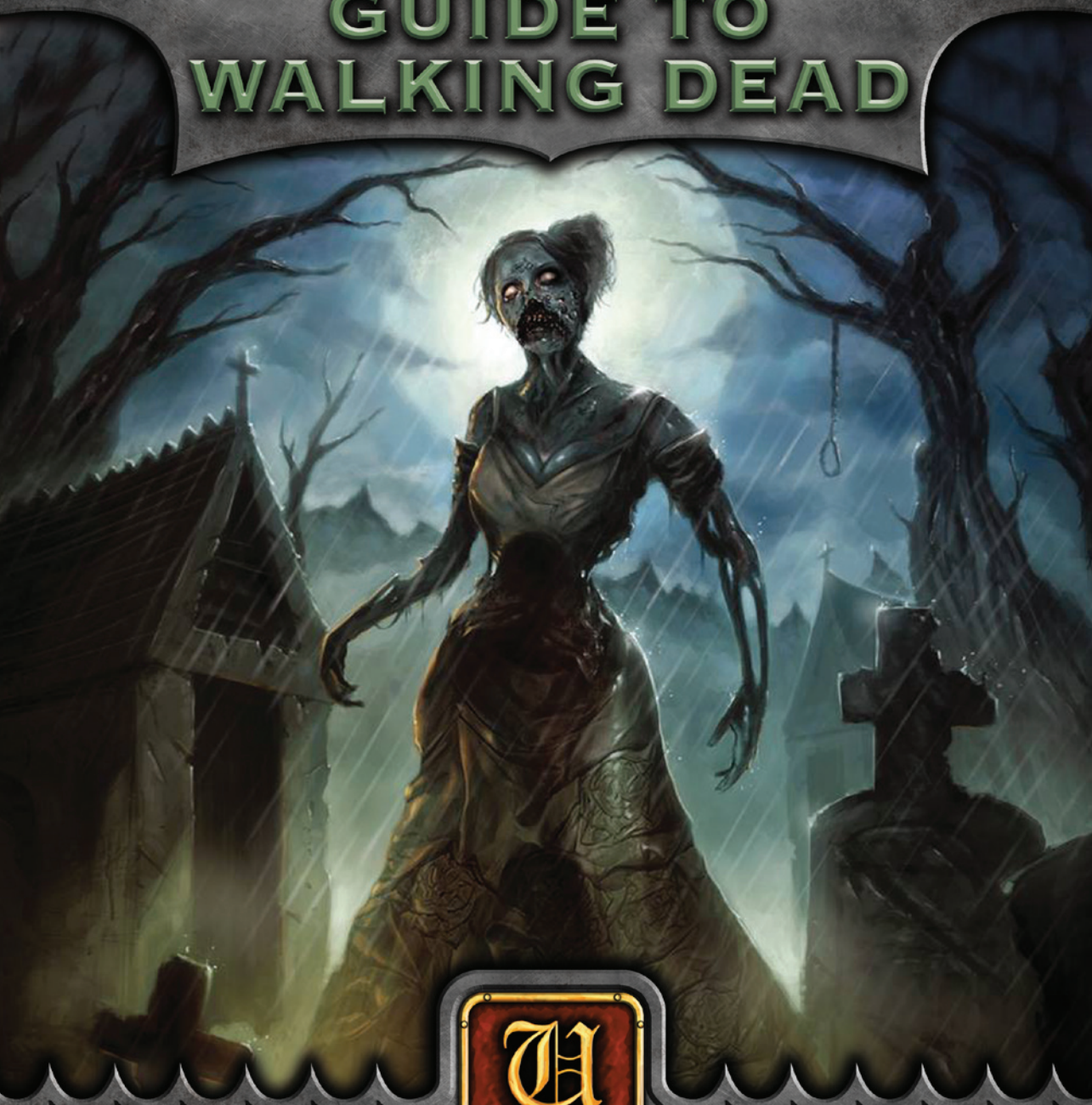


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# GUIDE TO WALKING DEAD



# Leagues of Gothic Horror

## Guide to Walking Dead

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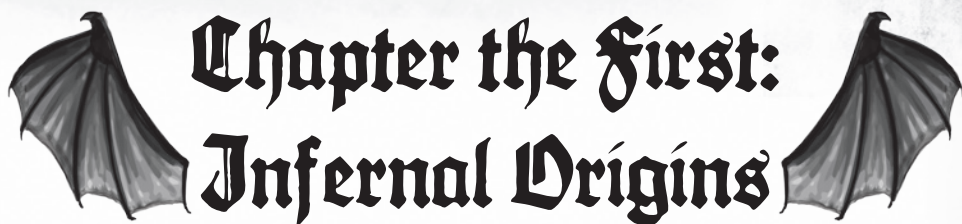
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# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Walking Dead

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# Chapter the First: Infernal Origins

*"Soft flesh is eaten by hard teeth."*

—Isaac Marion, *Warm Bodies*

The Ghost Club's decision to publish a sixth guide to monsters caused much consternation within the Leagues of Adventure. The discussion centered not on the need for a further volume or the dark nature of the proposed contents, but on something as simple as the work's title.

The Ghost Club author had, in his wisdom, opted to group zombies, skeletons, Frankenstein monsters (henceforth "flesh golems"), revenants, and ghouls into the same general category—that of the walking dead.

The few critics who argued that mummies and vampires also qualified as walking dead were hastily silenced with a reminder that i) they had not objected to the earlier works being published without the inclusion of other types of undead, and ii) mummies and vampires are very specific types of undead and undoubtedly worthy of their own in-depth study.

Some members argued that "animated dead" would be fairer to all, since not every corpse had legs. An argument was lodged that not only are ghouls still alive, but that the term "animated" implied a lack of independent thought, something definitely not applicable to revenants, ghouls, or flesh golems.

Ghouls and zombies both need sustenance to survive (as do some but not all flesh golems), and thus "hungry dead" was pitched as an alternative title. Again, there were voices who claimed that such fiends should have been

grouped in with vampires, who most definitely require sustenance.

After much debate, it was decided to retain the original title. Thus it is you come to hold in your hands the *Guide to Walking Dead*.



## Flesh Golems

The original golem was not in any way a member of the animated dead. Formed from clay and modelled into anthropomorphic shape, the golem was an artificial construct under the control of its creator.

History does not record who first coined the term "flesh golem," a term that is both apt and erroneous simultaneously.

On the one hand, a flesh golem, like its clay predecessor, has been shaped by the hand of man—unlike a zombie, flesh golems are stitched together from multiple corpses. On the other hand, a flesh golem is a sentient creature, albeit one of often limited intellect and filled with unholy rage.

The first flesh golem was created by Victor Frankenstein sometime in the early 19th century. Born in Italy and raised in Switzerland, young Frankenstein developed an interest in the medieval alchemists, more specifically their search for the fabled elixir of life. Information concerning his research into the metaphysical is sketchy—rumors of laboratory notes and hearsay among certain elements of the scientific community are all that remains of the scientist's work.

Records from the University of Ingolstadt

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clearly indicate the young student studied chemistry, though other sources lead one to believe he used electricity (perhaps in conjunction with chemicals) to give life to his creation. Despite the claims of some, there is absolutely no evidence that Frankenstein resorted to arcane means—his work may have been beyond the understanding of even other enlightened men, but it was still firmly grounded in scientific principles.

While Frankenstein referred to his creation as a monster, demon, and fiend, it was intelligent, articulate of voice, sensitive, and possessed a desire to learn. In some ways, it was perhaps better than many mortals born of conventional means. It is sadly true that the creature did ultimately commit murder and turn its thoughts toward revenge, but this was perhaps inevitable given the method of its birth and its possessing features so ugly that all of society shunned it, including its creator.

Several scientists have attempted to emulate Frankenstein. Although a few have succeeded in restoring life to dead flesh, all such experiments have also been absolute failures. Of the examples that have followed, not one has possessed the higher intellect of the original.

Little better than animals, the monstrosities are slaves to their base emotions and lack all concept of right and wrong—they do as they please, with absolutely no regard for the consequences of their actions. It is these abominations that truly deserve the title monster.

These vile creatures are also known as “cadavers,” “stitched,” and, more cruelly, “Frankenstein monsters.”



Ghouls are native to Arabian mythology. Sometimes described as evil spirits, possibly related to genies, and other times as corporeal monsters, they haunt graveyards and battlefields, where they scavenge for human flesh. Although they featured in *One Thousand and One Nights*, ghouls first entered the English language in 1786 with the publication of William Beckford's novel *Vathek*.

In the parlance of the Leagues of Adventure, a ghoul is a mortal man or woman, albeit

one warped physically and mentally by the repeated consumption of human flesh. Ghouls are thus cannibals.

Cannibalism is likely as old as mankind. In many instances it was born out of necessity, especially during lengthy sieges or harsh winters, or after shipwrecks. In others, it occurred due to religious or cultural tradition.

While modern scholars might raise an eyebrow at ancient historians' insistence that in entire tribes living beyond civilized lands practiced cannibalism by choice, cannibalism has not been confined to the unenlightened past.

During the Congo Arab War (1892-1894), the Batetela allies of the Belgians cleared the battlefield of the dead and wounded to fill their stomachs. Although there is no indication Europeans partook of human flesh, they certainly took little action to prevent cannibalism among their troops. One Belgian officer wrote home stating that, *"It's horrible but exceedingly useful and hygienic ... I should have been horrified at the idea in Europe! But it seems quite natural to me here."*

True ghouls, although they are never referred to by that title, have plagued civilization for time immemorial. Even today, reports of their existence occur in newspapers around the globe. In most cases, the reports refer to the perpetrators as “degenerates,” a term casually thrown around by reporters to describe anyone they consider they less educated or cultured than themselves. Alas, it is also often bandied about as a racial slur.

Given their chosen diet, ghouls are rarely found lurking at the heart of civilization. Instead, they dwell in remote yet populated areas, such as the Scottish Highlands, Appalachian Mountains, or Florida Everglades, places where the disappearance of a stranger every few months raises few eyebrows.



Taking their name from the Latin *reveniens* (“returning”), revenants are literally those who have returned from the grave.

It is important to note that revenants appear in folklore as both apparitions and as



# Infernal Origins

walking corpses. This work deals solely with the latter, the former having been covered in *Guide to Apparitions*. While it is theoretically possible for a revenant to rise from the grave to complete some noble deed left undone in life, every documented case to date involves revenge or the terrorization of the living.

Through analyzing folklore, the Ghost Club has divided revenants into two categories. The first are those who were wronged in life and now seek vengeance from beyond the grave. The second were wicked in life and desire only to continue their evil ways, even after death.

What little folklore exists concerning folklore primarily comes from Great Britain and Ireland, though certain creatures from Scandinavian folklore, such as the *aptrgangr* ("again-walkers"), may qualify as revenants.

That modern scholars have access to these centuries old tales is primarily thanks to William of Newburgh, a 12th century historian. One tale describes how a man of "evil conduct" grew suspicious of his wife's activities. Hiding in the rafters of their house, he caught his spouse being unfaithful with a younger local man. Incensed at what he was witnessing, the man lost his balance and fell to his death. Despite having a Christian burial, the wicked man rose from the dead each night.

Several murders occurred before the locals finally acted. The man's grave was opened, his corpse hacked at with spades, and the remains dragged outside the village, where it was finally burned on a pyre.

Most British stories confuse revenants with vampires. This is forgivable considering that some revenants do require blood to survive and that beheading them or cutting out their hearts are tried-and-tested means of destruction. To be fair though, these methods would end the activities of most corporeal undead. It is certainly true that incorporeal revenants do possess the ability to drain blood, but to date, no physical revenant has displayed the same power or yearning.

One common supernatural ability attributed to revenants is that of pestilence. The Abbot of Burton, writing in the early 12th century, tells of two peasants who rose from the dead with their coffins supported on their shoulders. They would walk around the town, bang-



ing on doors and calling for the occupants to join them. Within a few days, those summoned forth by the revenants died of disease.

## Skeletons

Scholastic globetrotters have long been divided on the first recorded mention of animated skeletons.

Most agree that their existence stems from the Middle Ages, when skeletons were portrayed as the personification of death. In Western Europe, for instance, the Grim Reaper is portrayed as a hooded skeleton. Traditional is relative, however, for the popular image dates only from the 16th century, being attributed to a woodcut by Hans Holbein the Younger. Skeletons in the guise of death also appear in various woodcuts and paintings depicting the dance of death (or the dead).

Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting, *The Triumph of Death* depicts an army of animated skeletons in a landscape of death and destruc-

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tion—countless humans have been slain, trees are shown devoid of leaves, fish float dead in a pond, and shipwrecks litter the sea.

To art historians, it is simply a pictorial representation of the ultimate victory of death over all things. A small few globetrotters have suggested the painting might be taken from life—though where an army of skeletons might have arisen and slaughtered a settlement without being recorded elsewhere in writing or art remains a mystery they have yet to solve.

Another faction suggests an earlier origin. During the quest for the Golden Fleece, Jason was required to undertake a series of tasks. One of these was to sow a field with the teeth of a dragon. Each of these promptly grew into a warrior. Although Greek texts refer to these warriors only as *spartoi* (a word that translates only as “sown men”), certain modern scholars claim that they were skeletons rather than soldiers of flesh and blood.



The first recorded use of the word zombie in the English languages dates back only to 1819, when Robert Southey used the word in his *History of Brazil*. In that particular instance it did not refer to any form of undead, but to an indigenous Brazilian king, Zumbi, who rebelled against the Portuguese invasion of his homeland. Although believed to be immortal by his followers, Zumbi was summarily executed by beheading in 1695.

The word *zombi* stems from Haitian French and refers specifically to a corpse given a semblance of life through magic rituals. More specifically, it is the work of a *bokor*, a practitioner of black magic (see *Guide to Black Magic*).

The creation of zombies is not confined to Haiti. The movement of slaves and the merging of Catholicism and African beliefs into Voodoo has seen the art spread onto mainland America, specifically in and around New Orleans.

It is possible, though not yet proven beyond reasonable doubt, that *zombi* has its origins in Central and Western Africa, where the Kongo language is dominant. In this ancient tongue can be found the words *nzambi*, which

translates as “god,” and *zumbi*, which means “fetish.” Since many slaves dragged across the sea to European colonies in the Americas were from this region, it is very plausible that they brought their native beliefs with them. Over time, the words took on a different, though still related, meaning.

Oddly, native Central and West African cultures lack creatures similar to zombies in their mythology. They are, however, found in South Africa. Here roam the *maduxwane* and *xidachane*, mindless walking corpses most often animated by black magicians to serve as slave laborers. Unusually, the sorcerer cannot animate any old corpse for this purpose. In order for the ritual to have any chance of working the corpse must belong to somebody killed by the magician.

## An English Plague?

The question of whether or not zombies have ever appeared in Great Britain has proved a vexing one. For sure there have likely been isolated instances, with walking dead animated by fell magicians learned in the black arts, but what of a large-scale incursion?

The only evidence hinting at such an event was found among papers written by Jane Austen. Whether the few remaining pages are genuine or not has never been satisfactorily proven. More importantly, since their supposed discovery a decade back they have subsequently gone missing.

Those who support the story claim the author was witness to a zombie attack on London and the surrounding territories at the end of the 18th century. Having written up an account, Austen attempted to have the piece published. A complete newspaper blackout by the government, coupled with no publishers’ desire to print such lurid work, ensured it never saw the light of day. By all accounts, Austen removed the horror elements, reworked the story into a more suitable form for the age, and had it published as *Pride & Prejudice*.

Such stories should always be taken with a large pinch of salt, for surely if a mass of animated corpses descended upon any large city in this green and pleasant land then no amount of government interference could ensure total silence.



# Chapter the Second:

## The Nature of the Damned

*"Not all the magic of earth is benevolent."*  
—Alden Bell

In this chapter we look at the various means by which walking dead can be created, their motivations, their dietary requirements, and methods by which a globetrotter can identify the nature of his foe. For those who through choice or fate must face off against the undead, there are suggestions for ways of defending against their attacks and ultimately destroying them.

### Creation

As the old saying goes, the road to Hell is paved with good intentions. No matter the intention behind the act of necromancy that spawns one of the walking dead, it is ultimately an act of wickedness.

### Methods

Laymen initiated into the Leagues of Adventure often possess scant knowledge of the occult. In their minds, clouded as they are by the imagination of penny dreadful authors, the creation of walking dead can only be attributed to magic of the darkest sort or the perversion of science. While these are undoubtedly the most common methods, and are thus discussed first below, the Ghost Club has recorded four other means by which the dead may walk.

### Magic

When it comes to animating the dead, magic is the oldest, the most common, and the most misunderstood method.

Raising the dead is not an easy proposition for a sorcerer. Not only is the ritual rare, but it requires a thorough understanding of the magical arts. Even if one masters the ritual and has sufficient magical acumen to channel the power, damaged or decayed corpses make the ritual harder to complete successfully. The creation of animated skeletons is reserved only for the most powerful magicians (or those prepared to weaken themselves physically by drawing additional magical energy or committing blood sacrifices).

Contrary to popular belief, the Raise Dead ritual is not limited solely to practitioners of Black Magic. Several Old Ways religions have a version of the ritual, though arguably they are faiths with a darker nature.

Rituals are not the only means by which someone can raise the dead. Some vampires possess the ability to animate corpses yet are ignorant of the magical arts. While a small few globetrotters theorize that such vampires are somehow able to channel a portion of the fell energy that flows through their veins into corpses, most attribute their gift to a deal with the devil.

Certain occult relics may also be used. The most well-known of these is Powder of Lazarus, though various similar powders, oils, and pastes exist under a variety of names.

Regardless of the method employed, undead created through magic are *always* mindless entities, slaves to their creator's will.



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## Zombie Astral

Zombies exist in two distinct forms—those that exist as a corporeal shell and those that exist only in spirit form. Because of this dual nature, zombies in Haitian Voodoo are seen as incomplete entities, missing as they are either a body or soul.

By binding a zombie astral—as ethereal zombies are properly known—into a physical object, a magician can bestow another with a short-term benefit, such as increased health or physical prowess, enhanced knowledge of a particular skill, or improved wealth. Once the zombie astral's power is used, the spirit departs.

In game terms, the creation of a zombie astral is nothing more than a trapping of the Spirit Binding ritual.

Globetrotters or NPCs who want to animate the dead through arcane arts require either an occult artifact to do the work for them or, more commonly, the Magical Aptitude Talent, 4 levels in the Magic Skill, and knowledge of the Raise Dead Ritual.

Use of the Raise Dead ritual permits only the animation of zombies and skeletons.

## Weird Science

The use of weird science to animate the dead can, without much doubt, be attributed to Victor Frankenstein. Whatever his intentions, he is the father of what some within the Leagues have dubbed “weird necromancy.”

Although it ultimately matters little to the end result, scientifically animated corpses are birthed through chemicals, electricity, or a combination of both. Exotic components and methodologies may be employed, and experiments may be shrouded in an air of the mysterious, but there is no room for the arcane in any shape or form.

The creation of walking dead through science is not a quick or easy path. Depending on his preferred method, the scientist must be versed in chemistry and/or the study of electricity. Furthermore, he must possess

an understanding of medicine, with an eye toward anatomy. Even then, it still requires a spark of genius (or perhaps madness) to turn idle dreams into stark reality.

Dabblers, those with only a limited understanding of science behind reanimation, are quite capable of creating a zombie—a mindless husk that slavishly obeys orders. Only those with true and deep knowledge are capable of creating sentient beings from corpses. In most instances, the end result is a flesh golem, a rage-filled monster that has no place in society. Only on the rarest occasions is a corpse restored to life as an intelligent and caring creature.

One major difference separates mindless zombies and skeletons animated through magic and those birthed through weird science—duration. Unless the ritual is repeated at regular intervals, the undead are destined to collapse back into an inanimate state after 24 hours. Those who owe their existence to weird science, while they may require regular nourishment in the manner of a mortal, have no preset expiry time.

Whether or not animating the dead can ever be called an ethical act is beyond the scope of this work, and is thus left in the hands of the individual weird scientist and globetrotter.

In order to raise the dead through weird science, characters need either a weird science artifact or scientific knowledge. In the latter case, this means the Weird Science and Spark of Life Talents, and levels in Medicine and appropriate Sciences.

Through weird science, a character can create zombies, skeletons, and flesh golems as living creations.

