weapon

Duration 1 minute/level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless, object); Spell Resistance yes (harmless, object)

You cover one melee weapon's blade in blood-red stains, causing the weapon to deal 1 point of bleed damage, as if it had the *wounding* weapon quality. Bleed damage from multiple hits with a weapon affected by *bloodletting blade* stacks, but the effect does not stack with other abilities that deal bleed damage (such as the bleeding attack rogue talent).

BLOODHUNGRY HAZE

School conjuration (creation); Level sorcerer/wizard 5, witch 5

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. level)

Effect fog spreads in 20-ft. radius, 20 ft. high

Duration 1 minute/level

Saving Throw Fortitude partial; see text; Spell Resistance no

You generate a bank of fog, similar to *fog cloud*, except that its vapors are a bloody crimson. The vapors drain blood from living creatures, clinging to the body to leech from

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exposed skin and seep into the orifices to draw blood from the internal organs.

A living creature inside the cloud is sickened and takes 1d6 points of bleed damage per caster level (maximum 4d6) on your turn each round. A successful Fortitude saving throw halves the Constitution damage and negates the sickened effect. An effected creature takes that amount of damage every round at the start of its turn its turn, even after it leaves the spell's area of effect. The bleeding can be stopped by a DC 15 Heal check or the application of any effect that heals hit point damage. Any creature that succeeds on its saving throw but remains in the cloud must continue to save each round on your turn or be subjected to the bleed damage which stacks with itself.

BLOODSOAKED SOIL

School necromancy; Level cleric 8, sorcerer/wizard 8

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range 5 ft.

Area 20-ft. radius spread emanating from you.

Duration 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw Fortitude negates; Spell Resistance yes

You cause the ground to become infused with negative energy that overflows if as much as a single drop of blood touches it. If a living creature within the area of effect takes hit point damage, the ground in the area of the spell's effect is immediately filled with deep red splotches from the spilt blood. Wisps of translucent grey negative energy coil up from the splotches, reaching hungrily to touch living flesh.

Any creature passing through or ending its turn in an affected square immediately gains one negative level unless it succeeds on a Fortitude saving throw. Passing through multiple affected squares requires an additional Fortitude saving throw. Each failed results in an additional negative level. Creatures remaining in the area of effect must make a successful Fortitude saving throw at the start of its turn or gain an additional negative level. If a negative level is not removed before 24 hours have passed, the target must attempt another Fortitude saving throw at the same DC or the negative level becomes permanent.

Bloodless creatures, such as constructs or elementals, do not trigger the spell if injured. Undead in an affected square are treated as if they were under the effect of *desecrate* and gain fast healing 5.

A creature may willingly spray some of its own blood onto its own square as a move action by dealing 1d4 hit points of damage to itself.

FEED OFF THE FALLEN

School necromancy; Level cleric 3, sorcerer/wizard 3, witch 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (a blood-filled leech)

Range 5 ft.

Area 20-ft.-radius emanation, centered on you

Duration 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw none; Spell Resistance no

You harvest the dissipating life force of dying or injured creatures. Spectral black tendrils arc from you to all creatures within the area of effect that are dying or suffering from bleed damage, transferring their lost life force to you. The tendrils are immaterial and cannot be



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interacted with in any way, although the spell may be dispelled as normal. At the beginning of your turn, you gain fast healing equal to the total number of creatures so affected (excluding yourself). For example, if there are two dying creatures and one creature suffering from bleed damage within the area of effect at the beginning of your turn, you gain fast healing 3 for that turn.

LIFE SIPHON

School necromancy; Level cleric 4, sorcerer/wizard 4, witch 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, F (a silver lancet)

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one creature

Duration 1 round/level or until discharged

Saving Throw Will negates; Spell Resistance yes

You create a link between you and the target, allowing you to siphon off some of the life energy lost if the creature is injured or dying. The subject takes a –1 penalty to Fortitude saving throws and adds 2 to the

DC of heal checks to stop bleed damage. If the subject drops below 0 hit points, it takes a –2 penalty on rolls to stabilize.

In addition, if the subject takes hit point damage, you gain half the number of hit points lost as temporary hp. Forms of harm that do not involve hit points, such as charm effects, temporary ability damage, level draining, and death effects, do not grant temporary hit points, nor do hit points lost as the result of a lowered Constitution score or negative levels.

The target must remain within the spell's range for you to gain this benefit. If you and the target of the spell move out of range of each other, the spell remains active, but you receive no further temporary hit points until you are once again within range of each other.

SOULSHACKLE CURSE

School necromancy [evil] Level sorcerer/wizard 9, witch 9

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (a black onyx worth 500 gp per HD of the target creature)

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one living creature

Duration permanent or until dismissed (see text)

Saving Throw Will negates; Spell Resistance yes

You claim ownership of a creature's soul, binding it to your will once it is parted from its mortal body.

The target creature is briefly enveloped by a whirling mass of manically shrieking demonic figures. If the creature's true name is invoked when the spell is cast, any spell resistance is ignored and the save DC increases by



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2. If the saving throw or spell resistance is successful, the onyx is destroyed. If the saving throw fails, there is no immediate effect, except that the target feels a sudden chill and experiences a foreboding sense of unease for the rest of its natural life. This has no game effect, but serves as a subtle warning to the target that its destiny has been altered.

