

ZOMBIE THE COIL

A Storytelling Game of
Mortality, Identity and Freedom

First Edition

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**Prelude:
Leaving the Coil**
By Jean-Paul Gagnon

“To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;”
- Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act 3 Scene 1

Rain-washed marble statues stand in silent guard, the radiant setting sun causing their cold-lidded eyes to acquire mimicry of life in the ebony darkness. Flowers are strewn, carelessly deprived of their roots, dying upon freshly disturbed earth. A weeping willow stands solid as its age, branches swaying silently in the breeze, bathed in the light of the Cheshire moon. A

black gate breaches the opening between two rough-hewn granite walls. The night is pregnant with stars, the air thick with the cold of evening. Sounds of life are present in this place of death. Nocturnal birds and insects fly through the silky moonlight intent on their twilight errands. Beneath the earth, burrowing worms



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crawl through the damp soil, enriching the nutrients with their passage; extracting salts and worm food.

You see none of this. You hear none of this. Yet you feel much of your surroundings. You do not know what this means. You only see darkness, an encroaching closeness, tight with the black that surrounds you. Shadows feed upon your inner being, pulling you upward... outward... towards what you sense in the darkness beyond. You start to reach out your arms but are halted; your fingers scratch against what is holding you, but you find no purchase. Velvet covered wood keeps your arms from rising. You feel a sudden panic and push. Wood splinters and moist soil fall onto your prone form. You bring your arms in front of your face and push upward with your spine, crashing through the wood and swimming out into the soil. You can't breathe but neither do you have to. You swim through the earth as if through water and burst from the sucking hole that was once your grave.

Your memories are absent and you are unstable on legs that do not know how to move. Clumps of dirt fall from your shoulders and hair. The sun has set and the night seeps through the headstones and statues of the cemetery. A wind sighs through the bars of the gate as you turn towards the streetlights. A simple stone is behind you, its legend carved deep with a diamond saw. However, you cannot decipher the glyphs written there. Your name is part of a world you are no longer a member of. All you remember is a face and a desire. All you experience now is a hunger. A terrifying hunger.

Your bones slowly remember their accustomed gait as you push through the cemetery gate and shamble towards the lights of the city. You walk in the middle of the street. You would read Old Hallow Lane on the road signs, if you could still read. The night is with you and the streetlights seem to dim as you pass. No one notices you as you walk down the deserted street. Even if they did notice you, they would not remember.

The face is ever in your mind, calling you with its familiarity. With this one you will find an answer, a release from your hunger. The face now has clear features in your dead mind, two deep green eyes and high cheekbones framed eloquently by black strands of long straight hair. You can almost see her body, her sweet flesh in a pair of denim jeans and a tank top. You can almost remember how her body felt, pressed against you in the darkness. Enfolding warmth. Your

body craves the warmth, warmth so terribly foreign to your present state.

The wind whips the street, blowing leaves and paper bags into the drains to collect with old newspapers and soda cans. Everything is so unfamiliar. You know the streets... and yet you do not. Your feet are taking you in this direction, and you are not sure why. Your clothes are a mess, smeared with dirt and torn from where they caught against the jagged wood of that box you left behind. Your hair is disheveled and unkempt and your face is sallow and pale beneath a layer of mortician's makeup. You step up onto the curb and begin walking on the sidewalk. You are careful not to step on a single crack in the concrete and you do this without ever moving your eyes from straight in front of you. Your arms hang at your sides, swinging with the motion of your movement but not as if they held any strength within them. But they are strong. You are strong. You have defeated the grave, and though you do not have the words to understand what you feel, you are freed from a destructive cycle of pain. You know where you are going now. You are going to the face.

The street might seem familiar if you had a memory of streets. The building might seem familiar if you had a memory of buildings. Perhaps you once lived here in your life, whatever that entailed. Perhaps you once walked this street arm in arm with the face at your side, together forever. However long forever lasts these days. You walk up the steps to the building, being careful to step over the third step. You don't know why you do this; neither do you know why you haven't stepped on any of the cracks in the sidewalk all night long. In fact you don't even notice that you do this or that your hands are rooting through your pockets, tearing at your ragged pants and what remains of your clothes, looking for something that is not there.

You push against the door and it creaks from the force of your skeletal frame. The bones of your hand seem to become more pointed as you claw at the door and tear great swaths of splintering wood from the frame. Your hunger is growing unbearable. All you can think of is the hunger and the face. You know that she will release you from your pain. You are in the entranceway to an apartment complex. Architecture from the Fifties appears before your sunken eyes and you mount the staircase leading to the landing of the floors above. Step, step, long step,



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step, and up and up you mount the stairs, your hand raking at the banister as you climb. You reach the top... and there!

Yes there is the door you are being called towards; the hunger rises in your very flesh, calling out for fulfillment. The door seems to melt before your presence as you pass into the entranceway of the apartment. The faint scent of jasmine-tinged perfume hangs in the air as you slow your steps and gaze in faint recognition at your surroundings.

But there is not time now, the hunger calls. You are burning up inside, ready to feed your destructive hunger. You follow the sweet floral scent past the glowing light of the fish tank and into the bedroom. You are surprisingly quiet as you enter and gaze down upon the sleeping form of the face. Your hunger is nearly banished by the sight of her sleeping form, revealed in the moonlight cascading through the unshaded window. No, the fever is too strong; the moment passes and you fall biting and tearing upon her. She wakes at the shock of your impact, but barely has time to scream before either the recognition of what is happening or the blood loss causes her to pass out. You are covered in gore and you feel your body come more to life as you rise from your feast. Suddenly you are assaulted by images of the life you once shared with this person now dead, dead from your hand and your hunger. You stumble and fall

against the wall. Your arms reach down and pick up her blood-streaked head, dead eyes staring out at you. You remember her name, Sarah. You remember that she meant something to you but you don't know what, and that you probably meant something to her as well.

You hold her head in your cold bloodstained hands and look into her eyes. At this moment you are conscious of what you have become, a creature neither living nor dead, an abomination, a zombie creature of the night. You will be spurned and hunted, feared for what you are and what you are capable of. Where will you find others like yourself? Where will you find companionship? What is the point of your existence here and now?

You reel under the psychic blows of this dialogue going on inside your mind and stumble against the dresser in the bedroom trying to escape. As you do you bash your shin against the wood and suddenly your mind is silent. Looking down, you see one of the guppies from the fish tank lying stunned on the carpet, a piece of your pant leg in its mouth. You grind it to paste beneath your heel and leave. "So what do I do now?" you think as you leave the apartment building, carefully stepping over the third step onto the sidewalk. You are conscious of your surroundings in a new way. You are also conscious of yourself.

Happy Birthday.



Introduction

"They say, 'life is too short,
'The here and the now'
And, 'You're only given one shot'
But could there be more,
Have I lived before,
Or could this be all that we've got?"
- Dream Theater, John Petrucci, "The spirit carries on"

What is this?

This is the printed version of *Zombie: the Coil*. A game also found on a website hosted by Ex Libris Nocturnis at <http://zombie.nocturnis.net>. This printed version has all the rules and back-story found on the site plus some more text and fewer grammatical errors. It is meant to be a more convenient format for game play than the *Zombie: the Coil* website itself. For the rest of this document, the assumption is made that you have become familiar with the nature of role-playing games and have played role-playing games that utilize the Storyteller system published in White Wolf Game Studios' *World of Darkness* line.

The purpose of this game is two-fold. One, it is designed to provide souls, thoughts, minds, back story, mythos, some antagonists and defined rules systems for the one major supernatural group that has not yet received an official "Monster: the Noun" game line. It is not "Risen: Second Edition." These people are not the Crow. The Zombies in this game are unmistakable for anything other both the traditional voodoo Zombies and the cannibalistic Zombies from those infamous George Romero films.

The second purpose of the game is for it to be played. A game is useless if you don't play and have fun. To this end, parts of the game are designed to be "modular," or easily altered and modified to suit your group's needs and desires. Basically, it's intended to make implementing White Wolf's Golden Rule a bit simpler.

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Concepts of the Game

Zombie: the Coil works on many levels, ranging from intense psycho-emotional drama to gory blood n' guts violence. These are the general over-simplified concepts of the game.

The Modern Zombie

Zombies, also known as the Living Dead, are those who have found themselves outside of mortality. Zombies are hidden among the masses of humanity all over the globe, male or female, every race and nationality has its share of Zombies. Zombies are stricken with the boiling cannibalistic hunger called Fever; only human flesh can satiate this hunger for any length of time.

Zombies, despite stereotypes, can be as intelligent as any normal human. A cunning few might find themselves in modest levels of political power while managing to hide their true nature. The majority, however, walk amongst the dregs of society where no one asks questions and everyone minds their own damned business. Here the Living Dead have formed small secret communities for refuge, security and companionship.

Themes of Zombie

The two main themes of Zombie are the struggle of identity against the disindividualization of mortality and the question of whether it is the soul or memories that constitute an individual identity. Zombie chronicles can run the gamut from academic debates over the nature of the soul, brooding quests for vengeance or high adventure hack n' slash. Either way, the basic theme of triumph of identity and freedom pervades all of **Zombie: the Coil**.

Faces in the Crowd

One of the odd habits of humanity throughout history is to categorize and quantify the unknown and the seemingly unexplainable. From the creation of earliest myths to explain weather anomalies to current studies in genetic and quantum theory, the quest to find the undiscovered and name the un-named continues. This quirk is not limited to the Living, as several scholarly Zombies, in the search for identity, have categorized the different "species" of Zombies into these four generalized groups.

Féos

Also known as the Walking Dead, these shambling mindless drones are more likened to reanimated corpses than true Zombies. At this stage, a casual observer can distinguish which Zombies are Grandes, eaters of the living, and which are Jackals, eaters of the dead. Féos have no speech skills, remedial intelligence at best, and one burning motivation, live flesh. All Zombies start out as Féos before being truly Born. That is, making the transition from Walking Death to Living Death. At Birth, they gain full sentience, though lack but traces of memories of who they once were.



Grandes, Eaters of the Living

Grandes pay the price for their second chance with a hunger for living flesh others must die so that they might live. Live flesh does give Grandes some advantages, such as extreme durability and certain bizarre supernatural powers called Vivas.



Jackals, Eaters of the dead

Jackals only eat well-decayed, or "ripened" flesh. Though this gives them an advantage in the search for food, their dark diet poisons their body but granting them the latent, and occasionally uncontrollable, ability to transform into raging, grotesque, beast of teeth, organs and hunger.



Lichs

Every Born Zombie has a personal nemesis called a Lich. Lichs are not Zombies proper, though they do inhabit the bodies of dead things. They can "jump" from one dead body to another but seem to have no control of the nature of said body for a Lich only appears when a Zombie is most vulnerable, psychologically and physically. Lichs have certain abilities all their own but all of their efforts focus on their one known goal, to force Zombies to "return to the Coil." There are even rumors of Lichs possessing Zombie's bodies and taking control of their minds.



Lexicon

It is uncertain where the origins of many of the words used by the living dead are derived from. Suffice it to say that these words are in common usage today, although some used in more... casual conversation.

Common Parlance

Augur- this is a person, mortal or not, who intentionally summons Zombies or keeps Zombies for the purposes of slave labor. In use, the word is not taken lightly and is often used in the same context as the word Nazi.

Birth or being Born- the time at which a new Zombie gains his or her sentience. Birth seems to be a random event in an uncontrolled group of Féos

Cadre (KA-dray)- A small group of Zombies.

Cell- A larger group of cadres sharing a unifying opinion and/or goals. Several Cells have joined together into larger organizations, the largest of which are the Circle and the Echelons. Much like two political parties with different sub-groups within each. Despite their best efforts, the two factions remain relatively small and exert only moderate influence over the independent cells and the rest of the Living Dead. Given the life span of the average Zombie and changing mores over several decades, few cells last longer than about fifty years.