## Cannibalism

In many cultures, cannibalism is a taboo, even if undertaken in life-and-death situations. Others might understand the need to survive and the steps one will take to ensure survival, but those who have partaken of human flesh forever carry a social taint.

In other cultures, cannibalism is part and parcel of life, often playing an important role in religious or social practices. These cultures are typically lower down the technological

# The Nature of the Damned

ladder and live in remote areas of the world. Even among their ilk, cannibalism is governed by various rules—one does not simply murder the nearest human just to sate one's appetite. Typically, such cannibalism involves the eating of enemies (sometimes to gain a portion of their strength) or deceased relatives.

Ghouls, who are of course living beings, are the only known creatures whose existence can be attributed solely to cannibalism. Obviously not every cannibal becomes a ghoul. Those forced to consume human flesh in order to survive some terrible hardship more often than not never desire to taste it again. Even in cultures where human flesh is regularly eaten, ghouls are a rarity.

Although it has yet to be proven beyond doubt, the consensus among globetrotters is that only a deep-seated psychological desire to consume human flesh can transform one into a ghoul. It is an unholy craving no other substance can sate. Unlike with other entities described in this book, ghouls are not created in one particular instant or event. Instead, they gradually lose their humanity. At what point the human existence ends and the ghoul's begins varies immensely from case to case.

Whether they feast on carrion or commit murder to satisfy a lust for fresh meat, ghouls quickly drift toward a nocturnal lifestyle. During the early stage they seek to conceal their activities out of a fear of reprisal (and in some cases shame). Later, it becomes pure instinct to use the shadows for cover.

As their feasting continues, they become something less than human in both mind and body. Jaw muscles grow tougher in order to rip meat from the bone, eyes enlarge to take advantage of starlight, skin grows pallid from lack of sunlight, and, in many cases, the ghouls develops the habit of walking on all fours.

Years spent hiding underground or living in shadows eventually leads to an intolerance toward sunlight. Often solitary, many ghouls eventually lose the capacity for true speech. For most, their verbal communication is purely bestial, consisting of mewling, growls, and the like. Some retain the ability to utter a few words, most commonly to lure potential victims to their doom.

The end result is something that, while still mortal, has no place among either men or beasts.

## Curse

In some ways, a curse causing one to become one of the walking dead is little different from the Raise Dead ritual. After all, both are obviously magic and appear to achieve the same result.

One obvious difference is that a curse is uttered against the living. Without this caveat, the whole point of the curse is rendered moot—the victim must live with the knowledge that he will not rest easily after death. Typically, victims rise as an intelligent zombie within a few days of death.

In rare instances, the curse actually prevents a mortal from dying of old age. This apparent





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blessing comes with a terrible cost—the continued aging of the flesh without the grace of death. After aging to the point where he would normally have died, the victim transforms into a true member of the living dead.

His flesh rots on the bone, albeit usually at a reduced rate, until he is ultimately a walking skeleton, while his mind remains untouched by the passage of time. The latter is yet another aspect of the curse that separates it from the Raise Dead ritual—the victim retains his full intelligence and is thus fully aware of his unnatural condition.

One tale, supposedly stemming from the Golden Age of Piracy, tells of the crew of the *Annabelle*. A band of pirates, they were cursed after stealing a Mayan artifact from a temple. The crew appeared fully human except in moonlight, when their undead nature was revealed in all its ghastly horror.

All but the most powerful curses contain a means of ending the enchantment. For instance, if the curse was borne from stealing an idol from a temple, then returning the object typically ends the curse. Should the victim already be a member of the walking dead when the curse ends, then he dies a second (and hopefully final) death.

Few modern magicians possess either the skill or the knowledge to condemn the living to return as an animated corpse after death. More likely, the curse is laid down by some ancient artifact or powerful enchantment laid down in ages past.

## Willpower

It requires an immense amount of willpower to fetter one's soul to the mortal realm and extend one's existence as an apparition. To anchor one's soul to one's corpse *and* animate the dead flesh demands not only a superhuman will but also intense emotions.

Since negative emotions are generally stronger and more frequently associated with death, it is usually these that dominate the resultant walking dead. Driven by their emotions, these horrors are possessed of cruel intellect. To date, this is the primary method by which revenants are created.

## Contagion

One unusual way of becoming a member of the walking dead is to suffer an injury from a contagious zombie. Thankfully such vile creatures have proven extremely rare, and it is to the great benefit of mankind that the status quo remains. Were such contagion permitted to spread in this age of rapid steam train and airship travel, humanity as a whole would be imperilled.

Although cases of infection have proven few and far between, the Leagues have gathered enough intelligence to deduce there are two separate strains of disease.

The first, referred to among globetrotters as the “dormant strain,” remains inactive within the victim's body until the point of death. Only a detailed analysis of the victim's blood (requiring a Medicine: Diagnosis roll at Difficulty 3) reveals any sign of infection. Unfortunately, there is no way to combat the disease in its dormant state—even weird science antibiotics have proven useless. Unless some suitable curative is created and administered, the victim is condemned to join the walking dead.

At the point where death occurs, the disease becomes active. Anywhere from a few minutes to an hour later, the corpse rises as an infectious mindless zombie fixated only on biting others and spreading its ghastly contagion.

The second variant is known as the “active strain” and is far more insidious. From the moment of infection the victim begins a rapid slide toward death. While a small few have thrown off the infection before death occurs, most succumb within a few short hours. Unlike the dormant strain there is no delay between death and reanimation—the moment the former ends, the latter begins. Globetrotters are advised to procure a quantity of antibiotics.

The standard method of passing on the contagion is through a bite. With regard to either strain, it has been theorized that any bodily fluid can act as a medium for infection. Globetrotters fighting suspected infectious zombies should be advised to keep their mouth and nose covered and quickly bandage any wounds, no matter how small and insignificant they might seem.

# The Nature of the Damned

## Physical Appearance

Mention the term walking dead to a layman and they are likely to conjure in their mind's eye the image of a partially rotten corpse clawing itself free from the earthy shackles of the grave. It is an enduring image, and most certainly one with many precedents, but it is not the only form taken by walking dead.

For those who must fight such fiends, telling the various undead apart is essential for long-term survival.

It is important to note that while all walking dead are preserved against decay (see **Diet** below), they may not have a preserved physical appearance.

## Fresh

The walking dead looks like it was buried only yesterday—which may in fact be true. At a distance, or concealed by fog or heavy clothing, a fresh walking dead may be mistaken for a living soul. Close proximity usually dispels this mistaken opinion, for even in near perfect condition a fresh corpse carries with it the unmistakable pallor of death. Known as *pallor mortis*, this whitening of the skin occurs within a quarter hour of death.

Of course, there are medical conditions that can cause a living person to look extremely pale—a state of deep shock or cardiovascular problems, for instance. Since revenants are capable of intelligent conversation, they may use illness as a means of disguising their undead condition. Fortunately for the living, there is one aspect of death that is harder to disguise.

The second stage of death, *algor mortis* ("coldness of death") is much harder to mistake, assuming one makes physical contact with the subject, of course. With all natural biological processes ended, the walking dead's temperature begins a steady decline until it matches the ambient temperature. A revenant may don gloves to limit contact with the living, but a surreptitious globetrotter can usually find a way around such obstacles.

Novice globetrotters should note that a fresh physical appearance relates only to the state of decomposition—a fresh corpse may

## Physical Flaws

Zombies, especially rotting ones, flesh golems, and skeletons need not be in perfect order. By adding a Physical Flaw, even a mindless minion suddenly stands out from the crowd of fellow walking dead and can become a memorable, albeit brief, foe.

Suitable Flaws are Clumsy, Crippled, Dwarf, Lamé, Obese (obviously not skeletons), One Arm, Poor Vision, and Young.

still bear ghastly injuries. In such cases, it would be difficult to mistake the walking dead for one of the living.

## Preserved

A preserved corpse is one that has been protected against natural putrefaction by natural (such as freeze-drying) or artificial (such as ritual mummification) means.

While it is possible a walking dead may have been mummified in the elaborate style of the ancient Egyptians, it is more likely they have been embalmed using chemicals. Not only to such individuals share traits with fresh corpses, but their skin has a waxy hue.

## Rotting

This is the natural appearance of most zombies and many revenants. Putrefaction involves a number of stages and thus rotting is a broad category. The skin varies in tone from green to black, the eyes are typically milky, extremities may be missing, and what flesh remains may be in an advanced stage of rot, revealing the skeleton beneath.

Doctors have long known that the rate of decay is not a constant. Natural variables such as location, temperature, humidity, light exposure, and weather can result in vastly different rates of putrefaction, as can factors such as the corpulence of the cadaver, cause of death, and the clothes it is wearing.



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## Skeletal

The final stage of death is skeletonization. As the name implies, it is the stage when all flesh has rotted away, leaving only the bones. Depending on conditions, this may occur anywhere from a few weeks to many years after death. Since this is a work of Gothic Horror rather than reality, the Gamemaster can ignore this figures—if the story demands a centuries old corpse to be rotting rather than a skeleton, then that's what the globetrotters face.

## Intellect

Regardless of how the walking dead was animated or its physical appearance, when it comes to intellect there are just two categories—enslaved and free-willed.

## Enslaved

Until recently, the Leagues referred to walking dead with no capacity to reason as mindless. Following several lengthy field studies, it was decided that enslaved was a more apt title.

One reason mindless was dropped is simply because it is not accurate. For sure, while zombies and skeletons—the only truly enslaved dead—cannot converse, function in society, or solve even the simplest problems of their own volition, they do possess a spark of intellect. Duller than even the lowliest human brain, it is nevertheless enough to enable them to understand and follow the orders of their creator. In terms of intelligence quotient, they are perhaps on par with dogs.

Enslaved walking dead are commonly found in servitude to their creator. No matter the task assigned to them, they are utterly powerless to refuse his commands. Most are employed as guardians or slave laborers.

There are limits to their mental aptitude, of course—a zombie might well be able to open a door, wield a pickaxe, or pull a lever, but tasks such as driving an automobile or performing rudimentary first aid are most definitely beyond its grasp. This not entirely down to reduced intellect—zombies also have diminished physical coordination, as evidenced in their stumbling gait, making them ill-suited to tasks requiring manual dexterity or coordination.

Other zombies answer not to the whims of a magician or weird scientist, but to base emotions. This is most common among those created by curses or contagion. In place of obeying spoken orders, these abominations seek only to feed (perhaps one of the most basic instincts) or to pass on their infection (which alienists have suggested is little different to the human urge to reproduce). While they cannot be controlled by mortals, these unfortunate creatures are no less enslaved.

As far as can be deduced, enslaved zombies and skeletons have no memories of their former life. Indeed, it is doubtful that anything of the zombie's former self survives the transition into death.

Globetrotters should be aware that enslaved-



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ment of intellect does not imply stupidity—an elderly ghoul might be a slave to its hunger, but it is a cunning creature with animalistic instincts.

## Free-Will

Possession of free intellect does not mean the walking dead cannot be a slave to someone or something more powerful than itself. Rather, it means the fiend is not a mental slave, having as it does the capacity for independent thought, deductive reasoning, and abstract philosophy, not to mention the ability to feel and recognize complex emotions.

In the same way that human intellect ranges from a level where one can barely function to that of genius, free-willed walking dead display the same range of cognitive abilities. As a rule of thumb, however, higher intelligence is commonly found only in ghouls and revenants.

While it is impossible for an enslaved walking dead to develop free intellect without outside interference (such as by augmentation by a weird scientist necromancer), the reverse occurs with great frequency in ghouls. Over time, their higher intellect diminishes, leaving them slaves to their unholy appetite.

## Motivation

When it comes to goals and desires, the walking dead are arguably the least complex of the various supernatural entities. Even those with the capacity for independent thought are inevitably doomed to slide into a single, all-consuming base goal.

## Duty

When it comes to motivation, walking dead raised through necromancy or weird science are almost always bound by a form of duty. A walking dead's sense of duty is not the same as a globetrotter's, though. Among the living, duty refers to obligation and doing what is right and required, no matter the personal cost. A person might have plans for their life, but responsibilities take priority.

Walking dead the Duty Motivation do not act in accordance with any moral fortitude or because they have made a vow—they do so because they have absolutely no choice. Thus, among the lower echelons of animated dead, Duty actually refers to mindless obedience. Few, if any, undead with this Motivation will ever earn Style points.

As with intellect, obedience can refer to strong emotions rather than the commands of a master. This is especially true of flesh golems. While many do seek revenge against their creator, this is often a short-term goal, one easily accomplished. With that urge satisfied, the flesh golem begins its reign of inflicting misery and pain on others. Revenge has now given way to emotional enslavement.

Similarly, a contagious zombie has only one overwhelming desire—to create more of its kind by infecting the living.

While Revenge is the primary Motivation among revenants, historical records clearly indicate that some wicked souls return from the dead simply to terrorize the living (often through spreading disease). Rather than Revenge, these revenants have the Duty Motivation.

## Revenge

The desire for vengeance can be an extremely powerful motivator. No undead wants to see those who wronged it stand trial for their crimes—the fell and corrupt creature wants to see them suffer mentally and/or physically. Ultimately craving the death of their victims is not a universal trait except among revenants.

The lust for vengeance is rarely, if ever, found among enslaved walking dead. A mindless zombie might go on a bloody rampage against those who wronged it in life, but true revenge takes time, and that requires the capability to plan ahead, a trait found only among those with free-willed intellect.

## Survival

The basest instinct of any living creature is to survive, and the most obvious way to achieve that is to eat. Despite being a primal urge, this Motivation is more commonly found among



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## Starving A Zombie

Although the sample zombies and skeletons in this work are different, those presented in *Leagues of Gothic Horror* share identical statistics. Since skeletons do not require food, acquiring living flesh doesn't present their creator with any difficulties. So can you create a skeleton by deliberately starving a zombie? Well, yes and no.

A zombie denied food but kept animated for a prolonged period will eventually lose all of its flesh. However, that occurs only when the zombie reaches -5 Health through starvation. At this point the flesh rots from its bones.

However, it also becomes a different creature, and that comes at a price. The zombie automatically collapses into a pile of bones, ending whatever ritual or weird science experiment gave it unlife in the first place.

It can be animated again, this time as a skeleton, but it also has the higher difficulty modifiers for being a skeleton.

ghouls rather than zombies and skeletons. While zombies must be fed (see **Diet** below), most do not seek flesh of their own volition.

Zombies with this Motivation are likely to have risen from the grave as a result of a curse, a punishment for some ghastly transgression in life. Until the end of time (or destroyed by globetrotters), the zombie exists only to eat the flesh of the living.

## Other

While the above Motivations are by far the most common, nothing prevents a free-willed walking dead from possessing a more interesting Motivation. This is typically the result of a curse, where the undead has been charged with some task it must complete before it can rest. For instance, a thief may be required to return every coin he stole from a temple.

Although this is a form of Redemption for the thief, his methods will not be gentle or particularly subtle. He is undead, a damned

soul, and he is driven to complete his task by the most expedient means. Likewise a revenant risen to protect its material wealth from robbers (or perhaps greedy family members) won't put its money in the bank—it will safeguard it near its grave and fight like a demon to ensure none of it is stolen.

As with Duty, there is no benevolent side to these creatures, nor are Style points likely to be awarded. Our thief earns no Style points if he “convinces someone to seek forgiveness for what they have done,” for example, whereas the miser is unlikely to “make a lot of money.”

## Diet

Any investigator of the supernatural worth his salt knows that vampires must consume blood in order to survive, and that ghouls are cannibals, but it is little known that every member of the walking dead has some nutritional requirements.

Unlike regular corpses, the walking dead (ghouls excluded) can prevent further decay of their corpses through their diet. Thus, a revenant with a fresh appearance may never suffer the ravages of putrefaction, no matter how long it endures. Similarly, a rotting zombie does not automatically become a skeleton, even if it somehow remains animated for decades.

## Feeding

Simply put, the undead must consume food for its long-term survival. Depending on the type of walking dead, the process takes one of two distinct forms.

**As Mortal:** The walking dead requires regular intake of food to maintain its health in exactly the same way as a mortal must eat to live. As with the living, the walking dead requires one pound of flesh per week to avoid suffering a point of lethal damage from starvation.

Ghouls only gain sustenance from devouring meat. Before any physical transformation begins, the ability to consume greens aids in avoiding detection. They can digest fruit and vegetables, though they provide absolutely no nourishment. Revenants that need to feed must

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consume blood in the manner of a vampire—it is the only method available to them.

Unlike humans, whose lifespan is fixed no matter what or how much they digest, walking dead are supernatural creatures. A ghoul, a creature that is technically still a living being, can endure for centuries, possibly even millennia, as long as it can find enough to eat. Such a creature would be wretched beyond description however, and could not be mistaken for one of God's creations, let alone a human being.

**Avoid Decay:** Magic or weird science may give a zombie unlife and maintain its unholy existence for a day, but prolonged contiguous periods of animation eventually take their toll. Arcane or scientific energy can keep the undead animate, but they cannot prevent decay. Unless the walking dead eats at least one pound of living flesh each *day*, it suffers a point of lethal damage as it rots at a greatly accelerated rate.

## Sustained

Rather than sustaining its existence and state of preservation through the consumption of food, walking dead in this category do so solely through the arcane or scientific energy involved in their creation.

Sustained by this invisible and infinite source, no method known to mortals can cut the undead off from its source of nourishment and cause it to suffer starvation. Since the energy source is infinite, the walking dead are preserved at the state of decay they exhibited at their creation.

In game terms, walking dead of occult or scientific origin created with the rules for living constructs are *usually* sustained.

## Improvement

Many supernatural creatures grow more powerful with age. Given that the walking dead category covers a number of very different beings, it should come as no surprise there is no one answer.

Ghouls and flesh golems learn and gain experience as they age. Zombies with free

intellect can also improve themselves in a similar manner. In game terms, this means the Gamemaster can create these walking dead with higher Ally, Follower, or Patron levels than the stock variants to create more challenging opponents for the globetrotters. It is also helps keep them on their toes, for they can never judge the power level of an opponent based purely on its type.

No matter how long they remain animated, enslaved zombies and skeletons can never improve themselves—they simply lack the intellect to glean anything for new experiences. Chapter Five of this book presents a number of new walking dead.



It is a sad fact of our chosen path that more than one promising globetrotter has met his demise by failing to correctly identify the nature of his enemy. Belief that one is facing a lowly flesh revenant when the villain is actually a vampire can very quickly prove fatal, as can mistaking a fleet-footed flesh golem for a shambling zombie.

## Research

The first thing a globetrotter must do is correctly identify the nature of his foe. As well as his own senses, the globetrotter must learn to piece together information from eyewitnesses. To that end, charisma and a personable nature are just as vital as book smarts or a big gun.

Even relatively trivial facts can help narrow down the type of monster one is stalking. For instance, if a death occurred during the day, then the fiend is most unlikely to be a vampire, even if he sucked his victim's blood. More likely he is a revenant in corporeal form. Similarly, a zombie seen to work complex machinery or pause and make a decision on its own is likely the creation of a curse rather than black magic or perverted weird science.

There are no absolutes, of course. Even with the most diligent research and questioning, a clue may be misinterpreted or a walk-



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ing dead may prove to have unique abilities. Whenever one is fighting the supernatural, one must be prepared for the unexpected and adapt accordingly. Still, there are some basic steps that should be taken.

## Nature of the Incident

That a globetrotter is investigating a suspected walking dead is because something has happened that has attracted, or been brought to, his attention. The nature of the incident and the scene where it occurred hold clues as to the nature of the foe.

For instance, let us imagine that the globetrotters have been called to investigate a murder. Unless the victim is missing chunks of flesh, one can deduce the killer is unlikely to be a ghoul. True, it might have killed to conceal its secret, but such information will only become known at a later stage in the investigation.

While relentless, most zombies lack the strength to smash door a stout door. Hence, destruction of property, especially heavy objects, is more commonly the result of a rampaging flesh golem.

If something was stolen, then it is wise to assume that the killer was working for a more powerful villain—criminal masterminds, whether mundane, arcane, or involved in weird science, rarely sully their hands with trivial crimes. In this instance, the attacker is probably a zombie. As in conventional criminal cases, why the villain sought to steal the object might take considerably more time to deduce.

## Eyewitnesses

Unfortunately, experience has proven that eyewitnesses are notoriously unreliable.

Witnesses to the walking dead may be in severe shock and require help from an alienist before they can reveal anything of use. Others may blank the incident from their mind, placing a poorly-concealed mundane spin on obviously supernatural events. Those with a reputation to protect may be adamant that they saw nothing unusual for fear of suffering a stain to their social standing or being mocked by their peers.