Once the target dies, either from old age or other causes, its soul does not depart, but instead remains bound to the body, suffering terrible anguish from being denied eternal rest. After 2d6 months, the soul will come back as a ghost (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*), doomed to remain as such until the power of this spell is broken. Apply the ghost template to the target creature and select specific ghost abilities to be determined by the GM.

Should any attempts be made to return the deceased target from the dead, through such means as *raise dead*, *reincarnation*, *resurrection* and similar spells, the curse corrupts the spell and instead turns the target into an intelligent undead as if you had cast *create greater undead* on it. The type of undead is determined by you when casting of the original spell.

Regardless of the distance between you and the target, you are always aware if the target has been turned into an undead or ghost in this manner, as long as you are both on the same plane of existence. You may scry on the target as if you have familiar knowledge and possess a body part. The target also takes a -5 penalty to Will saving throws to resist your control through the use of Command Undead.

The curse bestowed by this spell cannot be dispelled, but it can be removed with a *limited wish*, *miracle* or *wish* spell. You

may voluntarily dismiss the spell, usually under specified conditions.

TEMPORARY REANIMATE DEAD

School necromancy [evil]; Level cleric 1, sorcerer/wizard 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, F (an onyx gem worth at least 50 gp)

Range touch

Targets one or more recently deceased corpses touched (see text)

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw none; Spell Resistance no
You corrupt the faint echoes of life in recently deceased corpses, twisting them into undeath for a brief period of time. In all aspects, this spell functions as *animate dead*, except in the following ways. The targets must have died within one hour per caster level for the spell to function. The effects of this spell are not permanent. Instead, corpses reanimated by this spell only remain in their undead state for the duration of the spell. Once the spell is over, all targets immediately revert back to normal corpses, falling prone and dropping any held items. Due to the temporary nature of the undead state, a corpse that has been reanimated by this spell can still be brought back to life by *raise dead* or *reincarnate*.

UNHOLY BLOOD

School necromancy [evil]; Level cleric 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. level)

Target one living creature

Duration 1 round/level

Saving Throw Fortitude negates



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Spell Resistance yes

You cause the targets blood to become infused with negative energy. The first time in a round where the target takes at least 5 points of piercing, slashing, or bleed damage from a single attack, a spray of unholy blood strikes a randomly determined square adjacent to the injured creature. The spray deals 1d6 points of negative energy damage per 4 caster levels (maximum 4d6) to any creature in that square, and half that amount of splash damage to all creatures within 5 feet of the spray's target, including the target of this spell. Undead and creatures with negative energy affinity are healed by the spray of blood instead of harmed. Creatures that do not have blood cannot be targeted by this spell.

VAMPLING'S DEMISE

School necromancy; Level cleric 1, sorcerer/wizard 1, witch 1

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (a drop of vampire blood)

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target one mindless undead creature per 3 levels, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration 1 min./level

Saving Throw none; Spell Resistance yes

This spell enables the caster to augment undead creatures with the death throes of vampirings (*Shadows over Vathak: The Colonies- Game Master's Guide*), deformed creatures infused with vampire blood. If an undead under the effect of this spell is brought below 0 hit points due to positive energy, it immediately explodes, dealing 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage to any creature in the same and adjacent squares.

New Feats

SIPHONING SPELL (METAMAGIC)

You can use your spells to absorb life force from your opponents' injuries.

Prerequisite: Spell Focus (necromancy)

Benefit: You can modify a spell to siphon life energy from creatures damaged by the spell. When one or more creatures take hit point damage from the spell, you gain temporary hit points equal to the original level of the spell for each creature injured. The temporary hit points disappear one hour later. More temporary hit points may be gained by the use of additional siphoning spells, but the total number of temporary hit points gained in this manner can't exceed your hit point maximum. A siphoning spell uses a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Spellbook

ECHOES OF THE FINAL HEARTBEAT

(Level 18 Necromancer)

The volume consists of a number of rectangular sheets of linen, of the type used for funeral shrouds, mounted on frames made from human bone. The sheets appear blank until a small quantity of fresh blood is dripped onto the fabric, at which point blood red text and illustrations appear. The individual sheets are bound together by a black silk ribbon.

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Protection *Sepia snake sigil* (Reflex DC 16)

Oppositional Schools Divination, enchantment

Value 3,495 gp (5,845 gp with preparation ritual)

Spells (Spells marked with an * are detailed in this product.)

9th-*soulshackle curse**

8th-*life siphon**

7th-*control undead*

6th-*circle of death*

5th- *bloodhungry haze**, *symbol of pain*,
wall of force

4th- *animate dead**, *bestow curse**, *life siphon**, *wall of ice*

3rd- *feed off the fallen**, *haste*, *lightning bolt*, *vampiric touch*

2nd- *blindness*, *bloodletting blade**, *false life*, *glitterdust*, *resist energy*, *spectral hand*

1st- *burning hands*, *cause fear*, *chill touch*,
endure elements, *feather fall*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement**, *shield*,
*temporary animate dead**

PREPARATION RITUAL

Necrotic Backlash (Su) You infuse your own blood with negative energy to punish those who would dare spill it. Spend this boon as an immediate action when an adjacent creature hits you with a melee attack. The attacker takes 2d6 negative energy damage and is staggered for one round. A Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 your character level + Intelligence modifier) halves the damage and negates the staggered effect.

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