Circle, the- A collection of predominantly Grande cells founded to provide something of a support network for Grandes. Despite the Grande-centric beliefs, membership in the Circle is open to all Living Dead, be they Grande or Jackal. Not all Cells within the Circle agree with the liberal membership policy.

Coil, the- frequently mentioned by Lichs, the location and nature of the Coil are always a hot topic among the Living Dead. The Coil is assumed to be a synonym for Mortality. Most believe that "returning to the Coil" would be an unbelievably unpleasant experience and avoid it at all costs.

Compulsions - Zombies often experience these odd urges. They vary in intensity but are always somehow connected to their previous life. Indulging in Compulsions will often reveal key memories of the Zombie's previous life, shining some light on that mystery.





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Creeps- Creatures assembled from body parts of various cadavers. They are tended and treated as pets, beasts of burden, companions and spies. They come in many sizes and usually look like entirely unnatural, gruesome flesh-and-bone contraptions.

Echelons, the- The Jackal counterpart to the Circle. The Echelons have organized themselves into a rather elegant system of self-government, contrasting highly with the bestial nature that lurks within its members. Though the Echelons' membership is exclusively Jackal, not all Jackals are members of the Echelons.

Féo (FAY-oh) plural Féos- Féos are how all Zombies start their lives. It is also a reference to the state of being a Féo is in. Left to its own devices, a Féo is obsessed with the Fever and satiating it with the human flesh of its choice. Some Féos can be trained by skilled instructors to perform simple tasks and duties so long as they are fed regularly.

Fever- this is the white-hot cannibalistic desire Zombies experience.

Grande plural Grandes- Zombies who've reached some level of sentience and survive by eating live flesh. In game terms, most player characters will be Grandes.

Haze, the- The half-mocking term used for whatever it is that causes souls to lose their memory before they are destroyed after death. Also referring to a Zombie's inability to remember her previous life.

Independents, the- Any cell that hasn't aligned itself with the Circle or the Echelons. There are a multitude of independent cells established around the world, outnumbering the membership in the Circle and Echelons combined.

Hounfar (HOON-far) plural Hounfars- Mass risings of Zombies, always Féos, that seems to coincide with major, if unrelated, historical events. Hounfars of any sort of great size haven't taken place since the end of World War II.

Jackals- Zombies who reached a level of sentience and survive by eating decomposing flesh.

Lich (LIK or LICH) plural Lichs- Enigmatic beings who seem to know everything about the Zombie to whom they have a connection, even memories of her previous life not yet revealed to the Zombie herself. Lichs use this information to lure the Zombie into the Coil. When a Zombie is

weakest emotionally and/or physically, her Lich will appear, inhabiting the body of the nearest dead body.

Living, the- Mortals.

Meridians- a sort of delicately woven meta-skeleton of life energy that is believed to be composed of Viscera, what keeps a Zombie from decaying further, and what binds their soul and consciousness to their body, thus maintaining their Living Death. The meridians in Zombies must be frequently fed new energy by feasting upon human flesh and absorbing the Viscera within.

Mutations- The grotesque body-shifting abilities possessed by Jackals.

Pulse- this is the metaphysical aspect of Zombies that allows them to communicate with each other, transcending language barriers and physical hindrances to actual vocalization. It also allows Zombies to recognize one Zombie from another even if the two are nothing but a set of dusty old bones.

Safehouse- any place that is well known as a safe spot for Zombies to hang out or hide out.

Viscera (VIS-er-AH)- the energy found in the flesh of all living things.

Viva (VEE-va) plural Vivas- the arcane powers wielded by Grandes.

Whispers- Sense of deja vu arising from contact with anything concerning a Zombie's previous life. Also referring to the total combined memories of a Zombie's previous life.

Zombie- The Living Dead. Those who for whatever reason have returned from or never reached death and have been imprisoned in their flesh.

Vulgar Argot

Slang terms and assorted jargon are naturally produced by any unique culture. Needless to say, the Living Dead culture has created many colorful terms for use in the day-to-day life of a Zombie.

Beef, Green, Prey, Spam- Viscera, mortals, or the Living. It's all the same.

Beefer- Carne

The Basement- the Coil

Boogeymen- Lichs

Frankie- Dembellah user, mostly high level

Invasion- Hounfar

Jumpers- Short for claim-jumpers. A cadre with intent to capture another cadre's safehouse.

Lectors- Grandes
Link, the- The Pulse
Maggots, Struthers- Féos
Munchies- Fever
Pimps- Augurs
Pork- Police Officers
Prettyboys- Pelés
Reshuffled- killed
Skeletors- Knochen
Tetsuos- Jackals

How to use this book

This book is split into three distinct sections labeled **Flesh**, **Bones** and **Tears**. Within each of these sections are chapters designed to explain the different aspects of **Zombie: the Coil** from the setting to rules mechanics.

Flesh

Flesh is wrapped around an in-character narrative where you, the reader, see things through the eyes of a **Zombie** who has just been born, or a **Newborn**.

Chapter One: Setting describes the **World of Darkness** as it relates to **Zombies**. It explains, in detail, the phenomenon, living conditions and general knowledge a **Newborn** needs to have. There are many odd features of the **World of Darkness** that are scarcely known by other supernaturals but commonplace for the **Living Dead**.

Chapter Two: History tells the highly schizophrenic history of the **Living Dead**. Most of which has been forgotten save for the last one hundred fifty years or so.

Chapter Three: Society presents the remarkable adaptations the **Living Dead** community has made to survive in the hostile urban environment. Several of the more prominent **Cells** are also introduced.

Bones

Bones hold the body together. Well, actually, skin helps. Anyway, this section details the rules of the game. It assumes you're already familiar with the **Storyteller** system itself and so moves ahead to describe systems that are unique to **Zombie: the Coil**.

Chapter Four: Character Creation explains the how to make your new **Zombie** character. New **Backgrounds**, **Merits** and a heck of a lot of **Flaws** are explained.

Chapter Five: Systems lays down clear rules for **Zombies**. What their weaknesses are, what they eat, how they function and even how their psychological drives.

Chapter Six: Powers goes into further detail about the specific powers possessed by the **Living Dead**. A myriad of new abilities are presented for your character as well as defined systems for how these work.

Tears

Tears is devoted to the finer details of storytelling and playing **Zombie: the Coil**. Consider this section to contain anything not solely connected to the setting or rules.

Chapter Seven: Storytelling provides some helpful hints on running some of the more peculiar aspects of **Zombie: the Coil** including the unusual phenomenon and specific themes of the game.

Chapter Eight: The Stage grants the final piece of any chronicle. This chapter introduces the supporting cast, antagonists and "props" in the metaphorical stage of **Zombie: the Coil**. It also provides unique rules for these where needed and explains the different denizens of the **World of Darkness** from a **Zombie** point of view.

Disclaimer: Guess what? You're not a **Zombie**. Period. Any terms held in trademark by **White Wolf Games** are hereby acknowledged and are not challenged by any use here. The mention of or reference to any company or product in this website is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned.

Gob's Unnecessarily Sentimental Foreword

A little over a year ago, I was talking to a couple of friends about the one supernatural group not granted its own gameline by the prestigious **White Wolf Game Studio**. One friend passed off the idea of **Zombie** player characters as "Zombie: the Braaaaaaiiiiiins." I decided to develop the concept beyond stereotypes in the pioneer spirit of the other **World of Darkness** games.

Now, hours of personal time that would have probably been better spent doing other things has been invested into the little book you now hold in your hands. Thank you, everyone.



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Chapter One: Setting

"Hey, you awake, Pelé? Alright, cool. Get up, come on. We've only got a few minutes before the cops come looking after the mess you made 'round here. Hey, I said come on! There's nothing you can do here! You ate her. That's not something the pork appreciates even in this shithole. Nothing you could do about it, we've all been there.

"I've got a friend coming 'round in the car. I heard there was a Hounfar out here in the rat district but I didn't think we'd get anyone Born too. Don't worry. You're safe now. Get in the car. Fuck, hear the sirens? Get in, we'll explain everything along the way!

"Alright, we're heading to a safehouse a Knochen I know set up. He owes me a favor. You're gonna have trouble speaking for the next couple hours, but I know you can hear me. It'll take a while for the Pulse to give you back your voice, so listen up. And for Zemi's sake, clean off that piece of liver from your shirt. Damn, that's nasty.

"Name's Johnny Muertos, the lovely driver next to me is Donna Dammit, and the crazy fuckup next to you is Carlton. Great. So, you probably don't remember your name or anything else, do you? Didn't think so. Oy, Pelés are always the worst. No offense, I mean. Oh bloody hell, let's just start from the top. Take it away, Carlton."

"Very well. You, my friend, are a Zombie. It may take you a while for you to remember many of the images associated with that name. Trust me, however, none of them are attractive and only a few are factual. You've just gone through an experience our people call Birth. A simpler and more eloquent description of the event is difficult to find.

"Well, I get ahead of myself. You probably want to know how you came to be in this car with the three of us. Unfortunately, until we get to dig into your memories together a little bit, I don't know the answers to that. Working from past experience, your lack of decomposition and the general patterns with these sorts of things, I'd wager you were just killed. I might even speculate that you were that woman's pimp.

"You probably met her in an alley to broker some sort of deal. I'd imagine she wasn't pleased with the employer/employee relationship either. You see the claw marks on your wrist? Those are most assuredly from an inexpensive brand of press-on nails. Signs of a struggle. You must have wanted something she was keeping from you. Money. Sex. Who knows? In any case, you attacked her. She must have shot you, that much is obvious.

"How do I know these things? Well, as Johnny might say, I hear things in my head. We all do, for most they just hear Whispers from who we used to be. I, be it a blessing or curse, have Whispers of a different sort. It's quite fascinating really, but I digress. You see, you're eventually going to start getting these Whispers too. But it doesn't take a metaphysical connection with past mortality-transcending memories to tell me you've been shot to death. Just look at your chest cavity.

"Oh, yes. Yes, there's that special face. The expression you get very moment you realize the quandry into which you've worked yourself. You see, you're now in a state of Living Death. You're a corpse re-infused with the consciousness, awareness and life it previously housed. Your soul has reached the point of death where all souls become disindividualized by mortality, yet it has returned nonetheless. You're straddling and circumventing the mortal Coil."

"We're here, guys."

"Thank you, Donna. I've filled you in on the basics. Donna, could you walk him in?"

People

"None but the brave deserve the fair."

--Dryden

"Hey, suge, you alright? Heh, what am I saying? Okay, screw the nice girl bit. Sit down over here, get comfortable. This is "the Talk." You're probably wondering who the hell we are and what you are and what we're gonna do with you once we're through with this little chat. Okay, I'm gonna give you a crash course in the way things work around here. You gotta know the people. You don't know the people, you get screwed."

Rot

"Not everyone gets Born looking like Brandon Lee, actually we're usually Born looking like we've spent the last couple weeks or years rotting in coffins. Duh. There's three different types of Living Dead. Divided up by three different levels of rot. Besides appearances, there's enough difference between the rots to keep them distinguished from each other. Now, just because you were Born five minutes after you died doesn't mean anything if you were burned to death. So if burned up Zombie calls himself Pelé while his charred flesh is still smoking, that wannabe is gonna get laughed at."

Rot is the delineation amongst Zombies determined by the level of decomposition at Birth. Rot can also be used as a determination severity and violence of their manner of death. These titles are not any type of social caste system. Anyone, no matter how decomposed, can be in any strata of Zombie society.

Pelé (pay-lay plural Pelés)



"See, sometimes a Zombie is Born just a couple minutes after she died. She's got all her skin, hair and all the nice pretty stuff that makes her look like she's just a little sick. Certainly she couldn't be dead. And she definitely couldn't be Living Dead. Anyway, that's you, a Pelé. You look like shit right now but after you clean up a bit and cover up your wounds, you look as good as new. Pelés are also dumb as a bag of hammers when they're just born too. Heh."