Do not fall into the trap of believing that only the rich and powerful have reputations to protect—even the poorest souls have a standing among their own kind.

Most witnesses cannot tell a ghoul from a flesh golem, having thankfully seen neither beforehand. It is thus essential to wring every scrap of information concerning the monster's appearance in order to identify the nature of the foe. Mistake a shambling zombie for a hulking flesh golem and your investigation may come to a premature and bloody end.

One should always enter an investigation with an open mind rather than any preconceived notions of what the villain might be. This is especially true when questioning eyewitnesses. One must be careful to avoid leading the witness with poorly phrased questions. Do not ask, "Did the suspect have a pallid color?" Instead, ask the witness to describe the suspect's skin color.

## Written Records

Except in the case of revenants, and more rarely ghouls, library research is next to useless—it matters little what a zombie was like in life if the person is now a mindless meat puppet to some Satanic sorcerer.

When a revenant is back for revenge there is a story somewhere in his background, a reason as to why he refuses to sleep quietly. The sooner one can reveal a name, the sooner one can begin investigation possible reasons for his return. The obvious place to begin is with the death certificate.

Unfortunately, learning the revenant's name may require a lengthy investigation. Unless the walking dead was witnessed by someone who recognized him and has nothing to lose, globetrotters are likely to encounter a wall of silence—since the revenant is likely out for revenge, its intended victims are hardly likely to want their part in a scandal made public.

## Intellect Level

Identifying and categorizing a zombie's intellectual level is a quick fire way of deter-

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mining whether it is the true villain or a pawn dancing to the tune of a more powerful foe or its base instincts.

The presence of a master obviously opens up a second line of investigation. Determining how an animated zombie or skeleton was created is not an easy task, but such knowledge allows one to prepare ahead for the inevitable confrontation with its master. Those animated by magic are often daubed or branded with mystic signs, whereas ones borne from weird science may have electrodes in their neck.

Reports that all zombies try to kill their foes through biting them are fanciful at best. As has been repeatedly proven, most zombies use their hands to pummel foes. A zombie that repeatedly tries to bite you may simply be hungry or obeying orders, but it is wisest to assume it is contagious.

## Revenants

When dealing with a suspected revenant, the walking dead may not be the only monster. As discussed above, most revenants were evil in life and continue to be so in death. In cases where revenge is their motivation, there must have been an earlier crime. Hence, there may actually be one or more mortal villains.

Take, for example, the case of an academic or inventor who returns in life to kill his former associates. While it is possible they were the direct (or indirect) cause of his death, it is equally possible they cheated him. Perhaps they published his ground-breaking scientific research after his death under their own names, thus denying the revenant the glory he sought in life.

In the former case the victims deserve at least to be hauled before the courts. In the latter example, they should be publicly named and shamed for their caddish behavior.

More often than not, aiding the revenant is the surest way to ensure it returns to its grave and stays there. Of course, once a revenant has committed murder then it has proven itself a true monster beyond redemption and should be swiftly destroyed—investigating the reason behind the haunting can wait.



## Protection

As a rule, walking dead lack the insidious mental powers of apparitions and certain vampires, and the diabolical rituals of black magicians. Instead, they are reliant on surprise, physical strength, and weight of numbers to defeat their foes—or rather their master's foes, as is more often the case. Fortunately for globetrotters, the walking dead are rarely as physically impressive, or as violent, as werewolves.

Against shambling walking dead, those incapable of walking any faster than a slow walk, by far the best defensive is to maintain a healthy distance. Capable of only 2 mph when running flat out, these creatures present a danger only if they manage to surround or trap their prey.



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This is where investigation comes in handy, for there are zombies that, while they look identical to their plodding cousins, are capable of enhanced speed. Desiring to introduce a touch of levity to those who hunt down the walking dead, the Ghost Club refer to these as the “running dead.”

One method of increasing one’s odds of survival when fighting any walking dead is to fit Ballistic Defense Plates (see *Weird Science Compendium*) into one’s clothing. Even the lightest protection greatly reduces a zombie’s rancid bite or skeleton’s bony punch.

Be wary of the desire to engage them in melee. Alone or in small groups there is minimal risk to a skilled globetrotters, but in larger groups they can quickly overwhelm an individual, especially one who lacks the training to engage multiple foes simultaneously.

As ungodly as they might be, the vast major-

ity of walking dead are not affected by religious objects—crosses give them no pause, nor does holy water sear their flesh. Likewise, hanging garlic around one’s neck or daubing wolfsbane oil on one’s skin will do naught to thwart their implacable progress.

## Destruction

There are exceptions to every rule, but for the most part the walking dead have no special immunities to damage or exacting means by which they must be killed.

Yes, it is impossible to stun or tire them into submission, but they do not require bullets cast of precious metals or sharpened sticks rammed through their chests to end their existence. That said, they can be relentless foes, shrugging off wounds that would cripple a living opponent.

By far the easiest means to destroy one of the undead is to repeatedly inflict traumatic damage with missile weapons. Here is where the intelligence one gained earlier comes into play once more.

A zombie, while it can absorb a great deal of damage, is a slow moving, relatively weak opponent with no grasp of even the most rudimentary tactics—all it does is advance toward prey as fast as possible, flailing idly if it reaches a barrier it cannot cross. Standing around blowing one apart is hardly sport, but it is something one can do all day, especially if one has a good vantage point.

By comparison, a flesh golem is an intelligent creature. More importantly, it can absorb roughly twice the damage that would kill a typical mortal. Make the first shot count, for once you reveal yourself it will find cover and seek a means to advance on you unseen.

One advantage over fighting black magicians, vampires, or shapeshifters is that not even the walking dead can be mistaken for a mortal, at least not after a rudimentary medical examination of the earthly remains. Of course, while globetrotters may have nothing to fear from law enforcement officers trying to arrest them for murder, explaining why they were shooting or hacking apart a corpse raises more than a few awkward questions.



# Chapter the Third: Forsaken Lairs

*"He then took me into his laboratory and explained to me the uses of his various machines, instructing me as to what I ought to procure and promising me the use of his own when I should have advanced far enough in the science not to derange their mechanism."*

—Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*

When one mentally pictures the walking dead, the resultant image is likely to involve them shambling through an overgrown, fog-shrouded graveyard. Similarly, imagine a necromancer and one might mentally conjure a tribal sorcerer chanting fell words in a dark grove or a mad scientist pulling levers and tapping dials in the basement of a storm-cloaked castle. In this chapter, we take a look at typical lairs and how (if at all) the Refuge Resource applies to the walking dead and their insidious creators.

Unlike globetrotters, monsters and non-player character villains do not have to purchase Refuge: Size—they have whatever size Refuge their background and the adventure require. For instance, a tribal sorcerer in darkest Africa likely has a simple hut (Refuge: Size 0), whereas a European scientist with aristocratic ties might have a large townhouse (Refuge: Size 1) or small castle (Refuge: Size 3) at his disposal. Any bonus Resources garnered through Refuge: Size should be used to further improve the creature's Refuge.

Note that there are always exceptions to the rules, and the needs of the adventure should always take priority. If the Gamemaster

wants a ghoul to live a seemingly normal life and occupy a grand house in a well-to-do part of town then that's where he lives. Likewise, a mad scientist might have his laboratory set up in a seemingly derelict warehouse in a different part of the city from his respectable residence.

## Walking Dead

It should be noted that the average skeleton or zombie occupies the lair of its creator rather than having its own refuge. Near-mindless, these lowly undead are utterly incapable of creating or modifying their surroundings of their own accord. With that in mind, this section details only the walking dead capable of creating true lairs.

### Flesh Golem

This section applies only to flesh golems who have been abandoned by their creator or who have summoned enough willpower to escape their dominance.

Flesh golems have been dealt a cruel fate. On the one hand they are drawn toward humanity like a moth to a flame. On the other, they seek only to inflict pain and misery on those who shun them for their fell appearance. Having little need, or indeed desire, for home comforts, flesh golems favor places in the heart of towns and cities.

Here, in abandoned tenements, empty warehouses, boarded up townhouses, and the



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poverty of the rookeries, the sounds of humanity going about its mundane existence both soothes the creature's need for company and fuels its undying anger toward the living.

Few flesh golems are concerned with a large Refuge—even those who occupy warehouses claim only a small portion. As such, Refuge: Size can be ignored. Flesh golems neither appreciate nor desire the finer things in life. Their homes are shared with lice, fleas, and rats and littered with debris and filth; their beds are piles of rags or clothes; and any furniture is likely to be in a state of gross disrepair.

Most lack the intellect to use tools in any meaningful way or understand the written word, and the thought of creating something artistic is utterly alien to their rage-filled minds. Any equipment is likely to be left behind by the lair's former occupants. For instance, tools left behind when a workshop was abandoned

or a library in the home of a reclusive scholar murdered by the golem. Such trappings are nothing more than background flavor, though, and needn't be purchased as a Resource.

Flesh golems have no birth certificates, legally own no property, and do not work for a living. To that end, there is no paper trail a globetrotter can investigate to unearth their lair. Similarly, flesh golems generally lack the intelligence to fit sturdy locks or set traps. Combined, these mean flesh golems get little mileage from the Refuge: Security Resource.

## Ghoul

Save for a few unique specimens, ghouls haunt the edges of society. They lurk in unsanitary places, such as the filth-choked sewers beneath bustling streets or in long-abandoned moldy tombs on the fringes of graveyards.

With regard the latter, their Refuge is likely a single mausoleum and thus no larger than Size 0. Depending on how far it roams and the territory it protects, the former may extend for miles, granting the ghouls Refuge: Size 3+.

At the heart of the labyrinth of dark, dank tunnels, though, is always a single chamber where the creature feels safest. It is here that the gnawed and cracked bones of its many meals lie discarded.

Whether or not a ghouls has invested in an Equipment bonus depends on its cognitive abilities. Initially, a ghouls may favor some of the trappings of its former life. An academic, for example, may have a small library, while an artist may attempt to hold onto the shreds of humanity through a studio.

Eventually, and inevitably, higher brain functions give way to bestial instinct. As the ghouls transforms into a pure hunter, its equipment is forgotten and left to rot. While it grants the ghouls no game mechanics, having the globetrotters find the remnants of equipment is a reminder that the monster they hunt was once a member of society.

Similarly, even in its most bestial state, a faint glimmer of the ghouls's former humanity might remain. While it does not directly benefit from them through an Equipment bonus, perhaps the scholarly ghouls instinctively hoards



## Forsaken Lairs

books. These would not be placed in orderly fashion on shelves as with a library, for the ghoul has no desire to read them (assuming it is even capable of reading).

Ghouls do not have a public identity, and thus discovering anything about their present whereabouts through scholarly research is pretty much impossible. Any Security rating refers instead to the difficulty of stumbling across the creature's lair, gaining access, and/or navigating through it.

For instance, a ghoul occupying a mausoleum has the benefit of a heavy stone door. The Refuge: Security rating might thus give a penalty to Strength rolls to move it aside. The ghoul may also sweep away any sign of its passage around the tomb and refrain from disturbing vegetation, thus granting a penalty to Perception or Survival: Tracking rolls to detect anything amiss. Unless the ghoul lives in the only mausoleum in the graveyard, the globetrotters may struggle to find its lair.

Ghouls have a keen sense of smell. Likely the occupant knows the normal odors in and around its lair in the same manner as a globetrotter knows the location of objects in his house. When something is out of place, it stands out like a sore thumb. The Security rating could thus act as a penalty to intruders' Stealth rolls.



Whether he animates the dead through ancient and bloody rituals or taps into the wonders of modern technology, the villainous necromancer needs a place to work. Most, if not all, have some form of Refuge.

Gamemasters seeking more general advice on the lairs of magicians should consult the *Guide to Black Magic*.

Note that there is no such thing as a typical necromancer, and thus neither is there a typical lair. With regard magical necromancers, the stock image for many is that of a Voodoo priest or priestess. But what of the refined gentlewoman who plays bridge every Friday night, bakes succulent cakes for the church sale, and calls upon Satan to raise the dead? Or the well-

mannered pharmacist who, in secret, tinkers not with mortar and pestle but with bones and sinews?

### Equipment

Raising the dead is no mean feat, and necromancers need all the help they can get. Thus, Refuge: Equipment is the most important of the three subcategories.

While a necromancer can benefit from most any Skill, logically the bonus should be put toward either Magic or Medicine, depending on how the necromancer gives life to the dead.

The exact trappings vary according to the necromancer's needs. A Voodoo priest might have a collection of bone amulets, drums, and sacred powders, while his European cousin uses black candles, horned skulls, wands, and mystic circles. The scientific necromancer may have a vat of bubbling chemicals in which corpses are immersed, a lightning rod connected to a weather vane on the roof, or a complex dynamo powered by his trusty assistant. Don't let real world physics get in the way of your story—if you want your deranged necromancer to animate the dead by use of a sonic oscillator, then his laboratory has one.

Other Skills a necromancer might choose to augment through Refuge: Equipment include Academics, Linguistics, and Science.

### Security

For necromancers, Refuge: Security serves two purposes. First, it makes it difficult for intruders to locate and infiltrate the lair. Second, it prevents experiments from escaping.

How investigation rolls are hampered by the Resource depends on the type of necromancer as much as where they reside.

For instance, in remote corners of the world, where superstition holds sway and people know that magic is real, fear may prevent the locals from speaking to strangers. The modifier thus applies to Diplomacy, Intimidation, and Streetwise rolls. Even if the globetrotters can persuade the frightened inhabitants to talk, the necromancer may live deep in a swamp or jungle. In such cases the modifier



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may affect Athletics, Expedition, or Survival: Navigation rolls to reach the site.

A necromancer living in a town or city may not be particularly hard to track down. Likely they own or rent property, have a job outside of necromancy, enjoy a social life, and so on. Of course, any necromancer worth his salt will have his arcane workshop or scientific laboratory either concealed behind sturdy locked doors (or maybe even a secret door) or in a different building altogether. That people should have locked doors and refuse to open them to curious strangers is hardly a crime, especially in the Victorian era, when privacy is to be respected.

In instances where the necromancer lives in one location but works out of another, he may have obfuscated any paper trail (such as by purchasing or renting it through a third party or in a different name), thus hampering

Bureaucracy or Investigation rolls to discern if the villain has any additional property at his disposal.

## Size

Although it involves the spoken medium, roleplaying is also about conjuring images in the minds of the players. Falling back on stereotypes when designing a necromancer's lair is actively encouraged, as most players have likely seen horror movies. For instance, no mad scientist seeking to raise the dead is complete without a laboratory in a forbidding castle, while a voodoo priest requires either a hut (in a swamp) or a Southern style mansion (in a state of disrepair).

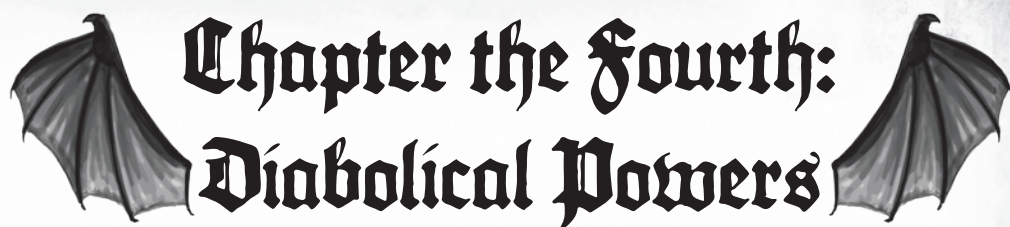
## Free Resources?

When choosing a Refuge: Size Resource, don't bother spending precious slots on it. Even if you are creating a Patron 5 villain with six Talents or Resources to assign, just give the cad whatever level you deem appropriate. At the end of the day, the size and style of his chosen refuge are nothing more a backdrop for action or social scenes.

We do not recommend granting free levels in Refuge: Equipment or Refuge: Security, however. Unlike Size, these Resources are tied to actual game mechanics.

Whether a necromancer should gain bonus Resources from his Refuge: Size Resource is a matter of personal taste. Some Gamemasters might consider this cheating, since the villain is gaining something for free. Others won't care. We suggest a middle ground, where Refuge: Size bonus Resources can be applied only to Refuge: Equipment or Refuge: Security.

Let's look at an actual example. Our villain is a typical mad scientist who lives in a small castle. This equates to Refuge: Size 3, which gives him a bonus Resource. Since he requires a laboratory, he gains Refuge: Equipment 1 for free. His home has no Refuge: Security—either he isn't worried about intruders, or his castle is in a state of disrepair, with doors missing and holes in the outer walls.



# Chapter the Fourth: Diabolical Powers

*"Nothing is impossible to kill. It's just that sometimes after you kill something you have to keep shooting it until it stops moving."*

—Mira Grant, *Feed*

This chapter describes common and unusual strengths and weaknesses found among the walking dead.



## Common Abilities

Here we discuss the abilities commonly possessed by each of the four types of walking dead. Globetrotters should be aware that "commonly found" does not mean "always found."

### Zombies/Skeletons

Zombies and skeletons are arguably the weakest of the many supernatural horrors, but countless globetrotters have reported how difficult it is to actually end their unnatural existence. Neither is particularly tough, but neither do they feel pain. Hack off a skeleton's arm or blow a hole through a zombie's chest and the monster will keep shambling forward, utterly oblivious to the damage. They can be knocked back, and even knocked down, by the impact of a weapon, but a blow that would knock the wind out of a mortal for dozens of seconds is casually brushed aside.

Skeletons have the added advantage of having no flesh. Not only does this make them a

slightly smaller target, but piercing weapons may do no more than chip a bone or pass harmlessly through the rib cage.

Zombies and skeletons may be slow, but they do not tire. Outrunning them over a sort distance is extremely easy for most globetrotters, but when the sprint becomes a marathon the odds are in favor of the undead. While a human needs rest and sleep, the undead can walk indefinitely.

While it should be obvious, we must state that zombies and skeletons require neither air nor sleep. Thus, they cannot be suffocated or drowned, and they are able to carry out their orders day and night without need for a break.

The magical energy, electricity, or chemicals animating a standard zombie not only fail to prevent decomposition, they actually speed it up. In order to prevent rapid decay, a zombie must consume one pound of living flesh each day. That the flesh must be living presents a major headache for necromancers.

A captive human, cow, pig, or other large mammal may feed a zombie for many weeks, but likely the unfortunate victim will die of infection, blood loss, or shock long before every scrap of his living flesh is consumed. Purchasing livestock at an unusual rate may raise eyebrows and provide globetrotters with a clue to the existence of a necromancer.

### Flesh Golems

Unlike zombies, flesh golems are capable of feeling pain. This is not to say they are any



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easy to destroy, however. Not only are these hulking abominations capable of ignoring the stun effect of minor injuries, but they are notoriously robust creatures.

## Revenants

Regardless of their appearance, corporeal revenants are rarely more physically powerful than they were in life. What makes them formidable foes is their ability to return from the dead time and time again. Blast one to pieces with explosives, dissolve the remains in acid, pass it through a threshing machine, and the revenant will still return the next night with nary a scratch on its flesh.

The revenant's only other supernatural power is its unerring ability to track foes over truly impressive distances. Those targeted by one of these vengeful fiends may earn a brief respite by traveling elsewhere across the globe, but ultimately they must keep moving to avoid being hunted down.

## Ghouls

As has already been stated, ghouls are not undead. Although relatively sturdy creatures, they have no special resistance to weapons.

When forced to hunt live prey they favor ambushes, striking from the shadows and clawing at their intended meal before it has a chance to react. Ghouls do not need to see or hear an approaching victim—their sense of smell is especially acute.

The growing aroma of perfume or sweat provides a clear indication not only of the target's distance, but also its general type. For instance, perfume would indicate a lady, a relatively weak target in most instances, whereas a heavy odor of sweat might indicate a dockworker or other laborer, a meal more likely to resist unless killed quickly.

The second advantage a ghoul possesses when attempting to ambush prey is its natural (one might say unnatural) stealth. These carrion feeders have been known to walk over loose gravel and dry ground vegetation with-

out any noise. Ghouls appear to be well aware of shadows, making the use of any darkness to conceal their presence.



While it is fair to say that walking dead of the same type share many common traits, grouping them together, especially in terms of determining strengths and weaknesses, is a serious misjudgment. Great variation is found even among specific types of walking dead. It is for this reason that we urge globetrotters to study their enemy before charging in with guns blazing.

For each level in Patron a walking dead has, including Level 0, it may take one of the special abilities below. This ability is in addition to its regular Talent or Resource improvement. Note that in some cases the special ability is itself a Talent. This allows a walking dead villain to effectively gain two Talents for each additional level of Patron if it so desires.

Unless restricted by prerequisites, a lesser walking dead, one with a Follower or Ally level, may take one of the following abilities, but does so in place of a regular Talent or Resource. For instance, a standard zombie (Follower 0) might lose its High Pain Tolerance but gain Kill the Brain, making it much harder to destroy. A Follower 1 zombie, on the other hand, would retain High Pain Tolerance and gain a second Talent or special ability.

In instances where an ability described below shares the same game mechanics as a Talent, even if it has a different name than the Talent in question, the ability stacks with that Talent when applicable.

## Other Powers List

The special powers below allow the Game-master to create unique walking dead. Using them keeps the players on their toes, as they can never be sure exactly what abilities a foe has at its disposal.

Where a Patron prerequisite is given, it refers to the minimum level of the creature. Such

## Diabolical Powers

abilities are more powerful than the standard ones, and can thus be used only by powerful and unique villains.

### Brain Food

*Prerequisite:* Ghoul

Ghouls require flesh to survive, but for some, devouring the fresh, creamy-textured brain of a victim brings surprising benefits. As the brain is digested, the ghoul gains some of his meal's memories and skills.

Tracking whose brain the ghoul ate and what skills the victim might have known is unnecessary. For ease, a ghoul with this ability gains the benefits of the Jack of All Trades at Level 1, regardless of its Intelligence rating. The ghoul can take this ability a maximum of three times, gaining another level in Jack of All Trades each additional time.

### Burning Touch

*Prerequisite:* Must have died from burns; zombie or skeleton

Through magic or science, heat suffered during death is retained in the creature's body and can be channeled through its hands.

Instead of punching an opponent, it may attempt to burn them. This requires a Brawl touch attack opposed by the victim's Active Defense. Damage is inflicted is 1L caustic, as if caused by a burning torch.

### Burrow

The walking dead can burrow through soft or loose material, such as soil or sand.

Zombies and skeletons, which have no need to breathe, leave no tunnel behind them when burrowing. Ghouls and flesh golems both require oxygen. They can remain underground for a number of combat turns equal to their Body x 2 rating. After this, they take 1N damage per additional combat turn as they slowly suffocate.

When burrowing, the creature moves a distance equal to its base swimming rate per combat turn. A walking dead that takes this ability again retains its full Move rating while

burrowing. Note that taking the Swim Talent does not increase burrowing speed.

Concealed beneath the ground, the walking dead can be detected only with hearing-based Perception rolls or specialist weird science equipment. In the former case, the Difficulty depends on the depth of the burrowing corpse.

### Carrier

*Prerequisite:* Zombie or ghoul

This walking dead is a carrier for a particular disease. Regardless of whether the creature is alive (such as a flesh golem or ghoul) or truly dead (zombie), it is totally immune to the specific infection.

Available are diseases are camp fever, cholera, and smallpox (see *Leagues of Adventure*). If you have the *All for One* supplement, *Riche-*





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*lieu's Guide to Healthcare*, you can also select from bubonic plague, consumption, hepatitis, malaria, and pneumonic plague.

No matter how much time is spent in its company, merely being in close proximity to the infected undead does not risk infection. Whatever infection it carries, the germ lives only in the creature's mouth. Anyone bitten by the fiend must make an appropriate Body roll to avoid infection.

## Contagious

*Prerequisite:* Zombie

The zombie carries a deadly contagion, though its effects only become apparent when a victim dies.

Any living creature bitten by a contagious zombie is automatically infected. When a bite victim dies (of any cause), he or she automatically animates as a zombie. This usually takes around 10 combat turns (one minute), though sometimes the transformation is much quicker (one combat turn). Removing the victim's head immediately after death prevents animation as one of the walking dead.

Ordinary medicine has yet to provide an antidote against this infection, though weird science might provide a solution. Unfortunately, the only way to test an elixir is on an infected victim, who would then have to be killed to determine whether it worked. Experimentation on animals is the most ethical means, but it still means capturing a contagious zombie or infected animal.

## Crush

*Prerequisite:* Flesh golem

Flesh golems are immensely strong. While most favor punching opponents to a bloody pulp, a few take great delight in crushing the life from foes.

The golem can crush the life out of those it grapples. If the golem successfully pins an opponent, it can begin squeezing on the next round. Instead of making an Attack, the golem automatically inflicts lethal damage equal to its Strength. Being pinned, the victim can resist only with his Passive Defense.

**Additional Levels:** A golem can take this ability an additional three times. It gains an additional +2 bonus to its Brawl rating at each level.

## Gnaw

Zombies are known for the propensity to bite victims, though gnawing on opponents is not restricted solely to them.

The combat turn in which it makes a successful grapple, the walking dead may make bite attack as a free action. Each combat turn the hold is maintained, the zombie may make a bite attack with a +4 bonus. This counts as its Attack action for the turn.

## Independent Body Parts

*Prerequisite:* Zombie or skeleton

When a normal zombie or skeleton loses a limb, it becomes inert, a lifeless object of flesh and/or bone. A walking dead with this ability is more fragile than normal—for each wound it takes, a limb is automatically dismembered. In the case of this entity, the limb remains animated, though it has limited mobility.

A severed leg, for instance, can hop about and kick out. Typically the leg remains on the ground and attempts to sweep out its opponents legs. This count as a trip trick. Arms can crawl and continue to claw at victims. Decapitated heads can do little but roll around and moan, though they can bite anyone who ventures too close.

For ease, individual limbs retain the base statistics of the host zombie or skeleton, save for Size, which drops to -1. This increases their Defense to 3. Each severed limb can take but a single wound before being destroyed.

## Infected Bite

*Prerequisite:* Zombie or ghoul

Zombies and ghouls are not renowned for their oral hygiene. Stringy bits of decomposing flesh get trapped between their teeth, resulting in all manner of nasty bacteria spawning.

Each time a mortal is bitten by an undead with this ability, he or she must make a Body x 2 roll (Difficulty equal to the number of wounds suffered in the attack) or the wound

## Diabolical Powers

becomes infected. While infected, the natural healing rate is halved. That is, the globetrotter heals one nonlethal wound every two days and one lethal wound per six days of bed rest. An infected globetrotter with the Quick Healer Talent would recover at the standard rate.

Fighting off the infection requires a Body x 2 roll each day. The Difficulty is 2 and ten successes are required before it is cleared from the victim's system.

### Iron Grip

The physical strength of a walking dead ranges from that of an average human to supernatural levels. Whatever its normal strength level, this particular undead has a superhuman grip. The fiend makes grapple attacks as normal, but has a +4 bonus to resist the hold being broken by its opponent.

This ability has proven particularly effective when the walking dead is part of a pack—it grabs and pins an opponent, allowing other undead to strike the victim with greater ease.

### Iron Teeth

*Prerequisite:* Ghoul

Stories of ghouls cracking open fresh bones with their teeth or gouging huge chunks of flesh from corpses are largely erroneous. In most cases, a ghoul's jaw muscles and teeth are no different than an ordinary human's. Of course, the aforementioned stories would not have started were there not a grain of truth.

The ghoul has powerful jaw muscles and sharp teeth. In addition to its claws, it has a bite 0L attack. The bite ignores one point of Passive Defense from armor.

### Kill the Brain

*Prerequisite:* Zombie

Sometimes plugging a zombie full of lead or dismembering it is not enough. Certain fiends can be slain only by destroying the brain.

The zombie ignores all damage except from called shots to the head and area effect caustic damage (such as being immersed in a vat of acid).

## Are there Walking Dead in the Bible?

Did Jesus not raise Lazarus of Bethany from the dead (John, Chapter 11)? Both Matthew and Acts speak of a day when the dead, both righteous and wicked, shall rise from the dead. Surely these refer to walking dead?

At first glance, and especially to the uneducated mind or sensationalist thinker, that may appear to be the case. A thorough reading of the relevant passages reveals that this is totally erroneous, however.

In the former case, the resurrection of Lazarus was a divine miracle, not the insidious will of some black-hearted sorcerer or early weird scientist. Lazarus returned not as a walking corpse condemned to serve Jesus as a slave, but to true life, as he had enjoyed before his demise.

Similarly, the mass rising of the dead at the end of days refers to imperishable living spirits rather than corruptible flesh and blood.

### Living Dead

*Prerequisite:* Ghoul

Ghouls hide from society because of their profane appetite and their hideous appearance. While a ghoul with this ability can do nothing about the former, it can at least move among humans. No matter its age, the ghoul not only appears as it did before becoming one of the walking dead, but it never appears to grow any older. The ghoul also retains its intellect, never devolving into a bestial fiend.

### Moldy

*Prerequisite:* Rotting appearance; zombie

Some undead stink of grave mold; others are literally infested with mold. This undead falls into the latter category.

Whenever the creature is wounded, all living creatures within five feet must make a Body x 2 with a Difficulty equal to the number of



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wounds inflicted by the attack. Any successes allow a person to quickly close his mouth and avoid sucking in a lung-full of choking mold spores. For each point by which the roll is failed, the opponent is automatically stunned for one combat turn.

Note that although the zombie reeks of grave mold, the odor itself is harmless. Indeed, unless the undead also has the Stench ability or Lesser Stench weakness it is barely discernible unless in close proximity.

## Rage

*Prerequisite:* Flesh golem

Flesh golems are created knowing only pain and anger. For most, the latter manifests only as constant roaring and lashing out at targets of opportunity. Some specimens, though, are capable of flying into a terrifying and destructive rage.

As a free action, the flesh golem can exert (take one point of nonlethal damage) to gain +2 bonus to all Strength-based Skill and Attribute rolls until the end of the combat turn.

The creature may purchase this ability up to three times. It gains a +4 bonus to all Strength-based Skill rolls at second level and a +8 bonus at third level.

## Raise Dead

*Prerequisite:* Intelligence 1; Patron 0

Typically, zombies and skeletons lack the mental capacity to animate the dead through any means, flesh golems lack the patience to focus on such a complex and draining endeavor, and ghouls don't see the point of animating a potential meal. A walking dead with this ability possesses necromantic power. It can raise the slumbering dead from their graves without any knowledge of magic (black or otherwise) or weird science.

The target corpses must be within a few hundred feet (line of sight is not required) and cannot have been previously destroyed in combat. That is, a walking dead with this profane ability cannot keep animating the same remains over and over.

The maximum number of minions the crea-

ture can animate in a combat or scene is equal to its Charisma + Willpower. These near-mindless servants have a maximum Follower level equal to the summoner's Patron level. For example, a Patron 1 flesh golem could summon Follower 1 zombies or skeletons.

The power that animates the shambling corpses is temporary and exacts a heavy toll on their rotting corpses. At the end of the combat or scene in which they were animated, they crumble to dust, rapidly decompose, shatter, or are otherwise irrevocably destroyed.

## Reform

*Prerequisite:* Patron 0

Some undead must be blasted to pieces or struck in the brain in order to slay them. Some must be hacked apart limb by limb. Others require immersion in acid or being set on fire. In certain rare cases, not even these methods are enough to guarantee the fiend will not shrug off the cold embrace of death and rise again.

If the walking dead's Health is -4 or above at end of a combat turn then it automatically regenerates back to full Health and regrows any severed limbs. In order to slay it, the unholy abomination must be reduced to -5 Health or lower in a *single* combat turn.

## Second Death

*Prerequisite:* Revenant that died a violent death

The most common reason for the creation of a revenant is to avenge its untimely, and often unjust, death. A revenant with this ability has both a boon and a bane.

On the plus side, it can only be injured by the original method of its death. For instance, if the revenant was beheaded, then only called shots to the head with a blade or axe inflict any wounds. One burnt at the stake can only be harmed by fire. Poisoning presents a few problems for globetrotters, as do more extreme (and historical) methods of execution, such as having a heated poker inserted into one's rectum (as supposedly happened to Edward II).

Determining the required method is usually impossible just by looking at the revenant.

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Instead, globetrotters must research the creature's history as a living person in order to deduce the manner of its initial demise.

On the down side, the revenant lacks the otherwise common ability to return from death over and over again. Once it is put down in the required manner, it remains in the grave for eternity.

## Stench

*Prerequisite:* Rotting appearance; flesh golem, ghoul, or zombie

This power is both a boon and a bane to the walking dead. A charnel stench hangs heavily over the undead, causing all living creatures who come near to it to gag. Any living creature within 15 feet of the creature suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls so long as it remains in range. Even backing away has a lingering effect—the stench pervades the nostrils for a number of turns equal to 7 - Willpower rating after retreating from the area of effect.

There are ways to block this, of course. Nose plugs or a scarf soaked in vinegar, for example, negate the vile stench.

While it produces no negative effects for those who smell it at a distance, the foul stench carries downwind. The range depends on the strength of the breeze. Unless a stronger scent masks their fetid odor, walking dead with this ability suffer a -2 penalty to Stealth rolls.

## Summon Animals

*Prerequisite:* Ghoul

As an Attack action, the ghoul can emit an unearthly howl. The call is answered by a single swarm of rats or a number of individual feral dogs equal to the ghoul's Charisma + Willpower. The creatures must be in the nearby vicinity (they do not appear out of thin air). The creatures are completely beholden to the ghoul for the remainder of the combat or scene, after which they depart.

## Sunlight Resistance

*Prerequisite:* Ghoul

The ghoul is no longer pained by sunlight. It lacks the Pained by Sunlight weakness.

## Swarm Host

*Prerequisite:* Rotting appearance; zombie

It is not unusual to see maggots and grave worms crawling on or burrowing through a zombie's flesh, but this specimen is host to a colony of voracious creatures.

Once per combat or scene, the zombie can unleash a swarm of beetles, and other such small creatures as an Attack action. This can be done only when the zombie is engaged in close quarters combat.

The swarm does not bite. Instead, it crawls and wriggles over the target, distracting him. The opponent suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls until the swarm is removed. This requires a Dexterity x 2 roll (with the -2 penalty) and counts as an Attack action. The roll can be repeated as often as necessary.

## Trackless

Whether this ability is natural or supernatural has been debated by globetrotters many times. Whatever the cause, the walking dead leaves virtually no trace of its passage, even through snow or soft mud. Survival: Tracking rolls to follow the creature suffer a -8 penalty.

## Wall Walker

*Prerequisite:* Zombie or ghoul

Bolting ground floor doors and shuttering windows provides adequate defense against many forms of supernatural creature. In a few instances, it is wise to ensure upper floor windows are also firmly secured.

The walking dead can crawl up walls or across ceilings at half its usual Move distance. It may also Run, but again only at half speed.

If it suffers knock back or knock down while climbing, the creature must make a Dexterity x 2 roll with a Difficulty equal to the damage dealt or lose its grip.



The walking dead have many inherent strengths, but they are not without their weak-



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nesses. This section describes both common weaknesses, those found in all specimens of a specific type of walking dead except on very rare occasions, and unusual weaknesses found only in scant examples.

## Common Weaknesses

### Anger & Pain

Flesh golems may not be particularly bright, but they possess enough intelligence to understand their life is a living hell. Bound to the will of their creator, constructed from multiple corpses, and in constant physical pain, it is little surprise they are in a state of constant anger.

When screamed at by a person because of their frightful looks, or when attacked by a globetrotter, flesh golems lash out blindly, caring little for their own safety. This instinctive reaction, arguably a potentially suicidal one when confronting an armed opponent, makes them poorly suited to being outside of their creator's direct influence for long periods.

This propensity for instinctive violence makes flesh golems poor tacticians. Where a more intelligent, less pain-ridden, foe will alter its tactics according to the situation, for flesh golems the only concern is to batter foes to death as quickly and violently as possible.

### Mindless

As described elsewhere, zombies and skeletons lack any form of higher intellect. This makes them ideal slaves, for they do not question orders and have no capacity for rebellious thought at being misused by cruel masters.

With zombies and skeletons possessing no higher brain functions, they cannot be reasoned with, bribed, or conned. Even the simplest organisms have an innate fear of fire, and thus it may be possible to intimidate one of the walking dead.

Unfortunately, being mindless also comes with several problems. They lack imagination and the capacity to reinterpret orders to suit

changing conditions. Aside from simple objects, they are incapable of manipulating tools. They can crank a handle, or swing a pickaxe in a mine, for example, but there is no hope of training one to use a weird science pneumatic drilling machine (unless it involves a repetitive task, such as cranking a handle).

### Pained by Sunlight

A ghoul's greatest weakness is its intolerance of sunlight. The pain one feels when touched by the sun's rays is not harmful, but it is distracting. This is rarely of great benefit to globetrotters, for ghouls hide away in tunnels and crypts while the sun is in the sky.

### Slow

More than one globetrotting wag has joked that rather than being the walking dead, skeletons and zombies should be renamed as the "shambling dead." As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the walking dead may shamble along at a sedate pace, but they never tire. Where their ambulatory deficit is truly felt is in combat and when chasing prey over short distances.

### Slow Reactions

The combination of a low intellect and no manual dexterity leaves zombies and skeletons very slow to react, especially in combat. With the undead invariably acting last in a combat turn, globetrotters have the tactical choice of whether to engage their opponents or retreat to a safe distance before the undead can react.

## Unusual Weaknesses

Gamemasters may add these weaknesses to walking dead to create unique and interesting opponents for the globetrotters.

### Aura of Corruption

The walking dead exudes an aura of corruption. This is not the same as a foul odor, for it cannot be discerned by conventional hu-

## Diabolical Powers

man senses. Animals, however, possess higher senses. Herbivores flee as soon as they catch wind of the monster's corruption, while carnivores adopt an aggressive stance.

In addition, milk curdles in its presence, fresh fruit rots, maggots and worms crawl from the ground, and flowers and grass wither at the undead's passing.

### Fragile

*Prerequisite:* Zombie, skeleton, or flesh golem

Advanced decomposition or poor workmanship leaves the undead in precariously fragile state. Each time an attack inflicts one or more wounds, something drops off or breaks.

Each time this happens, the walking dead suffers one of the infirmities listed below, as chosen by the Gamemaster. The entry in parentheses indicates how many times the mishap can be applied to an individual undead.

Whether or not the injury can be fixed is left for the Gamemaster to determine. The style of campaign will likely play a big factor in this decision. For instance, an eyeball knocked from a flesh golem's head may be left dangling. As an Attack action, the monster may be able to push it back into the socket. Similarly, as happens in some movies, an undead may pick up a severed limb and jam it back into place.

**Arm (2):** The undead has a -2 penalty to all rolls requiring two hands. A walking dead that loses both arms is incapable of undertaking any task that requires hands. It retains the ability to kick or bite in combat, though.

**Eye (2): *Flesh golems and ghouls only.*** The fiend has a -2 penalty on any ranged attack or Perception rolls where depth perception is important. A second injury of this type leaves the fiend blind. It automatically fails any roll requiring sight.

**Jaw (1): *Flesh golems and ghouls only.*** The creature's lower jaw is ruined, leaving it unable to talk or bite.

**Leg (2):** The first time this occurs, the undead has -2 to its Move rating (minimum 1). If it loses a second leg, the monster's Move rating drops by -4 (minimum 0). The fiend can crawl, but if its Move has been reduced to zero

then it can either Move or Attack in a combat turn, but not both.

**Gamemaster's Note:** If the above system, is too complex for your tastes, you can swap the mechanics for something much simpler. Two suggestions are presented below.

\* With less mass, the creature is more easily knocked back or down. For these purposes only, its effective Strength rating is reduced by one (minimum 1) each time it is wounded.

\* The creature has difficulty coordinating attacks due to missing pieces. It suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to all rolls after each injury.

### Holy Item Aversion

*Prerequisite:* Flesh golem, ghoul, or revenant

The undead knows its eternal soul is damned and has developed an innate aversion toward crosses, crucifixes, or holy wafers (and paraphernalia of other religions at the Gamemaster's discretion). Unlike with a vampire, touching one of these objects against the creature's flesh produces no effect. They can, however, keep a flesh golem, ghoul, or revenant at bay, but only if the wielder is a true believer in the faith—merely waving a holy object around as no effect.

Presenting such an object to the walking dead requires an attack action. In order to close within five feet of the wielder, the fiend must make an opposed Willpower test. If it rolls more successes than the wielder, the abomination is unfazed and may act as normal. Otherwise, it can advance no closer.