Pelés almost show no visible signs of being Zombies. While this is highly fortunate, they still have a major handicap: Pelés don't remember but a trace of their previous life aside from basic skills like speech,



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reading, or arithmetic. When a Pelé is Born, he is barely able to reason or perform any cognitive thinking beyond basic urges. Often, Pelés have a great deal of time languished over them to teach them about the world in which they now live. Generally, a Pelé will connect more with his life as a Zombie than a distant memory of someone he used to be.

Carne (kar-nes plural Carnes)



"Next you've got the Zombies who still have noticeable amount of flesh but have just as noticeable amount of decomposition. Johnny and me, we're Carnes. If we got enough cover, we can pass as living. Here, I always wear the long sleeves to hide my exposed arm bones."

Carnes are the most common type of Zombie. They still remember little of their past when Born but they can manage to fit into hidden parts of society even if they don't immediately have a fellow Zombie to show them the ropes. They show their decomposition much more than Pelés, but it's usually something that can be explained away as some sort of injury, scar, or some other type of accident. While they have an average ability of cognitive reasoning when Born it's usually just enough to ask where they are, why they're there, and whom they are. If they don't cope with all of this combined with the burning, seething, unexplainable hunger for human flesh, very soon they'll find themselves succumbing to Fever, Jackals, their Lich or just a crazed mortal out hunting for monsters that lurk in the night.

Knochen (K-nokh-en plural Knochen)



"Finally, there's the Zombies who are really friggin far gone when they're Born. They're usually pretty dried out and some of them are absolutely skeletal. They've got weird ideas though. They aren't exactly booksmart when they're Born but they sure do know a hell of a lot about what's happening to them right off the

bat. Spooky too. Despite their wisdom, they still need us to be their eyes and ears on the outside. The guy who runs this place, Sparky, he's a Knochen. He stays in most of the time, we bring him some take-out, he lets us hide out here. It's a good deal."

Knochen are generally respected among the Living Dead. Knochen remember the most out of all newly Born Zombies and seem to have been granted

great insight into the ways of mortality and undead existence. They have a much harder time hiding in society given their advanced state of decay. A Knochen can remember a little more of her past, but by the time she learns more, or even by the time she's Born, the people with whom she associated have probably moved on or passed on.

Races

"So, there's the decomposition thing covered, but then there's the two races. See, some Zombies only eat live flesh. Then there's the ones who eat dead flesh. Actually, they call it 'ripened.' Whatever, that's just nasty, if you ask me."

Grandes

"I ate his liver with some chunky salsa and a side of intestines."

-Johnny Muertos

"Okay, from the looks of the splatter scene back at the alley, I'd say you're a Grande. Yeah, I know, why the hell are we called 'big'? Hell, I dunno. It's a lot less pretentious than 'Eaters of the Living.' Ooooh... cannibals are spooooky. Gimme a break. I figure we got the name Grande from voodoo or something. Now, why is it that we're supposed to eat live flesh? I don't know and I don't really care either. It's what keeps me alive, well sorta. If I've gotta munch on some worthless meatbag, then that's what I'll do. It's much better than the alternative. I might sound cold-hearted, but it's how I've managed to last as long as I have. Devalue the food, kid. That's the way to go."

Grandes are those Zombies who must consume live flesh to survive. This gives them a stronger defense against the Fever, but it also forces them to become killers. In game terms, Grandes are going to be the default character that a player will use.

Jackals



"I will not eat oysters. I want my food dead- not sick, not wounded- dead!"

-Woody Allen

"Now here's the Jackals. They like to think of themselves as better than use Grandes 'cause they're not killers. They're not cursed to hunt the Living. Yeah, whatever. You don't see me



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munching on a dead bum, do you? Anyway, some of the Jackals are alright in my book. Sometimes one of them will hang out with us when we go hunting. We'll eat the catch, they eat the leftovers. Still, I don't like hearing those stories about Jackals eating Grandes. Sometimes they look at you with that objectifying gaze. Ugh, very creepy."

Jackals differ from Grandes in that they can absorb Viscera from dead flesh rather than living flesh. This Viscera is dark, succulent, and very toxic. It weakens their resistance to the Fever. This Viscera also allows a Jackal to transform, temporarily, into horrid malformed beasts of pulsing organs and personified decay. One of the more disturbing stories surrounding the Jackals is that if left alone without food for a long enough time, they'll soon devour themselves unto death. Of course, this could just be a rumor. Usually, Jackals try to present themselves in a regal and sophisticated manner, so as to dissolve any racial stereotypes.

Antagonists

"We found the Zombie in the hospital yard... The doctor uncovered her head for a moment but she promptly clapped her arms over it to shut out the thing she dreaded... Finally the doctor forcibly uncovered her so I could take a picture of her face, and the sight was dreadful. That blank face with its dead eyes"

-- Zora Neale Hurston

"I've gotten you acquainted with the majority of the Living Dead, but that's only half the story. It's a dangerous world out there, it's what makes places like this safehouse necessary."

Féos



"A single Féo is a sob story, an object of pity. A bunch of Féos is a massacre waiting to happen. You probably can't remember any of the Zombie movies, but the gist of it is that before a Zombie is Born, he is a mumbling, shuffling, ravenous eating machine. They are the Walking Dead, not the Living Dead. There is no passion in their eyes. No spark of life in their soul. No Whispers. No sentience. No common sense. No remorse."

Féos are the shambling, Fever-consumed Zombies with whom most mortals are familiar through modern movies and games. All Zombies live the beginning of

their new life as a Féo, usually called by an augur for a simple task (Guard door, carry box, tend field), on rarer occasions a great many Féos arise from their tombs and graves in a Hounfar and wreak havoc on the nearest unsuspecting town. Locals or police often kill most of the Féos created in this manner. Soon after, those Mortals will forget the incident ever happened due to the Haze. Féos are not usually counted among the Living Dead. Most Living Dead don't see a life spent in servitude to a person or one's own Fever as any sort of life. So Féos are more often referred to as the Walking Dead rather than Living Dead.

Lichs



"...the fog is rising."
-Last Words of Emily Dickinson

"Keep your wits about you, don't

show a moment of weakness, your Lich is watching. You haven't had to deal with it yet, probably. But you will. The second you put your guard down, the very moment when your emotional shell shows a little crack, your Lich will be there to help it crumble. We don't know who sends them. Probably the Coil. But the Coil isn't a person, is it? It's just mortality. A natural phenomenon. That's like saying, 'Weather is releasing quasi-zombies to make me commit suicide!' but there it is."

Enigmatic in their devises yet with a clear goal, one Lich seems to be drawn to one particular Zombie, leading some to believe that a Zombie and his Lich (or a Lich and its Zombie) have some sort of metaphysical link. Lichs can appear whenever they wish but they seem to choose when a Zombie is alone and is weakest, emotionally or physically. A Lichs physical form is always different because they possess the nearest dead thing in relation to their Zombie, from roadkill to a massive old log house made entirely from cut trees, usually the weaker a Zombie is, the stronger a Lich becomes. The causal relationship is still a mystery. Lichs have bizarre, subtle supernatural abilities although the power of which again varies depending on the vulnerability of their Zombies.

A lich will usually wait until their Zombie is alone at and , then attempt to attach their body to the Zombie's. If successful, the Lich communicates to the Zombie through distorted memories and nightmarish hallucinations. The goal for the Lich is always coerce

the Zombie into willingly returning to the coil. Why it is necessary for a Zombie to return willingly is as yet unknown. Even if a Lich is "killed" it is only the body that is destroyed, the Lich will go back to wherever it exists and wait again until the time is right to strike again.

There are rumors of Zombies who have been completely dominated by their Lich, these "Verloren" are the boogie men of the Living Dead. Word has it that Verloren hide amongst the Living Dead, subtly causing disruption and anguish to make the jobs of other Lichs easier.

First contact with a Lich is the main reason a Zombie will decide to join a Cell. But there are a brave (or foolish) few among both races who decide against pledging allegiance to any banner of loyalty.

Augurs



"Hold that man. Don't let him go, heavenly judge, hold that man"
-Traditional prayer spoken while exhuming a body for reanimation

"As shitty as this whole situation may be, you're just lucky you weren't brought back to this side by an Augur. These guys are bad news. Bring back the dead just for slave labor. The dead don't whine, go on strike or unionize. A perfect work force, at least that's the logic behind their actions. I don't buy it for a second. My guess is that they go through the trouble of bringing back the dead just for the rush. The workers are just a bonus. What sucks is that damn near anyone can be an Augur. That shaman down the block raising Féos is just as much of an Augur as the uber-powerful blood-sucker uptown."

Augurs can be anyone and anything. Indeed many of them tend to be humans, they can be a Mage summoning Féos, a scientist working in secluded labs trying to find the secret to immortality, or they can be Vodoun practitioners performing a generations-old rite of zombification. Still, there are Zombies who also practice the arts of reanimation for various purposes.

Most Zombies will put anyone who summons Féos under the umbrella term of Augur. The types of emotions that come from learning of the nearby existence of an augur will depend on the individual Zombie, though most don't think highly of slavery of any kind.

Weird Crap

"You've been pretty much introduced to the gang. At least now you won't freak out when you meet Sparky, he's a little short on flesh. Now, you gotta know about the weird shit. Stuff that just happens around us Zombies, most of us don't know what it's all about. Well, maybe the Knochen do, but they're not talking."

Hounfars

Thin clouds raced across a cold moon, fearful of the event occurring below them.

"So yeah, you weren't brought back by an Augur. So how did you come back? It's what we call a Hounfar. Yeah, the words just keep getting weirder. Anyway, Hounfars are when the dead come back. That isn't the freaky part though. What's fucked up is that the dead who come back are completely random. A rock star murdered by a former friend is just as likely to come back as a kid who died in a car crash. At least that's what I figure. Sometimes Hounfars happen in a big place, sometimes it's just one or two people. Like I said... random. For now, it looks like you were the only person brought back during the Hounfar. Weird."

There are short periods of time where for whatever reason, the dead rise in the form of Féos or anyone who should die at that moment are instead reanimated as Féos. There have been fewer Hounfars as of late but this maybe simply because news of these events hasn't reached public ears. Some of the more paranoid speculation presents a theory of a possible government cover-up is in place to keep the public unknowing of Zombies, and to keep Zombies separate from each other.

The Universe once seemed to spawn Zombies at the drop of a hat, and if no one dropped a hat, the universe would. Most, however, seem to coincide with major historical events of seemingly little connection. A comet passing by Earth, toxic waste spills, famines, and even a volcanic eruption have been linked to individual Hounfars, which is the cause and which is the effect is open for discussion.

At times there are Great Hounfars where a massive number of Féos rise from their graves. The first known Great Hounfar is believed to have happened some time around the Black Plague. Great



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Hounfars are said to be quite a sight to behold. Hundreds, if not thousands, of flesh-and-bone automatons, groaning and chewing their way through village after village. They continue feasting, ignoring any injury inflicted upon them until they were killed by local authorities.

The only surviving Féos of any Hounfar are the ones who become Born. About one in four Féos ever becomes Born. Keep in mind that all Zombies spend time as Féos at first. Actually, the only Zombie to have ever been rise "with eyes open" is rumored to be Zemi him/herself.

There are certain common occurrences around Hounfars. One of the most common of these is inexplicable fluctuation of emotion among the Living. Extraordinary outbursts of fear, righteous anger, panic, courage and even love are all often seen near Hounfars. A more common event is amnesia or catatonia. Still, there are some among the Living who will manage to keep their composure no matter what happens.

Birth

As if clawing through a fleshly curtain, he found himself overcome with all his senses. The world was a massive fireball of pain, passion and consciousness waiting to be rediscovered.

"Yup, you're Born. Your mind and soul have been vomited up by the Coil and shopped into your rotting body. Fun, eh?"