Alternatively, a cross can be used to force a walking dead to move where the wielder wishes. As an Attack action, the mortal makes an opposed Willpower test against the undead. If he rolls more success than the fiend, he may force it back five feet in a direction of his choice.

### Hunger

*Prerequisite:* Zombie or ghoul

In the case of zombies, an unnatural appetite for fresh meat causes it to temporarily disregard its orders. A ghoul with this weakness cannot help but swallow a chunk of meat when the opportunity arises.



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After killing an opponent, or when a hunk of fresh meat is within its walking distance, the undead must spend the next combat turn eating. This counts as its Attack action for the turn. In a life-or-death situation, such as when being attacked by a second opponent, a ghoul may make a Willpower x 2 roll at Difficulty 3 to resist having a snack.

## Lesser Stench

The walking dead smells of decay, either from its decomposing flesh, the grave from which it rose, the environment in which it lurks, or the remnants of its last meal. Although strong, the odor does not induce gagging in nearby mortals. It does, however, reveal the presence of the undead. Unless a stronger scent masks their fetid odor, walking dead with this ability suffer a -2 penalty to Stealth rolls.

## Recharge

*Prerequisite:* Flesh golem

Flesh golems are sustained by the electricity or chemicals coursing through their bodies. This specimen has a defect that requires it to seek regular recharges or doses of life-sustaining chemicals.

The golem can go without a recharge for a number of days equal to its Body rating. After this, it automatically loses one point of Health per day until it acquires a suitable recharge. Those bound to their creator usually have little difficulty achieving this. Those that have broken their bonds, however, must seek them out. Typically this means raiding a pharmacy or weird scientist's laboratory.

There is a slight upside to needing constant recharging. The flesh golem can voluntarily burn through whatever energy or chemicals sustain its life in order to gain an advantage. Doing so reduces the number of days before a recharge is due by one, but gains the creature an additional Move or Attack action for a single combat turn.

For clarity, the second action is totally independent of the first. Thus, the creature could move twice as far as normal without having to expend its Attack action on a Run, sprint twice to cover lots of ground in a single turn, or at-

tack an opponent, move across the battlefield, and then attack a second opponent.

Naturally, it cannot do this if the time before recharging has already expired.

## Salt

*Prerequisite:* Zombie

As well as being a preservative, salt is a symbol of purity and has been a key component in wards against the supernatural for millennia.

In certain folklore, zombies can be released from their undead state by filling their mouth with salt. Being aware of this, some sorcerers sew up their zombie's mouth as a precaution.

A zombie with this weakness suffers double damage from shotguns firing rock salt crystals. Alas, salt makes for poor ammunition. The range of shotguns firing rock salt is reduced to 10 feet.

## Unholy Healing

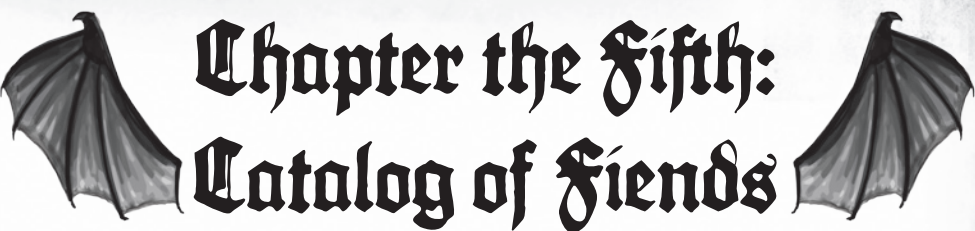
*Prerequisite:* Flesh golem or ghoul

Despite being constructed from the body parts of several individuals and given unnatural life through perverted science or complex dark rituals, flesh golems heal naturally and can have their injuries treated by a physician (not that many doctors would willingly agree to such a task). The same applies to ghouls, which are not actually undead. For reasons unknown, though, some are incapable of healing through conventional means.

While nonlethal injuries heal normally, neither Medicine rolls nor natural healing can be used to recover from lethal wounds. Instead, the undead must fix itself by utilizing flesh, bone, and organs scavenged from corpses. In rare cases, the monster may kill someone and make use of fresh components.

A corpse provides suitable materials to heal lethal wounds equal to its former Body rating (assume 2 in most cases). Thus, a ghoul that has suffered three lethal wounds requires at a minimum of two corpses (on average) to bring itself back to full Health.

Patching up lethal wounds in this manner takes two hours per point of damage and leaves the creature hideously disfigured.



# Chapter the Fifth: Catalog of Fiends

*"God knows it was not of this world - or no longer of this world - yet to my horror I saw in its eaten-away and bone-revealing outlines a leering, abhorrent travesty on the human shape; and in its moldy, disintegrating apparel an unspeakable quality that chilled me even more."*

—H. P. Lovecraft, *The Outsider*



### Body Snatcher

Not every monster has a supernatural origin. Body snatchers, also known as resurrection men, dig up the recently deceased and sell the corpses for use in illegal medical procedures (the Anatomy Act of 1832 made corpses available for legal procedures), or to scientists of dubious morality and purpose whose ready supply of cash ensures no awkward questions are asked by their ghoulish hirelings. When fresh corpses are in short supply, body snatchers aren't above using violence to secure what their employer requires.

Contrary to reports and public opinion, few body snatchers actually rob the corpses they gather from graves. As odd as it might sound, body snatching from a grave is merely a misdemeanor, whereas theft carries harsher punishments. Murder, of course, is a capital offense.

### Body Snatcher

#### Follower 1

**Archetype:** Everyman; **Motivation:** Duty; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 3, Stun 1, Health 4

**Skills:** Athletics 5 (*Digging* 6), Larceny 4, Melee 5, Stealth 5 (*Sneaking* 6)

**Talents:** Pack Mule (Treat encumbrance level as one level less)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Illiterate (+1 Style point whenever his illiteracy causes him severe difficulty or embarrassment)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N, Shovel 7N, Pickaxe 8L

### Necromancer

In fiction, a necromancer is most commonly portrayed as someone who animates the dead. In reality, the name applies to a person who communicates with the dead to tell the future (such as a medium). This entry follows literature and applies solely to the former.

Necromancers fall into two main types—those who use magic and those who use science to achieve their aims. Motivations are more varied. Some necromancers raise the dead or create life as a means of securing wealth (Greed) or power (Power). One example would be one who uses zombies as



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a source of slave labor or to create an army. Another may dabble with reanimation as a means of bring back a lost loved one (Love). Another may do so in order to study the mysteries of life and death (Mystery).

## Magical Necromancer

As the old saying goes, the road to Hell is paved with good intentions. A necromancer may set out with the noblest of intentions, but inevitably he is sucked down into darkness and despair by the forces he unleashes.

Raising the dead for any motivation is a highly dubious endeavor, especially in an age when Christian thought and the need for good moral behavior still holds sway over much of the population. Although *Leagues of Adventure* allows any magician to invoke the Raise Dead ritual, it remains, at best, an evil act, for

it flies in the face of all that is good and proper. Thus, the magical necromancer is always a villain.

### Ally 2

**Archetype:** *Occultist*; **Motivation:** *Varies*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 4, Perception 7, Initiative 5, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 6

**Skills:** Academics: Occult 5 (*Necromancy* 6), Intimidation 4, Investigation 5, Linguistics 5, Magic: Black Magic 10, Melee 4

**Talents:** Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals)

**Resources:** Artifact 1 (Magician's Wand: +2 to Magic rating)

**Rituals:** Channel Dead, Fear, Raise Dead (+1 to Magic rating), plus one more of Gamemaster's choice

**Flaw:** Aloof (+1 Style point whenever his business-like attitude causes him trouble)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N, Dagger 5L

## Scientific Necromancer

Scientific necromancers, while villains by dint of their vile experiments and lack of moral judgment, are no match for globetrotters in combat—they are men of science (albeit perverted), not violence. Fortunately, they often have a loyal henchman or spare animated corpse or two at their disposal to deal with pesky interlopers.

The scientific necromancer has a choice of two Craft and two Science Skills. Which ones depend on whether their experiments are powered by chemicals or electricity.

### Ally 2

**Archetype:** *Scientist*; **Motivation:** *Varies*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 4, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 6

**Skills:** Craft: Electrics or Pharmacology 6, Investigation 5, Medicine 6, Science: Biology 6, Science: Chemistry or Engineering 6

**Talents:** Spark of Life (can create intelligent

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artifacts), Weird Science (can create weird science devices)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Righteous (+1 Style point whenever his actions alienate him and his friends, or causes others to publicly question his motives and moral judgment)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N



## Frankenstein Monster

Frankenstein's monster is dead, self-immolated on a funeral pyre in the Arctic wastes. But the mad scientist's notebooks have found their way into the hands of others. The reader should note that nowhere in the novel does Mary Shelley state exactly how the monster was created. Talk of grave-robbing and stitched corpses is an invention of Hollywood, but it is also the one we use here.

Whereas *the* monster was intelligent, sensitive, and well versed in literature, these imitations of Frankenstein's work are brutish, stupid, amoral, and childlike in their knowledge of the world. They are blank slates who know only pain and misery and who enjoy inflicting the same on others. These fell mockeries of man lack the original's independence, and are mindlessly obedient to their creator.

These monsters range in appearance from the original, who was eight feet tall, grotesquely ugly, with yellowish skin that "barely disguised the workings of the vessels and muscles underneath," glowing eyes, blackened lips and hair, and white teeth, through to the corpse-stitched imagery from the movies, replete with hideous scars, long arms, a flat head, bolts through the neck, huge hands which end in black nails, and enormous, heavy boots.

## Frankenstein Monster

**Follower 2**

**Archetype:** *Artificial life*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 5, Charisma 0, Intelligence 1, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 1, Move 7, Perception 4, Initiative 3, Defense 5, Stun 5, Health 10, Horror 2 (4 once you realize it's a walking corpse)

**Skills:** Athletics 8, Brawl 8, Intimidation 5, Stealth 5\*

**Talents:** Iron Jaw (+1 Stun rating), Robust (+2 Health)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Sadism (+1 Style point whenever it is needlessly cruel to its friends or enemies)

**Weapons:** Punch 7N

\* *Frankenstein Monsters have a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.*



## Bal-Bal

Native to the Philippines, the bal-bal is a gluttonous fiend with breath that reeks of the grave. It possesses a powerful sense of smell, though only with regard dead and decaying flesh. Its sharp teeth and claws are ideal for biting and tearing off chunks of flesh.

Although the bal-bal does not hunt living humans, it breaks into funeral parlors and exhumes graves in search of nourishment. Thus, while not greatly feared by the living, it is abhorred. In order to avoid revealing its presence in the community, the fiend's intended meal is replaced with the trunk of a banana tree, thus inferring that the deceased was stolen by body snatchers rather than consumed.

Unlike the European ghoul, the bal-bal is truly undead. Although it appears human, its clawed hands, lolling tongue, and red eyes are clear indicators of its inhuman nature.

## Bal-Bal

**Follower 2**

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 0



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## Hyena

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 0, Intelligence 1, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size -1, Move 5 (Run 10), Perception 4, Initiative 3, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 5

**Skills:** Brawl 7, Stealth 6\*, Survival 6

**Talents:** Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

**Weapons:** Bite 9L

*\*Hyenas have a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls.*

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 3, Strength 4, Charisma 0, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 7, Perception 4 (8), Initiative 5, Defense 7, Stun 4, Health 6, Horror 3

**Skills:** Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Intimidation 5, Stealth 6, Survival 5

**Talents:** Keen Sense (+4 Perception rating with regard scent of human corpses)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Glutton (+1 Style point whenever its appetite causes it problems)

**Weapons:** Bite 6L, Claw 6L

## Ghoul/Arabian

The origin of the word ghoul lies not in the graveyards of Europe, but the arid deserts of the Middle East. A demon made flesh, and related to the greater genies, the Arabian ghoul is a horrendous monster, with matted black fur, enlarged teeth, bestial hands and feet, and red eyes. Whereas its European namesakes prefer carrion, the Arabian ghoul prefers living flesh.

A shapeshifter by nature, it can assume the form of a hyena (see sidebar). The ravenous fiend also has the power to assume the physical appearance of the last person it consumed. The demon gains none of its victim's Attributes, Skills, Talents, Flaws (unless obviously physical, such as One Arm)—it merely adopts their form and voice. In human guise, it seeks to lure un-

suspecting travelers into the deep desert, where the monster can kill and eat them at its leisure.

Arabian ghouls have no sensitivity toward sunlight, and thus are active during the day. Being demonic in nature, they have no need to sleep. Neither do they become more bestial with age. Those few with an aversion toward religious objects cower only when the Koran is presented before them.

## Ghoul/Arabian

**Follower 2**

**Archetype:** *Demon*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 4, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 4 (Smell 8), Initiative 4, Defense 6, Stun 4, Health 6, Horror — (4 in natural form)

**Skills:** Athletics 6, Brawl 6 (*Punching* 7), Con 6 (*Lies* 7), Stealth 6

**Talents:** Keen Sense (+4 smell-based Perception rating), Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Glutton (+1 Style point whenever its appetite causes it problems)

**Weapons:** Claws 7L

**Shapechange:** An Arabian ghoul can transform into a hyena or drop its illusionary human form and reveal its ghoulish appearance as an Attack action.

## Ghoul

Contrary to popular belief, ghouls are not undead. A ghoul is a person whose taste for human flesh has warped their physical body and mind into something neither man nor woman, beast nor human.

Ghouls exist on the fringes of society, scavenging corpses from graveyards or, on rare occasions, committing murder to sate their inhuman hunger. Pained by light and fearful of being caught, they spend the daylight hours huddled away in dark holes or sewers, gnawing on the bones from which they have already devoured the succulent flesh.

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Most ghouls quickly lose their capacity for speech, though some are capable of single words or short phrases. Often these are used to lure unsuspecting prey into their grasp.

## Ghoul

### Follower 2

**Archetype:** *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 4, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 4 (Smell 8), Initiative 4, Defense 6, Stun 4, Health 6, Horror 3 (4 if feeding)

**Skills:** Athletics 6, Brawl 7, Intimidation 4, Stealth 8, Survival 5

**Talents:** Keen Sense (+4 smell-based Perception rating), Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Glutton (+1 Style point whenever its appetite causes it problems)

**Weapons:** Claws 7L

**Pained by Sunlight:** Ghouls suffer a -2 penalty to all rolls when in sunlight.

## Hag

The occult is not a straightforward subject. Depending on the specific context, one might be referring to a mortal witch or a nightmare spirit when discussing hags. While many students of the occult group flesh-eating hags under witches, they are, in fact, a third type of creature with the same name and belong in a separate category—that of ghouls.

Ugly and old, cannibal hags have given rise to stories of Baba Yaga, Muma Padurii, and Grýla, as well as the cautionary tale of Hansel and Gretel. Whereas regular ghouls prefer to scavenge, hags especially savor the flesh of children. In addition to snatching babies from cribs, they are experts in luring children into their ghastly clutches.

Hags have no dreams of domination or wealth. So long as they receive regular meals, they are quite content to stay in their remote cottages and study the black arts.

## Hag

### Follower 2

**Archetype:** *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 2 (4), Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 5, Horror —

**Skills:** Academics: Occult 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Con 5 (7), Craft: Candy 4, Intimidation 4 (6), Magic: Black Magic 7

**Talents:** Charismatic (+2 Charisma rating but only when dealing with children), Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals)

**Resources:** Refuge: Equipment 0 (+1 bonus to Magic rating), Refuge: Size 0 (Cottage)





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**Rituals:** Alter Visibility, Control Weather, Empower, Harm, Spirit Binding

**Flaws:** Elderly (-2 penalty to any roll where strength, speed, or endurance is a factor; +1 Style point whenever her age slows her down or she is taken advantage of because of it)

**Weapons:** Punch 5N

## Ogre

In Roman mythology, Orcus was a minor deity of the underworld, where he served as punisher of oath breakers. His origins actually lie with the Etruscans. Depicted as a hairy giant, he was not a god, but a ferocious, cannibalistic monster who terrorized central Italy. It is from his name and description the word ogre originates.

That ogres were once widespread is evidenced by the number of fairy tales in which

they appear. Not consigned solely to western European mythology, they are found in Greek (where they appear as cyclops) and Japanese (where they are called oni) folklore.

The true nature of ogres has the Ghost Club vexed. Many members believe they do not exist, save as distant memories of cannibal tribes or individuals possessed by demonic spirits. Some members believe they are an evolutionary stage, one achieved only by the most aged ghouls. A small faction holds that they are a separate species of mankind, one either extinct or on the verge of disappearing. To others, ogre is just another name for the yeti or similar mysterious hominids. It may yet prove that they are a sort of Mr. Hyde, a manifested dark aspect of an ordinary citizen who secretly craves to dine on human flesh but who lacks the conscious will to undertake such a depraved act.

Whatever the truth, ogres still exist, although not in any large numbers. Where once they roamed freely, today they are forced to hide in the shadows. They are taller and broader than the average human, hirsute, and exceptionally tough. Ogres eat only human flesh, savoring the soft and juicy meat and organs of children over stringy adults.

## Ogre

### Follower 3

**Archetype:** *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 6, Dexterity 3, Strength 5, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 1, Move 8, Perception 5, Initiative 5, Defense 8, Stun 7, Health 12, Horror 3

**Skills:** Athletics 8, Brawl 8, Intimidation 6, Melee 6, Stealth 6\*, Survival 6

**Talents:** Iron Jaw (+1 Stun rating), Iron Teeth (Ignores one point of Passive Defense from armor), Robust (+2 Health rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Glutton (+1 Style point whenever its appetite causes it problems)

**Weapons:** Bite 8L, Punch 8N, Huge cleaver 8L

\* Ogres suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

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## Tonton Macoute

Children across Haiti know and fear the name of the gigantic and ghoulish Tonton Macoute ("Uncle Gunny sack"). A bogeyman figure whose name is invoked to frighten naughty children into good behavior, Macoute (as he is more frequently addressed) kidnaps disruptive children, dragging them away in his large sack. Come the morning, he eats them for breakfast.

Save for his top hat and milky eyes, not to mention his trademark sack, Macoute appears human. What stands out most is his height, for he rises to 18 feet tall.

In some legends, Macoute is a unique being, a wicked eternal spirit in corporeal form that can be laid to rest only for short periods. Destroyed through violence, he automatically reanimates the next sunset fully healed. Other folklore says that Macoute is a name shared by such creatures. In life, he was a wicked man. In death, his sin allows black magicians to animate his corpse. His unusual size, so folklore goes, is due to the quantity of his sins in life.

Relatives of Tonton Macoute—few of which are giants—are found across the globe. In Spain and parts of Spanish America they are called *El hombre del saco* ("The sack man"). Argentinians and Chileans know him as *El Viejo del Saco* ("the old man with the bag"). *Zsákos ember* ("the person with a sack") haunts the children of Hungary, *Krampus* terrorizes the Alpine nations, and *Bori Baba* ("Father Sack") has his eyes set on wayward Indian children.

## Tonton Macoute

### Follower 2

**Archetype:** *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 5, Dexterity 3, Strength 5, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 2, Move 8, Perception 4, Initiative 5, Defense 6, Stun 5, Health 13, Horror 4

**Skills:** Athletics 8, Brawl 8, Intimidation 7, Stealth 5\*

**Talents:** Robust 2 (+4 Health rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Glutton (+1 Style point whenever its appetite causes it problems)

**Weapons:** Punch 8N, Grapple 8

\* A Tonton Macoute suffers a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

**Gunny sack:** Macoute's sack is large enough to hold a single child of Size -1 or two children of Size -2. With a successful pin from a grapple, Macoute can ensnare a child in his sack. Once captured, the child instantly and automatically falls into a deep slumber. The child awakens unharmed once removed from the sack.

## Vetala

Mentioned in Hindu mythology, vetalas are demonic spirits with the ability to possess and animate human corpses. The animated dead is not a zombie, but is closer to a ghoul. So long as the vetala is present, the corpse does not decompose further. In many instances, the corpse is decayed enough that its supernatural origin is obvious to all. Corpses in a poor state may be mistaken for zombies. A fresh corpse, however, may be able to pass in society, although it is cold to the touch and still has any injuries sustained in death.

Unless forced to defend themselves, vetalas pose little threat to the living, for they eat only carrion. This does not mean they are tolerated in Hindu society—no one likes having their relatives used as a host for a spirit or being exhumed and eaten. Like their distant kin, they favor scavenging meals from graveyards and charnel houses.

Vetalas are extremely reluctant to leave their host body, and can keep it mobile even after it has taken grievous damage. This reluctance gives them a cowardly nature, making them more likely to run away than engage in a lengthy and potentially lethal conflict.

## Vetala

### Follower 2

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 1



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**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 4, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 5, Initiative 4, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 6, Horror 3 (may be higher, depending on the condition of the host body)

**Skills:** Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Intimidation 4, Stealth 6, Survival 6

**Talents:** High Pain Tolerance 2 (Ignores 5 wound penalties)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Bestial (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N

**Body Swap:** A vetala can be driven from its host body by a Banish ritual or exorcism. It is automatically forced to depart the host when it is killed. If there is another corpse within the vetala's Willpower x 5 feet, then it automatically takes up residence in a new body. The corpse

remains inert until the start of the next combat turn. If no such host can be found, the vetala returns to the spirit world, where it is bound to remain for a year. A vetala cannot possess a corpse it has previously animated.



## Haugbui

Found inhabiting ancient burial mounds, the haugbui is the corporeal relative of the feared draugen, or barrow-wight (see *Guide to Apparitions*). Unlike its spectral cousin, a haugbui cannot wander far from its grave. Thus, it commonly assaults only those who dare to trespass near its resting place. Most often they utilize their teeth, claws, and fell magic only to protect their grave goods from robbers. It is this love of material wealth that keeps a haugbui from moving on to the afterlife.

Although some haugbui have haunted the land since prehistory, many are of Viking stock. As such, they can be found across Scandinavia, northern Britain, and parts of Russia.

Haugbui are capable of speech, though they are not ones for small talk or trivial conversations. Usually they talk only to warn intruders of imminent death and invoke spells.

A haugbui is skeletally thin but far stronger than its frame and withered muscles would indicate. Its eyes glow with a baleful glint. Most were kings or mighty warriors in life, and wear the rusted remains of mail hauberks and carry notched and pitted swords or axes.

Haugbui cannot rise from death multiple times, though slaying the corporeal body of one is not guaranteed to end its existence. Should its treasure remain untouched, then the creature will never return. If so much as a single coin is stolen, however, the haugbui may return in spiritual form. In this instance, use the statistics for the aforementioned barrow-wight.

## Hagbui

Follower 2



# Catalog of Fiends

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Preservation*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 5, Charisma 0, Intelligence 1, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 7, Perception 4, Initiative 3, Defense 6 (8)\*, Stun N/A, Health 7\*\*, Horror 4

**Skills:** Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Intimidation 5, Magic: Black Magic 6, Melee 6, Stealth 6

**Talents:** Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals)

**Resources:** None

**Rituals:** Alter Visibility, Drain Life, Sleep, Spirit Binding

**Flaws:** Primitive (-2 penalty on any Skill roll related to modern technology; +1 Style point whenever its primitive nature hampers it)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N, Rusty sword 8L or hand axe 9L

*\* Rusty mail grants the baugbui a +2 Passive Defense bonus.*

*\*\* A baugbui is immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

## Revenant

While a zombie's brain is devoid of thought, vengeance burns brightly in the mind of a revenant. They are relentless, remorseless hunters, finding true peace only once the fires of vengeance have been extinguished.

There is no fixed time on when a revenant might rise from its grave. Some appear soon after death, seeking to murder the person who wronged them. Others might lie still for decades or centuries, finally awakening to enact revenge on the perpetrator's descendants.

In the latter case, the trigger may be an important anniversary (such as 100 years since the revenant entered the grave), a female descendant being born to whoever wronged the unfortunate soul in life, or even an auspicious alignment of stars or planets. Rarely, a revenant can be called from the grave by one of its descendants seeking vengeance.

Whether it is a lesser villain under the command of a living relative (the true villain of the adventure) or a major villain in its own right, a revenant should have a backstory.

Revenants retain some knowledge of skills and abilities learned in life. That said, a former accountant isn't out to cause financial ruin for his enemies, and thus isn't likely to need points invested in that Skill. As noted above, revenants desire only to cause death. A former sorcerer, on the other hand, may well retain Magical Aptitude, Magic (usually Black Magic, but any tradition is permitted), and a handful of rituals. Gamemasters should change the Attributes and Talents of the stock revenant below as required to suit the nature of the revenant in life.

## Revenant

**Ally** 2

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Revenge*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 5, Initiative 4, Defense 5, Stun N/A, Health 8\*, Horror 2-4, depending on the state of decay

**Skills:** Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Intimidation 5, Melee 6, Stealth 5

**Talents:** Flurry (Can attack same opponent twice in a round at -2 penalty), Robust (+2 Health rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Vengeful (+1 Style point whenever the desire to get even causes problems)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N

*\* A revenant is immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

**Multiple Lives:** Each time a revenant is slain, they return from death the next sunset fully healed. This occurs even if the corpse is utterly destroyed. Revenants are not immortal, though. Each time one reanimates, its Willpower rating drops by one (recalculate Secondary Attributes as required). When Willpower permanently drops to zero, the revenant can rise no more.

## Revenant, Drowned

Revenants who died from drowning and were buried or discarded at sea are almost



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identical to those detailed above. The main difference is in their appearance—a normal revenant may resemble a walking corpse, but those that have lain beneath the waves are far more hideous to behold. Regardless of the actual state of preservation, they return with sagging, worm-eaten skin that constantly drips water and reeks of rotting fish and seaweed.

The second difference is drowned revenants possess an usual power—they have the ability to create seawater in the lungs of those they hold in their moist grip, causing them to drown.

## Revenant, Drowned

**Ally** 2

**Archetype:** Undead; **Motivation:** Revenge;  
**Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 5, Initiative 4, Defense 5, Stun N/A, Health 8\*, Horror 2-4, depending on the state of decay

**Skills:** Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Intimidation 5, Melee 6, Stealth 5

**Talents:** Flurry (Can attack same opponent twice at -2 penalty), Robust (+2 Health rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Vengeful (+1 Style point whenever his desire to get even causes him problem)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N, Grapple 6

*\* A revenant is immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

**Drown:** A drowned revenant that secures a pin on an opponent can fill his foe's lungs with seawater on subsequent combat turns. This counts as a free action. The victim automatically suffers one nonlethal wound per combat turn until the hold is broken.

**Multiple Lives:** Each time a revenant is slain, they return from death the next sunset fully healed. This occurs even if the corpse is utterly destroyed. Revenants are not immortal, though. Each time one reanimates, its Willpower rating drops by one (recalculate Secondary Attributes as required). When Willpower permanently drops to zero, the revenant can rise no more.



## Danse Macabre

In the minds of modern scholars, the *danse macabre* is nothing more than an allegorical reminder of one of life's universal truths—from pope to peasant, everyone dies. But the woodcuts, paintings, sculptures, engravings, and murals found across Christendom are not just allegories—as the Ghost Club has discovered, the dance of death is a very real entity.

The *danse macabre* appears as a skeletal figure, sometimes clad in a funeral shroud and sometimes naked. In most manifestations it carries a set of pipes on which it plays the haunting yet frenetic dance of death, though others wield drums.

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Those who fail to resist the melody become entranced by the tune and begin twirling and whirling ever faster and faster. For many, this is the last dance they will perform, for the rhythm is a deadly one. Those who dance too long lose their souls, leaving their fleshy remains behind to serve the *danse macabre*.

Most manifestations are accompanied by a small number of animated corpses in varying states of decomposition. These mindless, soulless corpses are the *danse macabre*'s protectors, for while most mortals fear Death, some dare to strike out at him.

Those who know of the *danse macabre*'s existence are unsure as to its origin. Most argue that it is a servant of God, an Angel of Death sent to harvest souls according to God's decree. Others argue it is a tool of Satan, for it is indiscriminate in its harvesting. Were this so, though, good souls slain by the *danse macabre* would no more belong to Satan than if they died of illness or old age, for Satan has no authority over souls devoted to God.

Regardless, the existence of the *danse macabre* is a reminder to all mortals to ensure their souls are free of sin, for Death can strike at any time.

## Danse Macabre

### Ally 2

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 4, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 4, Perception 5, Initiative 4, Defense 4 (7), Stun N/A, Health 5\*, Horror 4

**Skills:** Athletics 6, Intimidation 9, Performance 11 (*Dancing 12, Musical Instrument 12*)

**Talents:** Captivate 2 (May make a single Performance roll against all opponents within 10 feet to entrance them)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N

\* *Skeletons are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

**All Bones:** Although the same height as a

living person, a skeleton presents much less of a target against piercing weapons, such as spears and bullets. Against such weapons, a skeleton has +3 Passive Defense.

**Dance of Death:** Captivated victims automatically suffer one point of lethal damage for each round they are held by the entity's power. Those who die by this effect become animated corpses bound to the *danse macabre*'s will at the start of the following round.

## Gashadokuro

The name gashadokuro means "starving skeleton" in Japanese. Extremely rare (and as yet never witnessed by any globetrotter), these monstrous beings cannot be created through magical arts. Instead, they are formed "naturally" from the bones of dozens of people who starved to death and were buried in a mass grave. Likely they are a gestalt entity, a collective mind animating the skeleton.

Gashadokuro are not hard to miss. Although they have the form of a standard skeleton, they stand around 60 feet tall! Not surprisingly, Japanese folklore claims these monsters are indestructible. They certainly require huge amounts of damage to bring down, but they are far from immortal. Claims they are invisible have been dismissed by the Ghost Club—if they were invisible, then there would be no descriptions of them.

Driven by hunger, the enormous undead stalk the land at night in search of lone travelers. These they grab in their huge hands before biting off their heads and squeezing out the warm blood. The dried husk is then discarded.

## Gashadokuro

### Follower 2

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 11, Dexterity 2, Strength 11, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 8, Move 13, Perception 3, Initiative 2, Defense 5 (8), Stun N/A, Health 22\*, Horror 2



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**Skills:** Athletics 12, Brawl 12, Intimidation 5, Stealth 0\*\*

**Talents:** High Pain Tolerance (Ignore 3 wound penalties)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Bite 12L, Punch 12N

\* *Gashadokuro are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

\*\* *Gashadokuro suffer a -8 penalty to Stealth rolls.*

**All Bones:** A skeleton presents much less of a target against piercing weapons, such as spears and bullets. Against such weapons, a skeleton has +3 Passive Defense.

## Skeleton

At their most basic, skeletons are rather similar to zombies, in that they are mindless servitors raised from the dead. With no rotting muscles and oozing internal organs to weigh them down, they are nimbler than their flesh-laden cousins, though still largely unable to run. On the downside, they are physically weaker and more fragile.

## Skeleton

**Follower 0**

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 1, Dexterity 2, Strength 1, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 3, Perception 2, Initiative 2, Defense 3 (6), Stun N/A, Health 0\*, Horror 2

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Melee 4, Stealth 5

**Talents:** High Pain Tolerance (Ignore 3 wound penalties)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Punch 4N

\* *Skeletons are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

**All Bones:** Although the same height as a living person, a skeleton presents much less of a target against piercing weapons, such as

spears and bullets. Against such weapons, a skeleton has +3 Passive Defense.

**Slow:** Cannot run or sprint.

## Skeleton, Charred

These unusual undead can be created only from skeletons whose flesh has been removed by fire or intense heat. Truly depraved necromancers burn victims alive and imbue the bones with necromantic energy while they are still hot and smoking.

As the name implies, a charred skeleton's bones are black and cracked. They also give off a smoky aroma, despite not actually producing any smoke. Their bony fingers glow red with heat, and are hot enough to scorch flesh and set fire to combustibles. To strike a target, the skeleton makes a Brawl touch attack against the opponent's Active Defense.

## Skeleton, Charred

**Follower 0**

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 1, Dexterity 2, Strength 1, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 3, Perception 2, Initiative 2, Defense 3 (6), Stun N/A, Health 0\*, Horror 2

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Melee 4, Stealth 5

**Talents:** High Pain Tolerance (Ignore 3 wound penalties)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Fiery touch 1L caustic

\* *Skeletons are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

**All Bones:** Although the same height as a living person, a skeleton presents much less of a target against piercing weapons, such as spears and bullets. Against such weapons, a skeleton has +3 Passive Defense.

**Immune to Fire:** Charred skeletons suffer no damage from any source of fire short of molten rock or metal.

**Slow:** Cannot run or sprint.

# Catalog of Fiends

## Skeleton Warrior

In days of yore, heroic warriors and rich nobles were interred with their arms and armor as a sign of their status. Death has weakened much of their former martial prowess and their equipment has rusted or rotted in the grave, but they are still a threat to globe-trotters, especially if animated in numbers.

## Skeleton Warrior

### Follower 1

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 1, Dexterity 2, Strength 1, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 3, Perception 2, Initiative 2, Defense 3 (8)\*, Stun N/A, Health 0\*\*, Horror 2

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Melee 6

**Talents:** High Pain Tolerance (Ignore 3 wound penalties)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Punch 5N, Rusting sword 8L or hand axe 7L

\* *Skeleton warriors are clad in rotting and rusted fragments of armor. Regardless of specific type, these grant the skeleton +2 Passive Defense.*

\*\* *Skeletons are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

**All Bones:** Although the same height as a living person, a skeleton presents much less of a target against piercing weapons, such as spears and bullets. Against such weapons, a skeleton has +3 Passive Defense.

**Slow:** Cannot run or sprint.



## Ro-langs

Ro-langs are found only on the high Tibetan plateau. They appear human, but have no capacity for speech (they communicate only by



moving their tongue) and cannot bend any of their joints. The latter impairment gives them a stiff, lurching gait.

There are two types of ro-langs. The first is created by a master of the dark arts to serve as his slave. In this regard they are little different from ordinary zombies. These are known as Tantric ro-langs.

The second comes from a demonic spirit inhabiting a corpse. Independent of any earthly master, they seek only to contaminate the living. This they achieve simply by touching a person on the head. These demon-infested corpses are referred to as demonic ro-langs. In some legends, this contamination is a disease. Thus, ro-langs are viewed harbingers of plague. In truth, the contamination is a spiritual sickness rather than one of the flesh.

Regardless of type. Tibetan folklore states there are five distinct varieties. Each variety has



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a specific name—*kbrag-langs* (blood-zombie), *lpags-langs* (skin-zombie), *rme-langs* (bone-zombie), *rus-langs* (bone-zombie), and *sha-langs* (flesh-zombie).

More importantly, ro-langs can be destroyed only by a weakness specific to their variety—what harms a blood-zombie has no effect on a skin-zombie, for instance. Unfortunately for zombie hunters, the only way to determine an individual ro-langs' weakness is through trial and error.

## Ro-langs

### Follower 2

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Duty/Survival*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 4, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 4, Perception 5, Initiative 4, Defense 5, Stun N/A, Health 8\*, Horror 4

**Skills:** Athletics 5, Brawl 6, Empathy 5, Intimidation 6, Stealth 6

**Talents:** Fearsome (May temporarily frighten opponents), Robust (+2 Health rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Inflexible Body (–2 Move rating; +1 Style point whenever its inability to bend its body or limbs causes it problems)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N

\* *Ro-langs cannot be stunned. They are immune to all damage except as determined by their vulnerability (see below).*

**Contamination:** This foul ability is found only among Tantric ro-langs. In order to use it, the ro-langs must make a called shot touch attack against its target's head. This done, the opponent must make a reflexive Charisma + Willpower with a Difficulty equal to the fiend's Willpower rating. For each point by which the roll is failed, the target suffers one point of Corruption.

**Vulnerability:** The Gamemaster must pick one specific weakness from the list below.

\* **Blood:** This is the most common vulnerability. The ro-langs can be slain by any means that draws blood. It suffers lethal damage as normal but is immune to all nonlethal damage.

\* **Bone:** Only breaking the creature's bones can kill it. Except for fists, it is susceptible only to nonlethal weapons, such as hammers and maces. For game purposes, the fiend dies when it has been driven to –5 Health by nonlethal injuries.

\* **Flesh:** The flesh of these zombies must be either cut deeply or blown off in chunks. They suffer damage only from slashing melee weapons (such as axes and swords), shotguns at short range, and explosives.

\* **Mole:** The only vulnerable spot is a single mole somewhere on the ro-langs' body. Targeting this tiny area, once it has been identified, requires a called shot with a –8 penalty.

\* **Skin:** These foul abominations can be slain only by removing their skin. Only caustic damage such as acid and fire harms them. Pinning them down and skinning them would work, but it is a slow and grisly method requiring a Horror roll at Difficulty 3.

# Catalog of Fiends

## Zombie

In their warm and comfortable clubs, adventurers and explorers are quick to mock those who speak of the walking dead. Such talk is ridiculed as superstition or drug-induced states of semi-consciousness in unfortunate victims, or put down to heatstroke or brain fever on the part of the viewer. But in the dark corners of Africa where the juju men hold power, and in the Caribbean, the last haunt of Voodoo, they are less quick to dismiss talk of shambling corpses.

Animated corpses have no intelligence or personality, and are exceptionally slow and clumsy. As such, they are little use for work requiring manual dexterity or mental aptitude, but they make fine soldiers and slave laborers for those willing to traffic in forbidden knowledge, for they possess unlimited endurance and stamina.

## Zombie

### Follower 0

**Archetype:** *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 0, Strength 2, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 2, Perception 2, Initiative 0, Defense 2, Stun N/A, Health 0\*, Horror 2

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Melee 5, Stealth 4  
**Talents:** High Pain Tolerance (Ignore 3 wound penalties)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Bite 5L, Punch 5N

*\* Zombies are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned. In addition, they must consume one pound of living flesh per day or suffer a point of lethal damage due to rot.*

**Slow:** Cannot run or sprint.

## Zombie, Electric

The result of unethical, and arguably perverse, weird science experiments, the electric zombie hides a deadly surprise.

## Witch Trains

Since the advent of the railway in South Africa, stories have arisen of "witch trains" among the indigenous population. Unfortunately, a "witch train" looks no different to an ordinary train, although it only runs during the hours of darkness.

If the stories are true, the engine driver is a witch and the staff her obedient zombie slaves. Depending on the witch's mode, living passengers may be murdered and transformed into zombies, or beaten senseless and thrown from the train in the middle of nowhere.

Governmental administrators, keen to quash these rumors before they incite panic, point out that any murders or kidnappings are likely the result of criminal gangs rather than supernatural menaces.

During construction, its veins are pumped full of a silver solution, while its internal organs are removed to make room for a large voltaic cell. Electrodes, usually silver, although iron suffices for necromancers of limited financial means, are driven into its fingertips. Once the battery is charged, a single touch from the rotting husk can deliver a lethal electric shock.

The voltaic cell cannot be recharged. The only way is to replace the cell, requiring the construction phase to be repeated. No additional Experience points need be spent acquiring a recharged electric zombie.

Large voltaic cells can be created as Artifact 0 gadgets. A batch contains five cells, each of which contains 10 charges.

## Zombie, Electric

### Follower 0

**Archetype:** *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 0, Strength 2, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 2, Perception 2, Initiative 0, Defense 2, Stun N/A, Health 0\*, Horror 2



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**Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Melee 5, Stealth 4  
**Talents:** High Pain Tolerance (Ignore 3 wound penalties)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Bite 5L, Punch 5N, Electric shock (see below)

*\* Zombies are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned. In addition, they must consume one pound of living flesh per day or suffer a point of lethal damage due to rot.*

**Electric Shock:** The zombie's voltaic cell holds a maximum of ten charges. Before making an attack, the zombie may elect to charge its fingernails with between one and four units of electricity as a free action.

With a successful Brawl Touch Attack, the zombie inflicts lethal caustic damage equal to the charges spent. Should the zombie miss its intended victim, the electricity harmlessly dissipates. Whether it hits or misses, the charges are drained from the battery.

**Slow:** Cannot run or sprint.

## Zombie / Explosive

There was a time when those who died in battle were buried with dignity for their sacrifice. As unscrupulous weird scientists run amok, fallen soldiers can once again serve their country.

Too slow and unintelligent, not to mention profane, to serve as regular soldiers, the corpses of these unfortunates are stuffed with explosives and sent shambling across the battlefield. Those few unlucky enough to have witnessed these grotesque walking bombs have nicknamed them "Bombies."