In the basic life cycle of a Zombie, a Hounfar or an augur first creates a féo. This corpse is a mindless reanimated cadaver but with the potential to be so much more. Birth refers to the moment when this Féo becomes a Grande or Jackal, when consciousness, sensory stimuli, soul and mind suddenly smashes back into the body. Why some are Born and others aren't is still a mystery.

Before Birth, all senses are muffled. Sounds are dampened, sight is blurred and the entire world feels numb, except the Fever. That blast furnace hunger dwarfs all other sensations before Birth. After Birth, however, the sensory deprivation of death is removed. The Fever doesn't become any weaker, rather all the sensory input of the world around the Zombie is amplified to meet the strength of the Fever.

The Birth process is a confusing time and most are fortunate enough to get through it with some type of mentor. Those who do regain some stability

without a mentor are some of the strongest and bravest around. Once the dust settles and the overwhelming world begins to get clearer, several eccentricities present themselves to a Zombie, namely Whispers, Compulsions and the cannibalistic hunger called the Fever, all of which will be explained individually later in this section.

Viscera

Mitch's teeth dig deep into the mortal's belly, tearing the flesh from his ribs. The flood of Visceral energy coursed through his body. He dropped the limp body and stood on newly strengthened legs. Nothing quite as satisfying as a good breakfast.

"Meat, part of this healthy breakfast. Now, it isn't technically the meat that keeps you alive, it's the energy inside it. Grandes absorb the vibrant life energy inside living flesh, Jackals absorb, well... I don't quite know what sort of Viscera exists in rotted flesh. But the Jackals seem to like it all the same.

"What you gotta remember, being a Grande and all, is that once your meal dies, no more munchy. Start with something non-life-threatening before you start gobbling intestines. If you just immediately go for the brains or something, you'll barely get any Viscera. That's no good for anyone. Here's a fun little mnemonic device.

"Arms.

"Legs.

"Belly.

"Brains.

"That's all you need to remember, suge."

Viscera is the pure life energy possessed by all living things. This energy is so profuse in the healthy living, that it condenses and fuses itself into the flesh. After the flesh dies and decomposes, however, the entropic Viscera inside the rotted meat can be absorbed by Jackals. When the Viscera-bearing flesh enters a Zombie's body, it dissolves inside her belly, strengthening her and granting her an extra few days of Living Death.

Grandes must eat living flesh, as has been stated repeatedly. So what exactly constitutes living flesh? Well, for the purposes of gameplay, the flesh is considered to be consumable by a Grande so long as the person from whom it came is still alive. After this time, there is a period where the flesh is neither alive nor decomposed. During this time, it is not consumable by either Grandes or Jackals. After it has



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been decayed, however, Jackals may consume it freely. The meat has to be raw. If it is cooked, even by fire that was the cause of death, it's been stripped of all Viscera that can possibly be consumed by Jackals.

Whispers

His wife continually appeared in his mind. The sight of her on their wedding day being the only reminder of how she looked, for it was the last thing he could remember about her. Who was he kidding though? She might not be his wife. He could have been the best man, or the priest.

"Okay, so you may have tried to attack that woman in the alley. Maybe you really were an abusive pimp. That doesn't mean you're still that person. Soon you'll be getting these flashbacks, then you'll start to remember who you used to be. Just don't let who you used to be dictate how you are now. Some people are gonna tell ya that you're still responsible for past transgressions. Don't buy it. You'll end up living in the past and re-living all the bad shit that led to your death. Then your Lich comes a-calling.

"Do yourself a favor, don't end up like the regression burnouts. The guys who are obsessed with their Whispers, I mean. They can't stop living in the past long enough to realize that they're given another opportunity to live in the present."

Sometimes sensations of *deja vu*, sometimes literal voices, Whispers are the connections of a Zombie's previous life to their current one. All Grandes and Jackals have Whispers of their previous life. How one should deal with one's Whispers is the most controversial topic of conversation among the Living Dead. Mention Whispers, chances are that there will be a confrontation. Everything for civil philosophical debates to heated bar brawls have all been started because of a disagreement over Whispers.

Haze

She struggled, banging her head raw against a wall. Desperately trying to remember the face of the man in her dreams. It was there, right there. So close. She could remember the smell of the semen-and-blood soaked shag carpeting. She could remember a crash of glass against the window. She just couldn't remember that damned face. Did he kill her? Did he rape her?

"You have the Haze to thank for your current amnesia, kid. See, this is my own theory, you'll probably hear lots of different ones. Screw 'em, I'm the one talkin' to ya right now. Anyway, the way I see it, the Coil recycles souls into the world, but it doesn't bother to worry about minds, y'see. So the Haze scrubs off the memories and knowledge from the soul in preparation for reincarnation. Your personality stays, the rest goes away. That is, if things go according to plan. Living Dead aren't exactly part of the natural order of things though.

"We're brought back with most of our memories ripped off. For some reason, I haven't figured out this part yet, our memories come back little by little **after** we're Born. I don't get it. Are our memories kept in storage or something? Waiting for us to be Born so we can retrieve them? That sort of implies that the universe actually expects Zombies. Whoa... I think I'm on to something."

The Haze, as part of the natural process of mortality, is believed to be the reason why people forget things they learn in between lives. It is the Great Disindividualization. A Zombie, in this theory, is considered to be a person who has died and had their soul reach the Haze but some external force prevents it from moving on. Instead, the soul is returned to the decaying body. The soul, without a mind, has the mind of rabid animal. A very hungry animal. These are the Féos, the Walking Dead.

As it happens, though, souls are quite resistant to disindividualization if they have any choice in the matter. Birth then begins the slow trickle of memories of a previous life. The first few Whispers are just enough to form a basic structure of full sentience. The rest is a blank slate. This fiery urge to maintain identity is what separates the Living Dead from the Walking Dead. Starting with a few seed memories, usually something about how they died, a Zombie continues on their new, confusing lives while trying to balance out the urges and Compulsions of their previous one.

Compulsions

So he stopped, as usual, counting every window on a building before walking past it. He'd stopped wondering why he had to, content to get the chore over with as soon as possible.

"Heh, I just noticed you're still breathing. Well, not quite breathing, really. Just making awkward



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thrusts with your chest, like inhaling and exhaling. You need to stop that, or at least learn to do it more convincingly. Ha! You're blinking too! Damn, Pelés are a piece of work, lemme tell ya."

Once Born and somewhat settled, a Zombie begins to exhibit strange compulsive behavior. When these urges are acted upon, they often lead to new revelations and memories of a Zombie's previous life. A Zombie inclined to leadership will find that they were once in charge of a large organization or group. Someone who is an extreme hypochondriac will find that they've died from various diseases or was a member of the medical community. Quite often, Compulsions manifest in the form of phobias related to the Zombie's manner of death.

The best way to describe Compulsions would be to think about all the habits and routines you perform every day. (e.g. brushing your teeth, making coffee, getting the newspaper, going to school/work, etc.) Now, imagine you still have an urge to do these things but you have no idea why. This is, in a very broad sense, the nature of Compulsions.

Pelés often exhibit Compulsions in the form of rudimentary life functions like breathing and blinking. Some Carnes also exhibit this behavior but it is more rare. Knochen never show these Compulsions. Even if they did, it would be hard to tell if they're blinking since few Knochen still have eyelids.

Meridians

Sam focused his vision, after a while he could see past the outside of things. Everything fell away, dampened by his concentration, everything except the beautiful network of shimmering light coursing in, out and around the Living.

"Now, this is where things get a little esoteric. Meridians are what keep organic material from falling apart. The Living don't have to worry about most of this stuff. See, their Meridians are naturally inclined to keep their bodies from falling apart, but our Meridians are **supposed** to have let go of our body after we died. We've constantly gotta fight to keep our Meridians from unraveling and letting our bodies decompose."

Meridians are an ancient term for the lines of Viscera energy that flow in a certain pattern within living beings and in Zombies. They form a sort of spiritual skeleton and blood stream. All living beings possess Meridians of their own and maintain them

without effort until they die, at which point the Meridians' grip loosens gradually on the body and the corpse begins to decay.

Crudely speaking, Zombies are dead but they still have Meridians of life-energy coursing through their bodies. Zombies do not have the luxury of maintenance-free Meridians, however, so they must consume the flesh of the living (or the decomposed) to keep their Meridians strong enough to stave off further decomposition.

Often, amputees report a feeling of "phantom limbs" that still itch even after they've been gone for years. This is because Meridians keep the general shape of the being, even if the body doesn't hold that shape. In the case of Zombies, only the use of Batida can mold or even affect Meridians. This is why bodily alterations of the Viva Dembellah alone are temporary; the streams of life energy have not been molded to include the augmentation. The extra body part will decompose as if it were completely deprived of life energy.

Pulse

Alan cordially greeted his two Knochen friends, Marcus and Dust. Alan could easily distinguish between the two despite being entirely without flesh. Marcus' third molar was slightly off center on the right side and Dust's eye sockets were a bit mismatched.

"You'll soon be able to talk, and that's a lot better than some of the Knochen around here. See, even if you didn't have a larynx or anything, you could still talk to any of us and we'd be able to understand you. Heck, we could understand you even if you were speaking another language. Johnny was speaking in Spanish a little while ago, I bet you couldn't tell."

Often the Living Dead have no vocal cords, tongue, or larynx, despite these setbacks, a Zombie will always be able to communicate with another Zombie. Just as often, Zombies will be Born without eyes because of modern burial practices. The Pulse works as a new pair of eyes, allowing a Zombie to see as well as he could if he were alive. The Pulse does this so well that many eyeless Zombies still need to wear glasses to correct their vision.

If a Zombie tries to speak to a non-Zombie, she will be forced to use her physical body to do this. Pelés obviously have an easier time of this than Knochen. A Pelé will speak as clearly as she could while alive.

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Carnes have raspy, but understandable voices. Knochen can rarely speak to non-Zombies. This is all specific to the situation of course. A Pelé with her throat ripped out will have just as hard a time speaking as a Knochen.

Encounters with the Living

News Report: "...and in breaking news, Police Chief Warren has refused to comment on the progress being made in the investigations into the recent streak of cannibalistic murders. A source in the police department has told News 9 that the main suspects are actually cult of some sort. Chief Warren wouldn't verify this statement. So, the community continues to be gripped in fear as the death toll rises to twenty-three, including three police officers. And now weather..."

"Okay, it's inevitable that you're gonna want to talk to the meatbags. After all, there's just so many of them around and you get sick of talking to the same Zombies in your neighborhood every day. Act natural, blend in, and don't arouse suspicion. Bad things happen when you arouse suspicion, kid. See, you're lucky. Since you're a Pelé you can walk around easily. Sure, you might look a little sick, but just sneeze once in a while and your cover is secure. The rest of us don't have that luxury. We've either gotta learn some supernatural tricks to hide our death-marks or we just skulk around where no Living can see us."

Encounters with the Living are unpredictable. Many of the Living fear their mortality, sometimes irrationally so. Thus, a reminder of their impending death, like a Zombie, always causes a reaction. Most people will be stricken with fear. Even if they don't think about their death all that much, the sight of a walking, decaying, hungry Féo is still very frightening. There are also some stone-cold types who won't be afraid of the sight of a Zombie but, for fear of what their friends will say, they'll deny the entire event ever happened. Still others would be so traumatized that that they don't experience denial, because there's nothing to deny. They'll literally forget ever seeing that woman ferociously chewing on the bum's leg, they'll forget the sound of flesh torn from the bone and forget the screams of the bum as he lives, for a while, through this torture.

Only the most desensitized will be able to work and live comfortably, knowingly around the dead... and the Living Dead. Zombies also know not to push

their luck as well. Who's to say that the person who can calmly talk to a Zombie isn't a slaver, augur, or worse?

It should also be noted; this is usually a moot point. Some Zombies can, and will, use their arcane abilities to disguise themselves in Living society. Even without access to "arcane abilities," a clever Zombie can still make good use of mundane make-up, fragrances and clothing to exist casually amongst the Living. Anyway, most mortals who see a Zombie will know it's the last thing they'll see.

Ordeals



Auburn sits in the corner of her apartment, softly weeping into a pillow. She's just remembered that the person she ate last week was a close family friend. A recently roadkilled cat slips in through the window via a fire escape.

Quietly, the feline pads across the floor, approaching the tearlessly sobbing Zombie. Auburn ignores the sense of danger, mistaking it for heartache. The cat pounces on her back and digs its claws into her soft flesh.

As Auburn lies on the floor convulsing and twitching with each painful memory, the cat, still on her back, can almost be heard giggling.

"Remember when I said to stay away from Lichs? The reason is Ordeals. When I say Ordeal, I don't just mean pain. You let a Lich lay one finger on you and it may be the last thing you ever see, kid. I've managed to avoid my Lich this far, but who knows... Anyway, you can usually tell when your Lich is around, just a sinking feeling in your gut. That's nothing compared to the feeling of an Ordeal, though. You see a Lich, you do what we do. Run.

"Heh. Did ya like that line? Got it from a cool movie."

Ordeals occur when a Lich makes physical contact with a Zombie and blasts it's mind with scathing images of their previous life. This experience alone is not physically harmful, although the battle before the Ordeal can be quite heated indeed. During an Ordeal, a Zombie will experience various kinds of memories and flashbacks, depending on the personality of a Lich.

Some Lichs seem to prefer to communicate through clear pointed memories while other Zombies



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report that their Ordeals were full of hallucinatory images and sensations. The subtlety of Ordeals also depends on the Lich. Sometimes everyone a Zombie remembers will appear in their mind chanting about the peace and beauty of the Coil. Sometimes it's much more deceptive.

Once, a Zombie believed she spent an entire year of her life going about her business until she started noticing the word Coil in newspapers, billboards, and license plates. Through her force of will she managed to free herself of the Lich, which had taken the form of a dead pigeon, and kill it beneath her heel. When she checked the time and date she found that she had been in an Ordeal for only five minutes.

Physiology

"I know this is a lot to absorb at once but you gotta learn this stuff sometime, right? I figure as long as you've been given a second chance, you better live every moment of it. You can't live every possible moment of it if you're stupid though, so quiet down. Zombie's bodies are kind of... peculiar. We don't have proper digestive systems, but we gotta eat to live. Hm... I think I'll start with what you need to become a Zombie."

Becoming Living Dead

One by one, they rose. Gnarled, bony fists punching through their pine-and-cement prisons.

"Now before I say anything, this is just the general pattern of these sorts of things. We might be wrong about this stuff but so far we haven't seen anything to the contrary. Gotta have a whole, intact body. Then your soul goes in, then your mind follows along."

For a corpse to become a potential Zombie, the skeleton must be completely whole. If even a finger, let alone a head, is missing, reanimation is impossible. A corpse cannot be cremated and brought back from the other side. This is why many early cultures would remove certain body parts to prevent the return of the spirit to its body. However, if the body is still whole but highly decomposed, nearly to the point of being little more than a skeleton, it can still be reanimated so long as there is still connective tissue between the bones.

A common misconception perpetuated by the movie industry is that one will return from death by

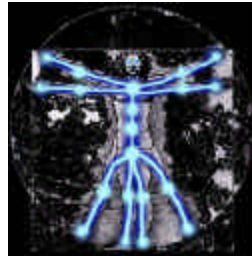
simply being bitten by a Zombie. This is obviously not true. If it were, there would be Féos running rampant across the world. However, if a Zombie were to unknowingly kill a mortal during a Hounfar. The victim would indeed come back from the dead.

Anatomy

"See, there's basically three important things that make up a Zombie. Mind, body and soul. Yeah yeah, it sounds like some lame role-playing game or something but it's still true."

Mind, body and soul. Three concepts that have become rather clichéd in the cynical World of Darkness but are concepts that are no less powerful. The concepts are just as instrumental in regards to being one of the Living Dead.

Body



The body is represented, obviously, by the Zombie's body. The Meridians are what hold a Zombie's body together. When a Zombie consumes flesh, the Viscera evaporates into her Meridians and the flesh dissolves entirely. This function is easily seen when a Knochen feasts. The flesh is chewed, somehow swallowed even without a tongue or peristalsis then falls through the Knochen's body until it reaches the equivalent of his belly. At that point it just dissolves into a pinch of dust, all the organic matter is presumably transmuted into pure Viscera. Zombies do not have digestive functions aside from this phenomenon.

If a Zombie eats non-Viscera food, it will just sit there in his belly, or fall onto the ground if he does not have a stomach. Zombies do not need to drink, breathe or sleep either. While the Meridians and the Pulse make senses quite amplified, touch seems to remain as dead as the body a Zombie occupies. Zombies neither feel pain nor pleasure through physical contact. Only things which directly affect Meridians, like feasting, will illicit pain or pleasure.

Soul

The soul manifests itself as Compulsions. Quirks in personality that would exist despite any change in memories or knowledge. This is also the capacity for emotion. Zombies feel hatred, remorse, love and happiness just as anyone else can, with a slight difference. A minor complication arises in the



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expression of anger in that Zombies do not feel pain. So, punching or slapping would be an exercise in futility if the desired response is pain. Instead, many Zombies have become masters of the stinging word and well-placed insult. Some Zombies still express anger through violence but this is more of an act of disrespect than an attempt at injury.

A Zombie's physical expression of love and sensuality can manifest in a variety of ways. Pelés usually do things the old-fashioned way, seeing as how they have all the necessary equipment. However, many Carnes and Knochen are not so fortunate. In these circumstances, several techniques have been devised to create the equivalent of a sexual experience among Living Dead. Rather than to go into explicit detail here, players should just be creative while hopefully not creeping out the rest of her group. In any case, Zombies still do not feel pleasure from the mere physical contact, the sensation arises from a subtle and mysterious manipulation of Meridians created specifically through these acts. How exactly the Meridians are affected by this physical interaction is an age-old mystery.

Mind

The mind exists as knowledge, memories and experience, in other words, Whispers. When a Zombie becomes one of the Living Dead, she is granted a bare minimum of memories of her previous life. This is enough to grant her sentience and, if she's lucky, the ability to read, write or even drive a car. However, she will not remember how she learned these abilities. Essentially, the newly Born Zombie has the same personality and body as she did in her previous life, but her memories have been erased.

Is this enough to consider the Zombie a different person than she was in her previous life? The subject is a hotly debated one. As her memories return to her, they might conflict with the newly formed memories of her current existence. On the other hand, her personality may be such that her current Living Dead existence differs very little from her Living existence.

Dying

"Yeah, we can die. After that happens, there's no coming back. You're not Living Dead, undead or restless dead. You're just dead. Reshuffled. Gone. Fortunately, we can take a serious pounding, but don't mistake that for immortality kid. Sure, we won't ever

die of old age, but there's plenty of situations where you could get killed by violence. I had to learn most of that the hard way."

The Meridians that bind the soul and mind to the physical world also keep tight control over the physical integrity of a Zombie's body. This control results in a Zombie with a highly durable body, more durable than a normal corpse, that's for certain. However, this also means that whatever does manage to harm a Zombie, does a lot of damage. Zombies do not "regenerate" as many other supernaturals do; they just manage to take the injury without pain and little physical damage. A Zombie can easily take a few beatings of a baseball bat or survive being hit by a speeding car. However, persistent, maintained punishment will kill a Zombie just as easily as any mortal. It just takes a bit longer. Similarly, when a Zombie does take damage, it takes quite a while to heal it.

There are two situations that will indeed cause immediate death. First, if a Zombie's Meridians are weakened to the point of non-existence, his mind and soul are released to resume their normal course of death and the body is left to decompose where it stands. Second, if a Zombie loses his head, the Meridians' strength is severely compromised. Some Zombies have supernatural abilities that allow them to survive for short periods without a head, but for the most part decapitation results in immediate death.

One of the most peculiar weaknesses exhibited by the Living Dead is their aversion to pure, uniodized salt. Perhaps there is a mystical significance of salt as a symbol of life that causes damage to Zombies, perhaps the chemical properties of salt react violently to the foul ichors inside a Zombie's body. In any case, even a pinch of salt is commonly known to cause immediate, extraordinarily painful damage to the Living Dead. Upon contact with a Living Dead body, salt will pop and fizzle much like a chemical burn. This is valuable knowledge to those with a desire to enslave or hunt the Living Dead. Table salt and salt water will not have the same effect as pure salt, but it will cause quite a bit of discomfort. The damaging effects of salt can be neutralized with simple water.

"Alright, it looks like Carlton's all set up for his therapy/history lesson schtick. It was good talking with ya. See ya around."



Chapter Two: History

"Hey there, come in, come in. Make yourself comfortable on the couch. Lay down, if you wish. This is my requisite history lesson, but to liven things up a bit I'm going to do something new today. Anyhoo, I trust Donna gave you the run down of people and phenomenon of our unusual community. She can be a bit abrasive sometimes, but then again I have a certain streak of impetuosity myself. So, you're here to learn a bit of history. Hm... That's something of a tall order, you see.

"Unfortunately, the Living Dead haven't kept very good records of our origins for my tastes. It is mostly an oral tradition, you see. Hm. This obviously creates quite a bit of confusion in regards to the beginnings of the Living Dead. It seems our personal searches for identity are mimicked in the macrocosm of Living Dead history. If no one can agree on why a single Zombie is brought back, how can anyone be expected to find a consensus on our origins as a whole?

"Enough of my blathering. You see, I'm the therapist/historian/seer of the neighborhood. Today, you're going to be my guinea pig, you probably don't remember what a guinea pig is, do you? Hm. Well, I'm going to guide you through your Whispers a bit here. I don't rightly know what this is going to do, really, you'll be the first person on whom I've tried this Viva.

"Don't worry about what a Viva is, just remain calm. Here we go, this may sting a bit."



Zombie: the Coil © Daniel Solis 2001

*No, No too much, I cannot handle it all. It **What am I?** is coming too fast. Please slower. Faster.*

Born, blessed, and on your way to a level of existence that will transcend the mortal Coil. Lucky to be alive with that extensive necrosis in your body. Dead. You're dead. Let it go.

History lesson, you freak. Time to die. What? What's happening? Help me! I can't remember anything!

There was a time when life and death had no separation between them. Spirit and flesh were one and the same and people were not identified by flesh. Souls would spend time in a bodily vessel until it no longer suited them and then enter another at will, remembering everything they had learned from their time in the previous body. It was a time of learning, peace, and revelry.

Then the Coil existed.

To say it was born or arrived would be misleading for it is simply a phenomenon. A state of the universe that has existed for so long that few question its origin. After the Coil existed, those souls found themselves trapped inside their flesh cages as they withered and died. There was a great panic but some simply believed that they would be released from their bodies once they decayed and then they'd be free once more.

Then those souls began to forget.

No longer could souls remember the things that they had learned while existing inside a body after they had left it. The last souls watched in panic as the last of their friends died and returned without a single memory of their previous life.

And so this indifferent cycle went on... Living. Dying. Forgetting.

*Too many images are bleeding into **What happened then?** my soul. My images of souls.*

A powerful shaman named Zemi was working late in his village. He was visited by strange voices that claimed to be those of his previous lives. He asked his loved ones if they had heard any of these whispers but they could not. Soon these Whispers had told him many secrets which he had forgotten since he had been born into his current body. They told him of the Coil and the times when it didn't exist.

Zemi soon became obsessed with mortality and the elimination thereof. He spent long nights in graveyards meditating, dancing, singing, and thinking. His family soon left him, calling him mad. But he ignored them, pitying their lives that would become senselessly inconsequential.