## Zombie / Explosive

**Follower 0**

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 0, Strength 2, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 2, Perception 2, Initiative 0, Defense 2, Stun N/A, Health 0\*, Horror 2

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Melee 5, Stealth 4  
**Talents:** High Pain Tolerance (Ignore 3 wound penalties)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Bite 5L, Punch 5N

*\* Zombies are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned. In addition, they must consume one pound of living flesh per day or suffer a point of lethal damage due to rot.*

**Boom:** The explosives packed inside one of these abominations counts as a very light bomb (Damage 6L, Area Effect 5 ft.). Unless the weird scientist fitted a timing device, the bomb detonates only when the zombie is reduced to -5 Health or lower.

**Slow:** Cannot run or sprint.

## Zombie / Fast

For those who must fight zombies, their shuffling gait is something of a reassurance. Knowing it will take the zombies some time to reach them, globetrotters can stand back and blast away with firearms.

Although as yet unverified by the Ghost Club, rumors of zombies capable of sustained running speed of up to 20 miles per hour and possessing lightning fast reflexes are spreading. The Ghost Club is divided over whether these new zombies actually exist or whether they are an excuse invented by globetrotters whose poor tactics placed them in danger.

**Gamemaster's Note:** Since it ignores nonlethal wounds, a fast zombie has no limitations on how long it can sprint.

## Zombie / Fast

**Follower 1**

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 2, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun N/A, Health 4\*, Horror 2

**Skills:** Athletics 6 (*Jumping 7, Running 7*), Brawl 5, Stealth 6

# Catalog of Fiends

**Talents:** Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating), Run (Running speed is doubled)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Bite 5L, Punch 5N

*\* Zombies are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned. In addition, they must consume one pound of living flesh per day or suffer a point of lethal damage due to rot.*

## Zombie Master

Not all zombies are mindless servitors. Through means as yet not understood by globetrotters, some zombies can return not only intelligent and with the capacity to speak, but with an innate ability to raise the dead. Known as zombie masters, the appearance of these fiends varies from freshly interred to a rotting, maggot-riddled hulk.

Many of these abominations merely seek to prolong their own existence. With eternity ahead, it gives them time to truly master the inner secrets of the dark arts and plumb the mysteries of the universe.

This should not in any way to be taken to mean they are harmless academics. Ultimately, their reclusive nature hides baser negative motivation, such as greed, power, or revenge. While no longer capable of love, they might seek a beautiful woman or handsome man as a companion, though such an unfortunate would be more akin to a prized possession.

## Zombie Master

**Ally** 3

**Archetype:** Undead; **Motivation:** Survival; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 7, Initiative 5, Defense 6, Stun 4, Health 8, Horror 4

**Skills:** Academics: Occult 6, Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Intimidation 6, Magic: Black Magic 8, Stealth 5

**Talents:** Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals)

**Resources:** None

**Rituals:** Drain Life\*\*, Fear, Spirit Binding

**Flaws:** Overconfident (+1 Style point when he is forced to ask for help or when his bravado gets him in over his head)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N

*\* Zombie masters are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

*\*\* Any living creature slain by this ritual returns as a zombie under the master's control at the start of the next combat turn.*

**Raise the Dead:** The zombie master is a master of necromancy. It can cast the Raise Dead ritual, but makes a Willpower x 2 roll in place of Magic. The animated dead do not return to their inanimate state after one day, but remain mobile until destroyed. The maximum number of zombies that may be animated at any one time is equal to five times the master's Charisma rating.





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## Zuverbie

A zuverbie is a powerful type of zombie. Their creation involves an elixir known as the Black Brew, a concoction whose ingredients are known to but a small few Voodoo practitioners spread throughout the West Indies.

The Black Brew cannot be forced onto an unsuspecting victim. Rather, the imbiber must voluntarily consume it. Only if the drinker's heart is possessed of a burning desire to enact revenge will the foul concoction work.

When consumed, the Black Brew kills both the body and mind, ridding the brain of all vestiges of humanity. Within minutes, the drinker's flesh turns the color of meat drained of blood. Unlike its lesser kin, a zuverbie has no need to consume living flesh. Unless slain by iron or lead, a zuverbie will live forever.

These abominations wield a formidable ar-

ray of supernatural abilities. They can summon certain creatures, hypnotize mortals merely through its voice (though it cannot otherwise converse), command the power of darkness, and animate the dead.

## Zuverbie

**Ally 3**

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Revenge*; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 4, Charisma 3, Intelligence 2, Willpower 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 7, Initiative 4, Defense 6, Stun N/A, Health 11\*, Horror 3

**Skills:** Athletics 8, Brawl 8, Intimidation 7, Melee 8, Stealth 6

**Talents:** Charismatic (+1 Charisma rating), Iron Will (+1 Willpower rating), Robust (+2 Health rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Mindless (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Punch 5N

*\* Zuverbies are immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

**Animate Dead:** Any creature slain by a zuverbie rises as a normal zombie at the start of the next combat turn. The new zombie is obedient to the zuverbie who created it. The zombie remains animated for a number of hours equal to its Body rating in life.

**Command Shadows:** A zuverbie can reduce visibility by commanding the shadows. This functions as the Alter Visibility ritual, except the undead uses Willpower x 2 in place of Magic.

**Invulnerability:** Zuverbies ignore all damage except that inflicted by iron or lead.

**Mesmerize:** This functions as per the Captivate Talent, except the undead makes a Charisma + Willpower roll in place of Performance.

**Summon Animals:** The zuverbie can summon a single swarm of bats or a number of individual owls, snakes, and werewolves equal to its Charisma rating once per night. The creatures must be in the nearby vicinity (they do not appear out of thin air). The creatures are completely beholden to the zuverbie for the remainder of the combat or scene, after which they depart.



# Chapter the Sixth:

## Princes of Darkness

*"How I have lived I hardly know; many times have I stretched my failing limbs upon the sandy plain and prayed for death. But revenge kept me alive; I dared not die and leave my adversary in being."*

—Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*

### Walking Dead Villains

Zombies, skeletons, and most flesh golems are not suitable for being the main villains in an adventure. Not only do they lack the brains and drive to foment diabolical schemes, they are physically weak in comparison to a team of globetrotters.

Instead, they are tools, puppets manipulated by the true villain of the story. This villain need not be one of the walking dead, of course. Mad scientists, black magicians, or mortals who possess an artifact allowing them to animate the dead might all have lesser walking dead at their disposal.

Thus, these servitors exist to provide the characters with something to shoot and stab, serving in the same roll as henchmen to a conventional villain. Given their limited abilities, zombies and skeletons can be used *en masse* with little risk of wiping out the entire party.

In order to keep the players from becoming complacent, the Gamemaster should throw in a walking dead with unusual abilities

every now and then. For instance, fast zombies present an entirely different tactical challenge to their shuffling cousins.

When it comes to major villains, the only real choices are flesh golems who have broken free of their creator's influence, ghouls, and revenants. All three are stereotypical monsters, but this does not mean they cannot be given individuality. Indeed, without a unique motivation and background, these monsters have no reason to be major villains.

For instance, a revenant does not just seek revenge on anybody who crosses its path—it has a list of targets that directly relates to its former life. Piecing together the whys and wherefores of its reign of terror forms a vital part of the investigation. A flesh golem that seeks to replace decaying body parts with those torn from its victims is a different beast to one who craves to fit into society but cannot control its rage at being rejected because of its unholy origins.

Even if it has only limited motivation, the creature needs to be unique. Both Slack Jaw and Surly Ghoul (detailed later in this chapter) simply seek to survive. The former, though, has a terrible natural ability, while the second was once a preeminent surgeon. These simple additions transform them from ordinary ghouls into memorable villains.

In order to keep the players guessing, the villain should make an appearance only toward the end of the adventure. Until then, the globetrotters must investigate crime scenes and form their own conclusions as to the nature of the beast they face.



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## Christie Cleek

*"After all, you're only an immortal until someone manages to kill you. After that, you were just long-lived."*

—Simon R. Green, *The Bride Wore Black Leather*

Born Andrew Christie, the Scottish butcher had the misfortune of living in the mid-14th century. Terrible floods, coupled with a plague of mice and rats, brought widespread famine. Unable to earn a living, Christie fled into the hills, where he joined up with a pack of scavengers.

According to folklore, Christie's talent for butchery came in use when one of the scavengers died of hunger. Lean though the pickings were, Christie carved him up and fed the gang. Deciding that human flesh made a more

satisfying meal than bits of barley or clumps of grass, the renegades soon took to ambushing travelers to fill their grumbling bellies. It was at this time that Christie earned his nickname. When faced with a mounted wayfarer, Christie would unhorse them using a hook on the end of a rod, an implement known as a "cleke." How many men the gang devoured is unclear, but most estimates place the number in the low thirties.

The gang's predations soon attracted the attention of the authorities. A company of soldiers ambushed and killed the gang, save for Christie, who vanished from history.

Christie fled to the Scottish Highlands, where he has survived for over 500 years by scavenging corpses and waylaying the occasional wanderer who crosses his path. Time has not been kind to the degenerate cannibal.

Little now remains of what little humanity he possessed in life. Gray skin covered in coarse hair is drawn tight over his emaciated flesh. He lurks and skulks in the shadows, moving on all fours in the manner of a wild beast, and avoiding the sun whenever possible. He has no capacity for speech, but instead growls and barks like a rabid dog.

There is much speculation among the illustrious members of the Ghost Club as to whether Christie Cleek and a cannibal named Sawney Bean were one and the same person. If they were, the question still remains as to whether the stories relate to the same incident or are separated by centuries.

Information concerning Bean is scarce, and what does exist stems from spurious sources. The legend says he lived sometime between the 13th and 16th centuries and was the progenitor of a family of cannibals. The family were eventually captured and executed for their crimes, but Bean was never apprehended.

## Christie Cleek

### Patron 2

**Archetype:** *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 5, Dexterity 3, Strength 5, Charisma 0, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3



## Princes of Darkness

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 8, Perception 5, Initiative 5, Defense 8, Stun 5, Health 8, Horror 3

**Skills:** Athletics 8, Brawl 8, Melee 8 (*Cleke* 9), Stealth 8 (*Hiding* 9), Survival 7

**Talents:** Rising Handspring (Can stand as a reflexive action), Run (Doubles running speed), Trackless (-8 penalty to Survival: Tracking rolls to follow him)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Bestial (Cannot talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N, Cleke 9N

**Cleke:** Christie's cleke allows him to make grapples using Melee. Instead of being grabbed or pinned, victims are pulled from their mount and automatically knocked prone.

**Gnaw:** Each combat turn the hold is maintained, the zombie may make a bite attack with a +4 bonus. This counts as its Attack action for the turn.

**Iron Grip:** Christie has a +4 bonus to maintain grapples.

**Trackless:** Opponents suffer a -8 penalty to Survival: Tracking rolls.

**Pained by Sunlight:** Ghouls suffer a -2 penalty to all rolls when in sunlight.



*"I am alone and miserable. Only someone as ugly as I am could love me."*

—Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*

Eve was constructed by a reclusive weird scientist who craved female companionship but who lacked the social skills to find one among humanity. Alas, he was also sorely lacking in the delicate touch of the surgeon.

His creation, which he named Eve, was intelligent and charismatic, and had curves in all the right places, but her pasty-white skin was marred by a mass of livid scars. Her creator's rejection was swift and brutal, as was the creature's response. Now alone, Eve stole what wealth she could carry and fled into the night.

Like her creator, Eve craves companionship, something denied her by her disfigured



appearance. All attempts to befriend humans have ended the same way, with rejection followed by a bloody and destructive rage.

This is not to say she has completely failed to integrate into society. She has taught herself to dance and sing to a fair degree of competency, and has even developed empathy toward mortals. Eve has attended a few dances and other social events (under the pseudonym Eve Adamson), but is forced to wear gloves and a full veil to disguise her unnatural disfigurements. The ruse has a limited duration, for sooner or later someone invariably deigns to peek beneath the veil. That is when the screaming and bloodletting begins.

When not attempting to infiltrate humanity, Eve lives on the fringes of society, her scars hidden beneath tightly wound rags. She has passing acquaintances among beggars, but none of them have seen her face or know her sorrowful history.



# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Walking Dead

Not revealing her true form to them is perhaps her greatest mistake, for the lowest of the low carry with them many scars and disfigurements, and are less likely to react with abject fear.

Like virtually all flesh golems, Eve has no conscience. Those she murders she considers devoid of compassion, and thus they deserve their ugly fate.

## Eve

### Patron 2

**Archetype:** *Artificial life*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 6, Initiative 6, Defense 7, Stun 4, Health 7, Horror 2 (4 once you realize it's a walking corpse)

**Skills:** Athletics 5, Brawl 6, Empathy 6, Intimidation 8, Linguistics 4, Performance 6, Survival 6

**Talents:** Fearsome 2 (Can temporarily frighten foes), Staggering Blow (+1 bonus to knock-back her opponent)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Disfigured (-2 penalty on all rolls where appearance is a factor; +1 Style point whenever she is rejected because of her appearance), Lovelorn (+1 Style point whenever she is rejected or she suffers hardship in the name of love)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N

**Crush:** If the golem successfully pins an opponent, she can begin squeezing on the next round. Instead of making an Attack, Eve automatically inflicts lethal damage equal to her Strength. Being pinned, the victim can resist only with their Passive Defense.

**Rage 2:** Can voluntarily take 1N damage to gain a +4 bonus to all Strength-based Skill and Attribute rolls.



*"Since every genre is nourished by its beady waters, a paddle steamer can take even the most*

*walk-shy tourists to their chosen destination. As a bonus, there is traditionally at least one murder on board each trip—a "consideration" to the head steward will ensure that it is not you."*

—Jasper Fforde, *One of Our Thursdays Is Missing*

With no railways and few roads, passengers and cargo were transported along the mighty rivers of the United States. The early 19th century was the golden age for river steamboats. It is estimated that in 1810 only around two dozen steamboats sailed the Mississippi, but within 20 years that number had risen twentyfold.

Most of these vessels were working ships, rough and ready like the crews who manned them. Others served as floating casinos or showboats, catering to disparate audiences spread along the riverbanks in a never ending procession of sailing up and down the waterway. A small few paddle steamers, however, were floating palaces where the rich and famous could dine and dance in opulent fashion.

All things must come to an end, though, and the golden age of river transport was no exception. Smothered by the expanding railways, the use of riverboats greatly diminished from the 1860s onward. One showboat and casino, *Snowmane*, has not only survived the downturn, it has boomed.

The ship belongs to Captain Jeremiah Bartlett. Bartlett has the appearance of a man in his early 40s. He is strong and robust without being bulky. Although not prone to excessive vanity, he prides himself on his appearance, especially his dark hair and beard, which he keeps neatly trimmed. Bartlett is polite to his guests, though he rarely socializes with them outside of a few hands of cards. While his lips may smile on occasion, his gray eyes are lifeless and cold, flickering into life only when he dines on his favorite meal—human flesh.

Bartlett is actually 82 years of age and has spent much of his life on the river. His longevity is due to him being a ghoul. The captain preys exclusively on unaccompanied passengers, and cares nothing for the gender of his chosen victim. Drugged and murdered, the unfortunate souls are cooked up by Bartlett's personal chef, a hulking mute freed slave named Gabo.

## Princes of Darkness

Unlike most of his fiendish ilk, Bartlett has managed to keep his yearning for human flesh in check. It is relatively easy to hide a few disappearances—the riverboat sails on long journeys and there are no passenger manifests. As far as concerned relatives know, a missing passenger simply went ashore at some point and never returned. One benefit to keeping a check on his cravings is that he has retained both his intelligence and appearance, despite many decades of cannibalism.

### Jeremiah Bartlett, Captain

#### Patron 3

**Archetype:** *Ghoul*; **Motivation:** *Survival*;  
**Style:** 3

**Primary Attributes:** Body 5, Dexterity 3, Strength 4, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 7, Perception 7, Initiative 6, Defense 8, Stun 5, Health 11, Horror —

**Skills:** Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Bureaucracy 4, Con 6, Diplomacy 5, Empathy 5, Firearms 4, Gambling 6, Intimidation 6, Performance 5, Pilot: Nautical 6, Streetwise 6

**Talents:** Famine Hardy (Suffers less fatigue from starvation or thirst), Robust (+2 Health rating), Tough (+1 Body rating)

**Resources:** Fame 1 (Riverboat; +2 bonus), Refuge: Size 2 (Riverboat), Status 1 (Riverboat captain; +2 Social bonus)

**Flaws:** Addiction: Human flesh (+1 Style point whenever his addiction hurts him or someone he cares about), Secret: Cannibal (+1 Style point whenever he is confronted with the truth or goes out of his way to protect the secret)

**Weapons:** Punch 5N, Heavy revolver 7L

**Living Dead:** Bartlett appears as he did in life and retains his intellect.

**Sunlight Resistance:** Bartlett is not pained by sunlight and ignores the usual -2 penalty associated with ghouls.



*when you think yourself safe and happy, and suddenly your joy will turn to ashes in your mouth, and you'll know the debt is paid."*

—George R.R. Martin, *A Clash of Kings*

Even John Timmerman (1733-1790) would admit that he was not a good man in life. A pirate of low morals and ill-renown, he and his scurvy crew cut a bloody swathe through the Caribbean and among the coastal colonies of the fledgling United States of America. Murder and theft were his only pastimes, and he excelled at both. As his wealth grew, so did the amount of innocent blood on his hands.

Timmerman eventually tired of his piratical life. With vast wealth at his disposal, he sought to settle down, buy property, and become a respected man of leisure.

After making his wishes known, he was eventually offered safe passage in the fledgling

### John Timmerman

*"I will hurt you for this. I don't know how yet, but give me time. A day will come*



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town of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Keen to raise money to expand the settlement, the council offered the pirate captain safe passage, land, and a new identity in return for a small portion of his treasure.

Unfortunately, Timmerman wasn't the only one with greed in his heart. Once they were convinced Timmerman's treasure was safely ensconced in his new home, the townsfolk, under the sway of Alderman Darius Miller, stormed the mansion and arrested the pirate. After a hasty trial, Timmerman was sentenced to death by hanging, along with several of his crew who had opted to start a new life in Myrtle Beach. The pirates were still waiting for sentence to be carried out when their gold and silver was added to the town treasury.

The hanging of a pirate was a rare occurrence in 1790, and the executions drew a sizeable crowd of onlookers, despite the thick fog that rolled in off the sea. As the noose was

placed around his neck, Timmerman vowed bloody revenge on his betrayers from beyond the grave. His final words were cut short as his neck snapped.

As the decades passed and Myrtle Beach grew into a town, Timmerman and his ilk were forgotten, a minor footnote in history. In recent months, though, folk have started to whisper his name once more. Three citizens, descendants of those who betrayed the pirate a century ago, were found brutally murdered. Despite protestations that Timmerman lies in his unmarked grave, some folk believe he has returned as promised.

Timmerman and his five cohorts (treat as regular revenants) have indeed risen from death. With the treasure long spent, they seek to kill the descendants of their persecutors. Family trees develop a lot of branches down the years, and the undead pirates have a lot of work ahead of them.

Timmerman is a rotting corpse clad in the clothes of an 18th century gentleman, his neck hanging slightly to one side. His cutlass remains as sharp as ever and he wears a brace of primed blackpowder pistols. Not only has Satan granted Timmerman his desire for revenge, he has given him supernatural powers with which to achieve his goal.

## John Timmerman

**Patron** 3

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Revenge*; **Style:** 3

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 4, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 7, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 6, Stun N/A, Health 7\*, Horror 4

**Skills:** Athletics 7, Brawl 7, Firearms 7, Intimidation 7, Melee 7, Stealth 5

**Talents:** Flurry 2 (Can attack same opponent twice at no penalty), Ricochet Shot (Ignores up to 2 points of cover penalties), Riposte (May reflexively attack as part of the Parry maneuver)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Stubborn (+1 Style point whenever his



## Princes of Darkness

inflexibility causes him trouble, or he forces others to go along with his idea)

**Weapons:** Punch 7N, Cutlass 9L, Blackpowder pistol 9L

*\* A revenant is immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

**Fog Walker:** As an Attack action, Timmerman can cause fog he has summoned to coalesce around him. Once done, this enables him to teleport to anywhere under the fog bank as a Move action. His minions lack this ability, though if they are within five feet of their master they travel with him.

**Multiple Lives:** Each time a revenant is slain, they return from death the next sunset fully healed. This occurs even if the corpse is utterly destroyed. Revenants are not immortal, though. Each time one reanimates, its Willpower rating drops by one (recalculate Secondary Attributes as required). When Willpower permanently drops to zero, the revenant can rise no more.