One night the Shaman was meditating and speaking to his previous selves when a group of scholars, peasants, and fellow magicians sought him out for lessons in the path of existence outside the Coil. They discussed

Recently, my colleagues and I have uncovered ancient tablets from a buried village. From the mixture of glyphs and written word, this tablet appears to be at least two thousand to two thousand five hundred years old. Preliminary translations imply that that documents were written by a woman named of Zemi, of course that spelling is pure speculation and only a few more of the tablets have been deciphered.

Apparently, Zemi was a respected shaman of some sort. We've discovered, from other sources, that there was a serious famine during the creation of these tablets. From the illustrations, it seems that the tablet tells a narrative or fable, possibly written as a means of supporting religious faith for her people during a crisis.

The first tablet depicts a single stick figure, we've assumed that she's Zemi, surrounded by floating skulls. The skulls themselves aren't drawn in a sinister overtone, highly unusual considering the context of the tablets' creation. Indeed, the skulls actually seem to be whispering to this intently listening figure. This could indicate a very mortality-oriented society. Perhaps

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There was once a wonderful kingdom in the middle of a cheerful meadow. The benevolent king and queen treated their people with a warm and lenient authority. The seasons were perfect, each sharing an equal part of the year. When the people's numbers were too great for the food to supply, a sickness would wave a caring arm across the kingdom, sending the old and infirm to the grave. Though the people had acted as if they were saddened by their loved ones' departure, they all knew in their hearts that this is the way it should be and how the world always should be.

One day, a stranger entered the kingdom. This was a momentous occasion because the kingdom hadn't ever received a visitor before. The newcomer introduced himself to the royal court as Zemi, the magician. He found a home within the kingdom and took a place as the royal wizard. The king and queen didn't know the darkness they had allowed in their midst.

The Whisperings of evil spirits pointed Zemi to an opportunity to spread his dark mischief. He told the court that the circle of life had become obsolete, that death was no longer necessary, that immortality was a wonderful thing, and other such blasphemies and lies. The court was deceived all too easily by his guile. Following the directions of the whispers



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outside the Coil. They discussed that all manner of things, they ate and drank and laughed until the moon had turned three times about the sky.

On the third night they had a revelation. For one even as powerful as Zemi could not fight the universe and its decision to impose mortality. Hence, they would work slightly outside of mortality. The followers of Zemi decided that they would perform an act of such rebellion against the laws of life and death that the reverberations of it could be felt for millions of years. They each thought of their own methods of performing a rite that would, in the end, have the same result. The Disciples decided to remain chained to their current bodily vessel, if they must, and fool the Coil into thinking they were dead even as they still lived. They'd let their body die, but, by sheer will and passion, they'd remain alive. The people would call themselves Zombie, after Zemi, bravest of the brave.

I can feel skin under my

Zemi led a great funeral for each of his disciples and then for himself. There, in their graves, they stayed for three days and upon the third night Zemi, Lord of the Cemetery, and all his followers did rise from their prisons of wood and earth. But something was wrong. The Magician had warned the others that there would be some decomposition during their slumber but he had not expected the scene that lay before his undead eyes. As each of Zemi's followers rose, they seemed to be sheep without a shepherd. Off they wandered into the village for reasons Zemi could not fathom.

the skulls were ghosts and the culture was based on ancestor worship?

Another tablet, which we assume for now is the next one in the series, shows many other stick figures, each dancing with their own group of floating skulls around a fire. When viewed along with the previous tablet it can be assumed this begins the story of some enlightened person spreading their knowledge to others. It should be noted that an odd spiraled shape makes its first appearance on this illustration as a small sigil in the corner. At first, I believed it to be a simple signature of the author but this theory proved untrue.

The next tablet again depicts the spiral. This time it is much larger and menacing but the stick figures seem to be attacking it with spears. We're completely baffled by this tablet. The next tablet seems to depict the battle's aftermath. It shows the stick figures either dead or sleeping and the spiral is crooked and uneven possibly signifying a weakened state

Where do we come from?

Without a dependable source of translation of the text, we're left to interpretations of the pictures. A tablet followed the previous tablet, which had shown seemingly dead people who had slain the spiral, with the dead people now awakened and walking. The only indication that this tablet even goes in this order is that the spiral shape is crooked and "weakened" than the previous one.

Nevertheless, the tablet depicts the dead rising and walking, well, shambling. My colleagues joke that they look like zombies. One stick figure, whom we presume is Zemi, has not been affected in the same manner as her comrades and illustrate her with an exaggerated surprised stance. What exactly was that spiral shape meant to represent and why did the people, led by Zemi,

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Following the directions of the whispers from the darkness, Zemi had convinced the people to join in his vile rites. It was with the aide of these rituals that Zemi, the deceiver and corrupter, had ruined the universe and forever disturbed the natural course of Mortality.

nails. Why now mommy?

Blasphemous Zemi. How could he possibly have the audacity to say that he knew how the universe should work? Well, his rite of "immortality" did work but I believe it's only because the Coil let it work. The Coil is not an entity, not something we entirely comprehend. It is mortality itself and has control over all that lives and dies. Remember that the living are just as much locked into the Coil as the dead. And this despicable man sought to remove himself and others from the Coil's loving embrace. Why?

No matter. The Coil works in mysterious ways. They did become alive forever, almost. The Coil still maintained a wispy link to all of them that night, all except Zemi so he could watch as everything crumbled around him. Their minds and souls were still locked into the Coil, still dead. Their bodies out of control without anything to guide them. The Coil had cursed them all with the Fever, to feast upon the people they used to know. They're were alive, but they're also dead The worst of both worlds.

Unfortunately, some of his disciples broke



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Zemi followed and watched from afar as his followers attacked people at random. Feasting upon the flesh of those who had once been their loved ones. Zemi could only speculate that the Coil was punishing him for his hubris. The Zemi, Leader of the rebellion against mortality, Lord of the Crypt, the greatest magician of his village, wept that night, even though he had no more tears to shed.

But hope, as it does, came at the darkest hour. Some of his followers came out of their cannibalistic craze, they had fought the feverish tenacity of their hunger, to find themselves covered in earth, blood, and flesh. Those few remorseful people left their village with Lord Zemi. They left the sad, ugly ones to their feast.

Many centuries later, the Zombies, now collected in an isolated mountain commune, heard news of unusual happenings in Europe. It seemed that Zemi's rite of immortality had shaken the Coil so much that it caused the occasional mass rising of groaning mindless Zombies so ugly in mind and body that they were soon simply called Féos. Occasions of mass rising were subsequently called Hounfars, or gatherings.

News also spread of a powerful faction of Zombies who claimed to be Born after Zemi and his followers left the village. With no live flesh to eat, they feasted on the Féos left in the village. The dead flesh was so toxic that it gave them the ability to send their bodies into a state of semi-controllable dynamism as they devoured every last bit of dead flesh they could find. The scavengers were dubbed the Jackals.

attack it?

The next tablet shows Zemi watching from behind a tree as the rest of the shambling "zombies" head towards a collection of huts which we now assume is a village of some sort. The next tablet is a close-up of the scene Zemi is watching at the village showing the shambling stick figures attacking the villagers and eating them. Profuse amounts of red paint were used to show how bloody the feast was. While the spiral is not depicted in the sky as it was in previous tablets, it should be noted that there are small spirals in the attackers' eyes. Could this be the result of the efforts of the spiral? Had the spiral continued to exist and punished Zemi's people further by cursing them to cannibalism? Are these tablets telling a story of hubris?

We suspect that some tablets are missing from the series because the next one shows who we can only guess are the same cannibals who had attacked the village. They are in a mountain commune and seem quite peaceful. They are still accompanied by Zemi and skulls have replaced their faces. Also, they no longer have spirals in their eyes. We still haven't figured out when these people went from monsters to "civilized" people.

Another tablet shows the civilized skull-faces in the distance as the spiral-eyed monsters continue attacking the same village. The villagers have all been killed, some even becoming monsters themselves. The next tablet shows some of those creatures standing upright and normal with a skull face and unspiraled eyes. Still another tablet shows these "people" attacking the other monsters and eating them. All this gore is only enhanced by the transformation undertaken by the people after eating the monsters. Still, we can assume that these are no longer mindless monsters they once were. Rather, they're monsters that know quite well what they're doing.

free of the Coil's grasp, they remembered things, and worse, they grew stronger against the curse of the Fever. Those beings joined Zemi. They went into the high mountains where there were not even any birds or vegetation, just rocks and sky. They thought that if they were in a place where there was nothing alive or dead, they could hide from the Coil. No. The Coil is everywhere. Life and Death is everywhere. They cannot hide.

An odd offshoot of Zemi's rite also grew that night. They were like Zemi's disciples but different. They feasted on decayed flesh. Their bodies were unstable and the Coil saw that they did not have the same resistance to the Fever that the others did. The Coil has been watching these Jackals since their birth. The Coil wished that the two species of Zombie to wipe each other out, instead they found peace. They continued to resist the Coil!

That is why the Coil created Lichs. To torment the Living Dead, break their spirits and show them the light.

That is enough. **Why am I here? What do I do now?** *No more pain.*

That's like a mortal asking why they're here. The best answer I can give is that you're chosen, child. You've been given a second chance. Something within you is strong enough, passionate enough to transcend death. Find out why you're here for yourself. Find out you're own purpose.

Just remember. There are some of us who have no real reason to be here. We were "chosen" at random. If you're one of those people, don't lose hope. There's a secret war for freedom going on out there. Some, like the Coil, would like us all to be shackled. They either want us stuck in the unstoppable circle of life, or they want us for labor, they want to poke, prod and study us, or worse. We can't let that happen. We must stand strong, united. Once there are enough of us, the Living Dead will rise together and end the tyranny once and for all.

You're an aberration. Haven't you been listening?

You're a mistake! An accident. You were never meant to be.

You're supposed to be part of the Coil. C'mon go back to the Coil.

It's home. It's where you're supposed to be.

Once you're there, you can come back here in a new body,

eat normal food,

love and be loved by normal people.

Doesn't that sound nice?



Zombie: the Coil © Daniel Solis 2001

"Are you okay? You seemed to go out of sorts for a moment. Perhaps I should just do this the old-fashioned way.

"When mankind runs into a mystery, we're convinced that there must be some kind of reasonable explanation, there must be some kind of answer. Animals could care less, they just deal with it, but man, with our big brains and great learning know that the answer is there, it has to be. When that mystery is why you've returned from the dead and must feast on human flesh, that need for an explanation becomes more than an obsession.

"Everyone has their own reason in the end, they have to or they end up a slobbering monster that can barely gasp out a cry of "Brains!" before tottering after some screaming victim. Just like in the movies. There's just something about the way people think. There has to be an explanation, there must be - and if you can't find it, you will create it. It's what our "superstitious ancestors" did, and it's what we do today, alive or dead. The more things change and all that.

"The search for that ultimate truth can change a person, desperation bends your mind into whatever shape most easily fits the truth you adopt. Religion suddenly sprouts in the faithless and good children of the Lord in life find them worshipping unpronounceable pagan deities in Living Death. Anything that helps them make that explanation ring true, so that they can understand what's happened to them. Why they can't just lay in the ground and die, like everyone else they know, like everyone is supposed to.

"Some are convinced that the walking dead were with us from the beginning. When Cain slew his brother and created death and murder in one strike, he heaped blasphemy upon blasphemy and raised his brother from death. 'The borders between life and death were thin then, having just been created,' they say, 'and God cursed the diabolical Cain not for death - which was part of God's plan - but for the sin of creating of life in death.' We are the inheritors to that sin, just as man is still bound beneath the weight of Eve's original sin of disobedience against an authoritative God in the garden. Of course if you ask another group of undead flesh-eaters and they are certain that it was not Cain who created this horror, for he had nothing of the power required, but Satan himself. Some think of it as a test and seek to deny or

escape their condition, but others simply smile a toothy grin and revel in their sin - they are, after all, already condemned and about as close to the embodiment of evil as you can get.

"Some of the learned among us, the same ones that are concerned with names and distinctions and grand ideas, will tell tales of ancient shamans and magicians. The name Zemi comes up often, and it's a good a name as any. A shaman of unparalleled power, Zemi shattered the division between the living and the dead, cursing the living to a half-death and the dead to some sort of shambling parody of life. Whether he did this to protect his village or out of some overwhelming pride is immaterial now, the end result is the dead rising from their graves to feast on the flesh of the living. Zemi breached the barrier, and it never healed.

"At least, that's what they say. What do I think? I have my own story, of course.

"Before nations rose and swords fell across the Earth, a great shaman lead his tribe through a hard life. As I said before, Zemi is as good a name as any, so that's what I call this shaman of mine, Zemi. The leader of his people, Zemi used his gifts to bring the rain when the earth was parched and to heal the sick when they cried out in pain. He brought generations into the world with his kind hands and he comforted them as they passed out of it. His skin grew wrinkled around his caring face and his noble hair turned white with age and responsibility.

"And the time came when the woman Zemi loved fell ill. She had lived along side him, comforting him as he had comforted his entire tribe. Healing him as he had healed them. She had grown old as he had, and now she lay frail and fading in his desperate arms. Zemi loved her more than anything else, more than his own life. As she lay dying, he tried everything in his power to save her. He called forth the rains and the washed away the crops of the season. He called forth the sun and it baked the land and burnt the livestock. He called forth his powers of healing, and they did nothing at all.

"For three days the sky wept rain as Zemi cried tears and the sun shone brightly as Zemi's love tried to save his wife's life. Finally the people of Zemi's tribe came to him, begging him to let go of his grief and recognize that this was the time for her to die, as all things did. The great shaman heard the truth in their



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words, and he knew that this was the way things were, despite his grief.

"And it was then that Zemi's wife finally died.

"Sick with grief at his loss, Zemi threw aside his care for natural order of things and his devotion to his tribe and chased his love into the afterlife. Using the great powers given to him to protect his people, he ripped asunder the border of this world and the next, striding after her soul. Held at bay by his power and his passion, the guardians of the other world could do nothing as he lifted up the crumpled soul of his wife and carried her back to the land of the living.

Through the dark world and into the light, Zemi brought her, not noticing that she hid her face from him. As her returned to their home, he brought her soul to her body and lay it back into it's cold vessel, binding it with his love and the power he held. It was then that he saw her face.

"He looked beyond the face of her body and saw her soul, he saw the sight she had hidden from him as he carried her back to life. Zemi saw the visage of death instead of the gentle face of the woman he loved. Tears streamed out of empty sockets, running down sunken cheeks and across bared teeth.

"She wept in pity for Zemi, and for the world after what Zemi had done.

"As motion began to return to her corpse, he heard screams and moans from outside. It wasn't until he saw the carnage in his village that his desperate act had caused that he realized what he had truly done. The dead walked and the living died - Zemi had broken the balance between life and death, he had destroyed the boundary between them and created a scar that even millennia couldn't heal.

"And that's the story of love, desperation and human weakness that I use as my Truth. It's as good as any and better than some, and it leaves me to deal with the more important issues of survival. Besides, it's comforting to think I was reborn not from sin or from evil but from simple humanity and a legendary love. And that's what all these tales of Truth are for, in the end, comforting us with reason and explanation so that we can go on from day to day."

Recent History

"Enough of my personal theories, you've got to know what's been going on the past hundred years or so. Until the 1800's, it seems no Zombies were

interested in a recorded history. Anything before the American civil war is personal journals and old Zemi tales. I guess there just weren't enough Living Dead around in previous centuries to really bother making a detail history. So around the 1860's, the abolition movement was in full swing. Underground railroads were in full operation sending escaped slaves into free sections of North America.

"Just the same, there had been Living Dead, and more rarely full cadres, that would hide out Newborns escaped from augur's plantations. Aside from this, however, there were not enough Living Dead to really bother. That is, until the massive simultaneous deaths of the American Civil war seemed to shake up the Coil so much that large Hounfars started occurring across the world, mostly in North America. With all the Féos came greater possibility for a portion for them to become Newborns. It's bad enough that the Féos were shuffling around eating everything, but those Newborns Born out of the Hounfars could have caused a lot of problems.

"It was with this massive population boost that the Zombies of that time had considered a widespread campaign to bring all of the confused Newborns into their secluded homes. This was the origin of the safehouses and Underground Railroad as we know it today. Some even say that it was Zemi himself... or herself... that spurred the Zombies to get off their asses and save the Newborns. More credible records say that a Zombie named Rosa Villanueva, by sheer strength of personality, gathered the Living Dead into a full community. She was a pistol of a woman, by all accounts.

"Once America worked past their crisis, the makeshift unions of railroads had decided to keep up the practice, in case of any further hounfars. In the intervening years, these new cadres handled the smaller, scattered hounfars. Little did this ragtag organization know that the civil war was little more than training compared to the horrors they would face during the two world wars. Whether it was the massive death toll from the wars or the destitution of the great depression, no one can say, but these years brought about hounfars of such a size that few had ever seen anything of the like. The decades from 1914 to around 1947 have become affectionately known as the Hounfar Rush.

"At first, the Railroad was overwhelmed with the number of Féos that had to be handled, some



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renegade Jackal groups simply found it easier to kill the helpless Walking Dead. I'll get back to them later. After the initial wave of hounfars, the Newborns of these risings became the grunts for the railroad that had saved them in the first place. Hiding in the fog of war and in poorer districts, the Underground Railroads of the Hounfar Rush realized how disorganized they truly were. Using the new communication equipment available to them, the Living Dead were able to maintain contact with each other for miles around.

"Older Zombies, skilled in the Pulse, maintained communication posts and commanded the younger Zombies out in the field. The Newborns rescued from these hounfars would then be trained as the new circulation of grunts. The system was established and for the most part, worked efficiently without detection. Any soldier's tales of their fallen comrades waking up and walking blindly through a hail of bullets were simply attributed to shell shock. Emotional casualties of the Great War.

"After the two world wars came to an end, the Hounfar Rush also ended seemingly overnight. The new Living Dead "families" across Europe and Asia celebrated what seemed like the coming of a new dawn after a decades-long night. Still, after the celebration was over, the Living Dead began to discover the hole into which they had dug themselves. Yes, they handled the hounfars in such a manner as to avoid detection by most potentially hostile parties. Yes, the new organization and sense of community had spawned what had not existed before... a Zombie culture. But the price of these noble endeavors resulted in a sharp Zombie population increase.

Birth of the Cells

"Realizing that there was only so much food to be had in such a small area, several groups, called cells, decided to spread around the globe and found their own homes in distant lands. This was the last many cells ever heard or saw from each other. Even in this age of information, there are some fabled cells out there somewhere that have managed to remain hidden all these years.

"Most of the cells died out and others took their place. The lifespan of most cells is about thirty years. At least they last longer than disco. One of the little quirks that seem to carry over past death is the urge

for belonging and identity. Just as the Living often group themselves and each other by seemingly superficial monikers, dress and social habits, so do the Living Dead. A relative few of these groups are the organized holdovers from the Hounfar Rush. These holdovers managed to survive through tightly regimented lives and mostly sheer obsession. They are now more like cults. There still other rumors of pre-Rush cells from as far back as the Civil War and beyond.

"Now, a lot of these cells decided to get organized into even larger associations after the Rush. The predominantly Grande cells joined up under the name 'Circle.' Those Jackal cells that went around gobbling up the hounfar-spawn rather than helping them became the 'Echelons.' It's not enough that our two races have an innate hostility towards each other, these two lunkhead factions have got to create official party lines and all that. At least they aren't fullblown hate groups, that would be dangerous.

"Apparently, they're not stupid. They know that there are already enough things out there to destroy the Zombie community without all this infighting. So after the dust settled from the Rush, the Circle and the Echelons struck a deal for a cease-fire. The deal had no paper-backing, just each other's word of honor. You'd think we'd learn to get things in writing by now. There is a palpable hostility between the two of them. The rest of us in the independent cells don't really care what they do though. We had just better not be caught in the crossfire."

Living Dead Legends

Bloody Mary – A popular figure of love beyond death, Mary is said to wander the streets still wearing the gown in which she was buried. Supposedly, she and her groom killed by a jealous third party.

The Sin-Eater – The Sin-Eater is reputed to be able to remove any ailments from a mortal by eating them, then regurgitating their bodies where they reform after a few hours as if nothing had happened. It is also said that the Sin-Eater can remove the Fever from the Living Dead body through the same process.

The Top hat Zombie – Almost a Santa Claus amongst monsters, the Top hat Zombie helps other Zombies. That's it. His methods vary from clever wit to outright violence, but he always helps. Only the most naïve still believe in the Top hat Zombie. Still... if you see him, **never** touch his hat.



Chapter Three: Society

"So Carl and Donna give you the rundown on all the good shit? Cool. Now I'm supposed to show you how to get along without fucking yourself over. Welcome to the Johnny Muertos tour of the freaks, weirdos and psychopaths that make up our lovely community."

The lowest levels of basic necessities for survival don't come as easily when you're a walking corpse. Going by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, food, shelter, safety, belonging and self-esteem are the first things everyone has to satisfy if they are to be content. But how a Zombie satisfies these needs is often quite different than how a Mortal satisfies them.

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Safehouses

"Right. I'm gonna take you on the grand tour of the place. Watch your step. Act cool around the guards. That's what it's all about, man. You're going to have to find some place to stay. You've got no papers. You've got no ID. You're dead or missing as far as the state is concerned. Not that they are... concerned, I mean. You're lucky if you can even get a hotel room. It's cool though, you can crash here til your Birth settles in. Yeah, the place is a little rundown, what can you expect from an abandoned warehouse? You get what you pay for.

"Over here we have the living room. Don't ask me how Sparks gets the tv to work, it just does. Over here we have Carlton's library and therapy room, been there, right? Right. Upstairs you got Donna's boot camp, been there? You will eventually. Donna doesn't actually live here with the rest of us though, she's got her own crib downtown."

Safehouses are special locations that a cadre of Zombies have acquired where they are safe, secure and comfortable. Some safehouses are gained through legal means via a cadre member with enough knowledge to purchase property without showing their face. In this case, a Cadre will usually send a Pelé into a tax seizure auction to look for a cheap "paper street" house or abandoned factory space. Most often, the Living Dead search through the underbellies of cities, looking for a hard-to-find and easily defended safe spot where they can have a moment of peace.

Safehouses are necessary sanctuaries. Without them, most new Living Dead would wander into the path of some unsavory supernaturals, slavers or crazed Zombie slayers. Safehouses are kept safe through guards, or "heavies." Most often a safehouse comes under attack by "claim jumpers" seeking to take a well-established safehouse for their own. Occasionally, a safehouse's guards come face-to-face with a real live Vampire, or even a Werewolf or a Magician. What any of these groups wants with a dilapidated safehouse is unknown. Some truly tricked out safehouses are equipped with full security systems and packs of Creep Hounds waiting to pounce.

Cadres

"We... I mean me, Donna, Carl, Sparks and the heavies... We're a cadre. Sorta like a family, only

Infiltration

Infiltration, or "going where you're not supposed to go," is a burgeoning subculture in among the Living, primarily in Australia, Europe, and the US, but in other places as well. Infiltrators use urban survival skills to explore sewer mains, abandoned buildings, corporate basements and college campus steam tunnels. These skills are also highly useful to the Living Dead as a method of claiming new Safehouses and learning new escape routes in the case of danger. Living Dead infiltrators have an advantage over their Living counterparts in that they don't have to worry about getting hurt too badly in case the floor gives way or a rafter collapses. On the other hand, this can lead to recklessness in younger Zombies driven by the rush of exploration. Abandoned subway tunnels are populated by all sorts of junkies, homeless and things that were once human. Traveling a water main can lead the overzealous Zombie directly into the woods where furry chainsaws are waiting to slash anything to bits.

tighter. We look out for each other. We got each other's backs. Well, 'cept for Donna. She's kind of a loner, but hey, she's got the car."