**Summon Fog:** Timmerman can raise a fog as an Attack action. The fog covers a square mile, but must roll in from the sea. Typically, it takes an hour to blanket an area. It then remains for the duration of the combat or scene. The fog gives a -2 Visibility to all except Timmerman and his crew. By self-inflicting a lethal wound, the pirate can increase the density to give a -4 visibility modifier.



*"All causes shall give way: I am in blood Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,*

*Returning were as tedious as go o'er."*

—William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

Keen to prove his theories on the creation of life through scientific means, Doctor Maximus Barnstable used second-rate body parts held together with third-rate stitching. Barnstable's success was marred by his slapdash attitude to his work. Although his creature lived, it oozed blood where limbs had been grafted together and through its stitches.

Not that Barnstable cared one iota. His first



creation was merely an experiment, something to be studied with impartiality so that improvements might be made in subsequent specimens. Only then, when he had perfected his art, would his creations be revealed to the world. Calculating his creature had approximately three weeks of existence before its life expired, the mad scientist set about recording its gradual death with empirical precision.

Number One—Barnstable's name for his work—may have been a mindless brute, but it possessed a strong survival instinct. As the days ticked by and it slowly weakened, it begged for blood to replenish its body. Barnstable ignored the pitiful pleas, for in his mind Number One was not truly alive. As he told it, "You would be better praying to Saint Lucy of Syracuse (patron saint of protection against bleeding), for you shall receive no succor from me."

Fuelled by rage and a lust for life, the weak-



# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Walking Dead

ened creature used the last of its inhuman strength to break its bonds and strike down the madman who had spawned it. Grabbing a needle, Number One quickly drained the scientist's blood and injected it into her withered veins, renewing her vigor.

Now going by the name Lucy, after the saint, the creature has managed to survive for over a century. Each week or so it must inject itself with human blood. Lucy has no problem ending human life—survival is all that matters, and she has absolutely no conscience or moral compass. Humans kill animals for food; she kills humans to live. For the most part she stalks the poorest members of society, people whose disappearance will not raise alarm bells. Forced to go for a prolonged period without injections, though, she attacks whatever prey is to hand.

Lucy is the stereotypical image of a flesh golem—scarred, ugly, and violent. She is also covered in a thin veneer of caked blood.

## Lucy

### Patron 2

**Archetype:** *Artificial life*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 6, Dexterity 4, Strength 5, Charisma 0, Intelligence 1, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 1, Move 9, Perception 4, Initiative 5, Defense 9, Stun 6, Health 10, Horror 3 (4 once you realize it's a walking corpse)

**Skills:** Athletics 10, Brawl 10, Intimidation 5, Stealth 8\*

**Talents:** Fearsome (Can temporarily frighten opponents), High Pain Tolerance (Ignores 3 levels of wound penalties), Tough (+1 Body rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Sadism (+1 Style point whenever it is needlessly cruel to its friends or enemies)

**Weapons:** Punch 10N

\* *Lucy suffers a -1 Size penalty to Stealth rolls.*

**Rage:** Can voluntarily take 1N damage to gain a +2 bonus to all Strength-based Skill and Attribute rolls.

**Recharge:** The golem can go without a recharge for a number of days equal to its Body

rating. After this, it automatically loses one point of Health per day until it acquires a suitable recharge. It can voluntarily burn through its blood. Doing so reduces the number of days before a recharge is due by one, but gains the creature an additional Move or Attack action for a single combat turn.



*"Watch it, nasty boy, or I might jest have you fixed, iff'n you not careful."*

—Jason Medina, *A Ghost In New Orleans*

New Orleans is a new city, having been founded only in 1718, but the dank, primeval bayous that run around and through it are as old as time. Several of these timeless streams feed into Lake Maurepas, a brackish body of water some 20 miles northwest of the city. Few white men have ever risked exploring the mosquito-infested swamp surrounding it, and even the recently-freed slaves go there only rarely.

Deep in the swamp lives Mama Bayou, a withered hag of African descent. Stories concerning her are well known in the poorer districts, but rarely told to outsiders.

Mama Bayou, it is said, has existed since shortly after the first slaves were dragged to the area to work on plantations. As the blood from their scourging fed into the bayous, it coalesced to give life to Mama Bayou. Another tale claims she was born of no earthly parents, but was created by the *loa*. Every story says that she is a powerful Voodoo priestess, a witch whose powers allow her to raise the dead and bind spirits, as well as see into the future.

Mama Bayou is indeed ancient, having risen from death in 1732. A Voodoo priestess and former slave, she was a ghoul long before her transportation to America. Her heart may have been wicked, but she was innocent of the crime that led to her death—using black magic to blight her master's children with sickness.

Shortly after her death, a cabal of Voodoo practitioners attempted to raise Mama Bayou from the grave using black magic. After hours of chanting, the crone finally dragged herself from the waterlogged soil. The ritual, one so

## Princes of Darkness

potent it involved a dozen sacrifices, transformed Mama Bayou into one of the walking dead, albeit one who retained her personality and intelligence. She was a zombie master, but retained her ghoulish lust for human flesh.

After enacting her revenge on her former master and his family, Mama Bayou retreated deep into the swamp, taking over an abandoned house on the edge of Lake Maurepas. She lives there still, surrounded by the shambling corpses of those who have offended her.

Although her soul is as black as pitch, Mama Bayou is prepared to aid those who meet her twin demands. First, they must bring her a human corpse (on which she dines). Second, the supplicant must gift her a lock of their hair, a nail clipping, or a few drops of blood.

As a villain, Mama Bayou is the power behind a lesser foe. She may lend a follower zombies for a task, curse someone on their behalf, or even strike their foe dead. Only after repeated crimes have been thwarted should the globetrotters discover her existence.

### Mama Bayou

#### Patron 4

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 4

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 4, Strength 4, Charisma 3, Intelligence 4, Willpower 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 8, Perception 9, Initiative 8, Defense 8, Stun 4, Health 9, Horror 3

**Skills:** Academics: Occult 8, Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Empathy 7, Intimidation 8, Investigation 7, Linguistics 5, Magic: Black Magic 12, Stealth 6, Streetwise 6

**Talents:** Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals), Psychic Resistance 2 (+4 bonus to resist supernatural effects), Skill Aptitude (+2 to Magic rolls)

**Resources:** Artifact 1 (Sacrificial dagger), Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 bonus to Magic rolls), Refuge: Size 1 (Abandoned plantation house), Status 1 (Voodoo priestess; +2 Social bonus)

**Rituals:** Augury, Channel Dead, Control Animal (snakes only), Empower, Fear, Harm, Greater Hex, Lesser Hex, Nature's Embrace,

Raise Dead, Spirit Binding, Spirit Sense, Summon Horror

**Flaws:** Disfigured (+1 Style point whenever she is rejected because of her appearance.)

**Weapons:** Punch 6N

**Raise the Dead:** Mama Bayou is a true master of necromancy. Animated dead given unlife by her Raise Dead ritual do not return to their inanimate state after one day, but remain mobile until destroyed. The maximum number of zombies that may be animated at any one time is equal to 10 times her Charisma rating.

**Sunlight Resistance:** Mama Bayou is not pained by sunlight and ignores the usual -2 penalty associated with ghouls.

**Warp Landscape:** By altering paths, summoning mists, or causing vegetation to conceal trails, the hag causes all Survival: Navigation rolls made within 10 miles of her lair to suffer a penalty equal to her Charisma rating.





# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Walking Dead

## Prometheus

*"The soul becomes dyed with the color of its thoughts."*

—Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*

Most copies of Frankenstein's legendary monster are little better than rage-filled beasts, devoid of higher intellect and the capacity to learn. Rarely, one is produced that is highly intelligent and capable of complex reasoning. Prometheus is one such fiend.

Prometheus was created to assist his master in his experiments, and he learned quickly. Capable of reading, he spent hours perusing books on philosophy and religion.

One stormy night, he posed his creator two questions—do I possess a soul, and what will happen to me when I die? Laughing, his master

informed him that he could not possibly possess a soul, for he was created, not born. Given that, he would be assigned to oblivion when his life eventually ended.

Prometheus demanded that he be given a soul, for without one he was naught but a mockery of man and an affront to God. That he deserved one, he argued, was clearly apparent, for did he not appreciate poetry and understand philosophical matters? Was he not above the beasts of the earth by acknowledging the existence of merciful God?

His master refused, claiming such power lay in the hands of God alone. As Prometheus crushed the life from his creator, he vowed that he would steal that power for himself.

Using his former master's wealth and laboratory, Prometheus delved into forbidden experimentation, walking a road that no sane creature would dare to tread. Decades have passed but the monster has finally made the breakthrough he needed. He has found a way to capture souls at the instant of death (using a device he calls the Soul Collector) and store them indefinitely in a gigantic glass receptacle he calls the Soul Chamber.

According to his diabolical calculations, once he has collected 100 souls he can move to phase two of his perverted experiment. By connecting himself to the Soul Chamber and blasting it with a tremendous bolt of electricity the souls will coalesce into a single entity and fuse with his body.

Prometheus' dream is close at hand, for the Soul Collector is nearly full. A handful more and he will be ready to gain a soul. What has escaped his attention is that even if his new soul is pure when it enters its body, it will rapidly be stained black by the blood on his hands. For all his labors, for all his noble intentions, all Prometheus will succeed in doing is damning himself to Satan's embrace.

## Prometheus

**Patron 3**

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Wisdom*; **Style:** 3

**Primary Attributes:** Body 5, Dexterity 3, Strength 4, Charisma 1, Intelligence 4, Willpower 4



## Princes of Darkness

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 1, Move 7, Perception 8, Initiative 7, Defense 7, Stun 5, Health 10, Horror 2 (4 once you realize it's a walking corpse)

**Skills:** Academics: Philosophy 5, Academics: Religion 5, Athletics 7, Brawl 8, Craft: Electrics 6, Intimidation 5, Linguistics 5, Science: Biology 8, Stealth 6\*

**Talents:** Jack of All Trades (Ignores untrained Skill penalty when using any general Skill), Weird Science (Can create gadgets)

**Resources:** Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 bonus to Science: Biology), Refuge: Size 1 (Large townhouse)

**Flaws:** Fanatical (+1 Style point whenever his devotion causes harm or he converts someone else to his way of thinking), Righteous (+1 Style point whenever its actions alienate him, or cause others to publicly question his motives and moral judgment)

**Weapons:** Punch 8N

\* *Prometheus has a -1 Size penalty to Stealth rolls.*

**Crush:** If the golem successfully pins an opponent, she can begin squeezing on the next round. Instead of making an Attack, Eve automatically inflicts lethal damage equal to her Strength. Being pinned, the victim can resist only with their Passive Defense.



*"Bite first, ask questions later."*

—John Austin, *So Now You're a Zombie: A Handbook for the Newly Undead*

If private correspondence and anecdotal evidence is to be believed, the ghoul known in the globetrotting community as Slack Jaw has haunted mankind for some 250 years.

The fiend takes its nickname from an unusual ability. Like a constrictor snake, Slack Jaw can unhinge his jaws to accommodate large amounts of food. Once its jaws are locked around an opponent's limb, the jaw snaps back into place with tremendous pressure, tearing through flesh and breaking bone as it does. With a swift yank of its head, the ghoul removes the severed limb. More than one young globetrotter has scoffed at this tale, only to be silenced by

a veteran waving the empty sleeve of his jacket as testimony to the ghoul's ferocious bite. Even if globetrotters can retain their limbs, injuries inflicted by the ghastly maw quickly fester, leading to a risk of blood poisoning.

Despite numerous investigations, Slack Jaw's history remains a mystery to the Leagues of Adventure. The first record that can be tentatively tied to him is from 1648. It takes the form of a letter written to a chaplain during the English Civil War, in which the unnamed author claims to have "battled a creature from the grave" which "with great gusto did sever my arm using its wicked teeth."

Whether Slack Jaw originates from that bloody conflict or owes its origins to an earlier age is something scholastic globetrotters would like settled. The Ghost Club has a standing reward of £200 for verifiable information concerning one of its greatest nemeses.



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The use of the pronoun “it” is deliberate. Whatever gender it was born, the thing has no vestiges of humanity. To use he or she when describing so vile a creature is to do humanity a gross disservice.

Forgoing clothes, the bestial fiend is encrusted in grave dirt and the remains of previous meals. Taut muscles ripple beneath its parchment-like skin. Its mouth, filled with sharp teeth, continually opens and closes. As it does, saliva mixed with decayed flesh drips from its maw. Slack Jaw has long forgotten how to speak.

## Slack Jaw

**Patron 2**

**Archetype:** *Undead*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 3, Strength 4, Charisma 1, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 7, Perception 6, Initiative 8, Defense 7, Stun 4, Health 7, Horror 4

**Skills:** Athletics 9, Brawl 9, Intimidation 6, Stealth 8

**Talents:** Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Glutton (+1 Style point whenever its appetite causes it problems)

**Weapons:** Bite 9L, Claw 9L

**Infected Bite:** Victims who suffer a wound from a bite attack must make a Body roll x 2 with a Difficulty equal to the damage taken or the bite becomes infected.

**Iron Teeth:** Slack Jaw ignores one point of Passive Defense from armor.

**Pained by Sunlight:** Ghouls suffer a -2 penalty to all rolls when in sunlight.

**Reform:** If the walking dead's Health is -4 or above at end of a combat turn then it automatically regenerates back to full Health and regrows any severed limbs. In order to slay it, the unholy abomination must be reduced to -5 Health or lower in a *single* combat turn.

**Severing Bite:** If Slack Jaw makes a called shot bite attack to an opponent's arm and inflicts more wounds than the victim's Body rating (after Defense is factored in), he severs that limb. The victim loses 1L each combat

turn from blood loss until stabilized. He also gains the One Hand Flaw.

**Stench:** Any living creature within 15 feet of the creature suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls so long as it remains in range. Even backing away has a lingering effect—the stench pervades the nostrils for a number of combat turns equal to 7 - Willpower rating after retreating from its area of effect.



*“The petty-minded fools here think surgery and butchery are the same thing. Look!”*

—Seanan McGuire, *Every Heart a Doorway*

The name Surly Ghoul has circulated in the gutter press for the last year or so, and always in connection with a series of unsolved and thoroughly gruesome murders. He has become a figure of urban legend, a bogeyman better known through newspaper reports as “The Whitechapel Cannibal.”

The few eyewitnesses that have spied him have given differing reports as to his appearance, but the common description used by the press speaks of him as a man with a bestial appearance and malevolent eyes, and of obvious limited intellect. Several witnesses, who stumbled across him in the course of his unholy nocturnal feeding, claim to have called out to him. In return, the fiend turned to glare at them and hissed his name before scampering into the shadows.

With the memory of Jack the Ripper still raw in London's consciousness, the police have so far managed to keep out of the papers the fact that the killer does not bludgeon or strangle his victims before carelessly tearing into their warm flesh, as is commonly believed. All evidence suggests he incapacitates his victims, and then, while they are still alive (albeit unconscious) carefully dissects their corpse with almost surgical precision to reveal their succulent organs.

The pitiful creature is actually none less than Sir William Gull, formerly a Freemason, prominent medical doctor, and Physician-in-Ordinary to Queen Victoria. His transformation into the monster he is today began in 1887. Following a stroke that damaged his brain,

# Princes of Darkness

Gull began to crave the taste of flesh. At first he could control his unnatural hunger by feasting on raw meat.

As the months passed he was forced to move on to live animals. Within a year he was compelled to frequent the seedier parts of London in order to sate his growing appetite, for now only human flesh would suffice.

As far as the world is concerned, Sir William Gull died on January 30, 1890. In truth, his family, having discovered his ghoulish nature, had Sir William secretly lobotomized by a fellow Freemason who could be trusted to remain silent, and had him committed to a lunatic asylum under an alias. His family gave a collective sigh of relief when they heard the asylum has burned down, for they believed their shameful secret was now gone forever. Alas, Sir William had escaped in the confusion.

His intelligence greatly diminished by the lobotomy and his ghoulish nature, Sir William continues to haunt the East End of London, lurking in the shadows and narrow alleys, and preying on society's most unfortunate members.

## Surly Ghoul

### Patron 2

**Archetype:** *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Survival*;  
**Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 3, Strength 5, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 8, Perception 5 (Smell 8), Initiative 5, Defense 7, Stun 4, Health 7, Horror 2 (4 if feeding)

**Skills:** Athletics 8, Brawl 8, Intimidation 5, Medicine 4, Stealth 8, Survival 5

**Talents:** Flurry (May make two attacks at -2 to each attempt), Keen Sense (+4 smell-based Perception rating), Subtle Strike (May use Stealth rating when making an unarmed attack)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Glutton (+1 Style point whenever his appetite causes problems for him or his comrades)

**Weapons:** Claws 9L

**Pained by Sunlight:** Ghouls suffer a -2 penalty to all rolls when in sunlight.

**Wall Walker:** Surly Ghoul can crawl up



walls or across ceilings at half his usual Move distance. He may also Run, but only at half speed. If he suffers knock back or knock down while climbing, he must make a Dexterity x 2 roll with a Difficulty equal to the damage dealt or lose his grip.

## Victor Frankenstein

*"We followed the local death-notices like ghouls, for our specimens demanded particular qualities. What we wanted were corpses interred soon after death and without artificial preservation; preferably free from malforming disease, and certainly with all organs present. Accident victims were our best hope."*

—H. P. Lovecraft, *Herbert West: Reanimator*



# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Walking Dead



Born in Naples, Italy but raised in Geneva, Switzerland, Victor is the son of Alphonse Frankenstein and Caroline Beaufort. Although his family was of distinguished ancestry and Victor was often given the title “baron,” he holds no formal noble title.

Having developed an interest in the great alchemists of old during his youth, Victor’s initial dream was the discovery of the elixir of life. Through this, he hoped to unlock the secret of immortality.

During his years at the University of Ingolstadt, this was replaced by an interest in chemistry, specifically with the intention of animating life in inanimate matter. It was a quest that would consume the next two years of his life. Though he eventually succeeded in granting life to a patchwork humanoid, Victor was horrified at the results and cast the creature from his presence. Woe and misery followed, for the

abandoned creature desired, and achieved, revenge on its creator.

As documented by Mary Shelley, who had pieced together the scientist’s sad story from his diary and several letters, Victor chased the creature to the Arctic, whereupon the scientist subsequently died of pneumonia and the monster disappeared into the frozen wastes, never to be seen again. According to his chronicler, Victor’s death occurred sometime in the early 19th century, probably around 1816.

Victor Frankenstein lives still. Though undocumented, his work on the elixir of life was never truly forgotten, nor was it fruitless. The transition from mortal to ageless being has not been kind on the scientist’s mind. He still believes his quest to animate matter can bring beneficial results to humanity, and believes he knows where he went wrong.

Using the name Victor Alucard, the insane scientist has infiltrated the Frankenstein Club. Having secured suitable chemical apparatus, his next goal is to find suitable corpses—preferably very fresh ones.

## Victor Frankenstein

### Patron 2

**Archetype:** *Scientific Necromancer*; **Motivation:** *Truth*; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 4, Willpower 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 4, Perception 8, Initiative 6, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 7, Horror —

**Skills:** Academics: Philosophy 6, Athletics 4, Con 5, Linguistics 6, Medicine 7, Melee 4, Ride 4, Science: Chemistry 8, Survival 5

**Talents:** Spark of Life (Biological creations only; Frankenstein cannot create any other weird science artifacts)

**Resources:** Rank 1 (Frankenstein Club; +2 Social bonus), Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 Science: Chemistry rolls), Refuge: Size 1 (Large townhouse)

**Flaws:** Obsession (+1 Style points whenever his obsession causes him to do something dangerous or endanger someone else’s life)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N, Scalpel 5L

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**Commanded by magic or weird science,  
the worm-ridden dead do not rest easily  
in the grave.**

**From skeletons and zombies to ghouls and Frankenstein's monsters,  
the walking dead take many ghastly forms.**

**Commanded by foul sorcerers or deranged weird scientists, or driven  
by base instincts, their numbers might be legion were it not for the  
bravery of the Leagues of Adventure.**

**Contents include an overview of mankind's historical interaction with  
the walking dead; how the various walking dead might be created;  
diabolical powers the Gamemaster can use to create unique specimens;  
a bestiary of fiendish creatures; and a number of walking dead villains  
with ghastly plans and motives of their own.**

**Leagues of Gothic Horror is a Horror Roleplaying game from Triple Ace Games.**



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