Even in Living Death, especially in Living Death, the necessity for belonging and love exists. This is where the cadre mentality comes enters. Perhaps some cadres are just paranoid in their delusions of "us" and "them," but certainly there are dangers out there that require a Zombie to maintain connections to a pseudo-family. Some cadres are formed as a mere circle of friends, others are constructed by one of the more regimented Cells, and many are little more than Living Dead gangs.

Often, each member of a cadre has their own reasons for joining one, the primary one usually being a precaution against Lichs. When a Zombie is alone and weak, his Lich will almost assuredly approach him. With a cadre of Zombies watching his back, the would-be victim is much safer. This safety doesn't come without a price, of course. In the more tight-knit cadres, a potential member must go through an initiation or at least be able to provide something useful to the group like special skills, a shelter, contacts, or transportation.

Underground Railroads

"See, what we got running here is an underground railroad. We go around searching for Newborns just like you and we make sure you don't get your ass blown away by some slayer or hacked to shit by a scooby. Once you're all safe and sentient, you can stay here if you want, but if you wanna go somewhere else, tell us and maybe we can get you there without you being noticed. My suggestion is to get as far away from here as possible so people don't recognize you after you're supposed to be dead."

A mainstay for Zombie culture since the civil war, underground railroads are cadres of Zombies who, for their own reasons, assure safe transport of Newborns and sometimes Féos. There's little warning of when a Hounfar will occur, but when it does happen, it is the job of a UR to assure that few bystanders get hurt and that the Féos draw as little attention as possible. Other URs specialize in attacking the strongholds of known Augurs to rescue the Féos and possible Newborns there. After retrieving the "refugees," what happens to them then is up to the individual cadre. Perhaps the Féos will undergo therapy to induce Birth, perhaps all Féos will be destroyed, it all depends. Still other URs don't concern themselves so much with the noble goals of protecting the innocent and all that. These URs do indeed retrieve Féos from the location of their Hounfars but only to let the Féos loose in a populated area. The UR then sits back and watches the carnage from a safe distance.

Population

"So there aren't a lot of us out there right now. I mean, there's a couple dozen in a city, I guess. But I suppose if there were any more, we'd draw a lot of attention and that doesn't seem to have happened just yet. Thank Zemi. We wouldn't stand a chance if any of the other big players out there new about us, let alone the Meatbags."

Zombies, despite their steadily growing number, are still rather rare. No one knows precisely how many Zombies are in any particular city despite a few attempts to hold a Living Dead census. No one likes census takers, fava beans and all that. As a rule of thumb, it takes a large population to keep a Zombie

Population Control

"The World of Darkness is too goddamned crowded!" This can often be heard during discussions over the strange discrepancies in the population of supernaturals in the World of Darkness. What with all the vampires, mages, mummies, werewolves, changelings, risen, multiple bloodlines, fera, kiths, and now Zombies, how the heck can supernaturals still be a mystery to each other, let alone to the non-supernatural? This is where the Golden Rule comes into play.

To come up with the canon (ha!) population ratio for Zombies, I first considered that they would need a larger group of mortals on whom to feast than vampires. A vampire can just suck some blood from their meal and then let them scamper away. Zombies don't have that luxury. There are a hundred thousand Living to every vampire. So at first, the population I had decided was a million Living to every Zombie, but since there are 6 billion people, that meant there were only 6000 Zombies in the world.

While this might make sense, given their rarity, I had to consider two things. First, it's very hard to create an all-Zombie group when the chances of just two Zombies finding each other are astronomical. For the sake of gameplay, I had to raise it a bit, but not too much. The second thing I had to consider was that, according to canon, those Hunters that just popped up a few years ago are apparently fighting off a lot of Zombies. Now, with all those Hunters and only 6000 Zombies in the world, the Hunters would run out of playmates relatively quickly.

So finally, I decided 300,000:1 was alright. That's about 20,000 Zombies, enough for several to be in one city and form a cadre. Vampires still outnumber the Living Dead 3 to 1 and the Hunters have plenty of shambling hordes to fight off. Storytellers might think this is still too numerous or rare, however.

In this case, consider the Zombie population to be anything but smooth or stable. There are hounfars, slavers, the aforementioned hunters, mutual rivalries and the inherent dangers of just getting a meal that greatly affect the population of the Living Dead. Any of these things can be freely utilized by the Storyteller to modify the Living Dead population for her game.

contentedly munching, so most Zombies live in the city. Unfortunately, living flesh isn't much of a renewable resource so there is one Grande for every three hundred thousand mortals. Jackals have their food necessities a bit easier. They are more spread out, some venturing into the wilderness. Many Jackals stalk hospitals waiting for biohazard bags to be tossed away. These usually contain liposuctioned fat, amputated limbs, and assorted discarded organs. Still, due to the few Jackals who are actually Born, their population size is about even with Grandes.

Race Relations

"Now, Donna told you about the Jackals, right? The dead-eaters. Nasty-ass mother fuckers, pissed off too. They all hate us. They're so full of anger."

There was once a full blown race war between the Jackals and the Grandes, or so the stories go. Chances are that there was some misunderstanding between the two races. Some Grandes say that the Jackals, in fits of berserk rage, would go on rampages eating fellow Zombies along with their usual meals. After these actions, they say, Zemi cursed the Jackals with weakened Meridians and uncontrollably fluctuating bodies. Some Jackals say that the Dead-Eaters existed first and some of them were cursed because of some sort of hubris to eat the living and become murderers. Everyone needs a scapegoat, it seems. Some even say that there never was a Race War, that it was merely a cautionary tale meant to prevent any hostility.

If there was a race war, that would explain the current slow burn animosity between the two races. Jackals view Grandes as vicious murderers. Grandes view Jackals as disgusting bottom feeders that would just as soon eat a Grande as they would each other, cannibals among cannibals. It may come to pass that all the cautionary tales in the world won't prevent a war between the Jackals and the Grandes.

Even though these habits seem to carry over even beyond death, there are still some groups that care not what a Zombie eats. "We're all Living Dead" they say, "We're all equally fucked." Other politically correct groups aren't quite so pessimistic.

The Revolution

"Jackals ain't so bad when you think about the real monsters out there. Slavery is alive and well, Pelé.

Can't we all just get along?

Despite the tense situation between the Jackals and the Grandes, there are still several cadres that ignore such superficial differences as chosen diet. When Grandes and Jackals team up to accomplish a goal, especially getting a meal, the efficiency with which they work is quite impressive. Grandes use their various Vivas while the Jackals use their ability to mold their body into various shapes. Despite their skills, most actions performed by Grande/Jackal teamups tend to draw a lot of attention.

You best watch yourself or else you could find yourself covered in salt and dragged to an Augur's sweatshop."

Zombies are great workers. They never tire. They've got no free will. They don't ask for money. That is, until they're Born. Sentience isn't the best of traits when it comes to labor-workers, just look at the popularity of robots on industrial lines. While the practice of Augury, a word with roots in the reading of fortunes in entrails, has fallen out of favor in modern times, those who still raise the dead are highly obsessed with the art. Augurs and slavers are almost synonymous to most Living Dead, but technically slavers merely capture Féos from Hounfars while Augurs actually do the reanimation themselves. Supernaturals and Living alike have been raising the dead since time immemorial and the the Living Dead are enraged.

Those brave or foolish few who openly revolt against the oppression of Zombies rarely last long in their endeavors. Those who do survive are regarded as great heroes or shunned by those with different beliefs. While open warfare is nearly impossible in urban areas, Revolutionists have become highly skillful in guerilla tactics. There are some well known Augurs and slavers running "big time" operations in South America and the Carribean. The Bosses running those operations have had entire compounds destroyed by well-choreographed attacks by Revolutionists. All without the Bosses inside the compounds finding out who was responsible for the attack.

The Féos rescued from these compounds are sent into safehouses via underground railroads.

Religion

"You religious, Pelé? Shit, I keep on forgetting, you're probably just now remembering how to tie your shoes. Anyway, religion's a funny thing when you're a Zombie, man. You believe in a cheerful happy god up in outer space while you're wolfing down some poor fuck's liver?"

As it happens, many Zombies come up with all sorts of different ethical codes, religions and explanations for their condition. Even if a Newborn remembers their previous religion, chances are that she'll have serious doubts about her former belief system. Most Living religions don't speak much of the possibility of returning from the grave as shuffling cannibals. As such, the Living Dead have created their own various religions or manipulated Living religions to include Zombies. Not surprisingly, many Zombies have converted to several different types of Voodoo/Santeria cults seeing as how some of those religions at least somehow regard the possibility of corporeal life beyond death.

Most Living Dead religions have adopted a single figurehead named Zemi. Some say Zemi is or was the first Zombie. Some say he, she or it is actually some sort of Zombie God that wished to experience life as a mortal, inhabited a dead body as a vessel and unknowingly became "stuck." Zemi's exploits and nature are as mixed up as your average urban legend. Which is precisely what many skeptical Zombies consider Zemi to be... an urban legend.

Supernaturals

"Sometimes I think Universal Studios went out of business and let loose all its freaks into the unsuspecting world. There's all kinds of monsters out there, Pelé, and none of them thinks highly of the Living Dead. I don't know how long we've managed to stay hidden from most of them. Hell, I don't even know if there have ever **been** Living Dead before this century. There sure have been Walking Dead though. Slaves. Cannon fodder. Mindless drones. That's all any of the weirdos out there have seen of us. That's all they think we're capable of. They're in for a surprise, aren't they, Pelé?"

Zombies do not hold high status in the pantheon of supernatural creatures, to be sure. Many supernatural creatures, primarily Vampires and Mages, have practiced reanimation of dead tissue at

So which ones are we again?

While we're on the topic of supernaturals, one might wonder about the difference between a Zombie and a Vampire. First and foremost, the distinction comes in each "species" classification. While Vampires are considered Undead, Zombies are considered Living Dead. The difference being more than semantics. Vampires are corpses kept in stasis with the power of blood coursing through their bodies. They cannot heal without the blood and they do not decompose like Zombies. Zombies on the other hand, are corpses that are not kept in stasis as Vampires know it.

Decomposition is a constant worry for the Living Dead, this is where the "dead" part of being Living Dead comes into play. To stave off decomposition, Zombies consume human flesh. The energies within that flesh, called Viscera, keep a Zombie from falling to pieces. Aside from diet, Zombies given enough time can heal on their own without the aid of Viscera. This is where the "Living" part of being Living Dead comes into play. In defiance of the apparent contradiction in terms, Living Dead are precisely that: alive and dead at the same time.

one time or another over the millennia. Even those supernaturals who do not practice these arcane arts have seen the American and Italian films depicting Zombies as lobotomized slaves to their own hunger. On the other hand, few in the Western Hemisphere have been exposed to the Hong Kong action flicks with fully sentient Living Dead martial arts masters. Regardless of any media involvement, most supernaturals are not aware of the existence of the Living Dead and would probably laugh heartily at such a notion.

Many Zombies resent this all-too-common sentiment but know they are powerless to do anything about it... for now. There are several groups around the world actively raising, Birthing, and training a Living Dead army to "teach those freaks a lesson in respect." This process of course takes time, especially since Knochen are preferred "soldiers" since they're the most easily trained. Other groups resent the stereotype just as much but feel militant action is distasteful. These Zombies would work towards Living Dead interest as spies while posing as Féo servants.

Such behavior is regarded as demeaning by the majority of Living Dead.

The Market

"We can't go out hunting every night, y'know. Sometimes it's just easier to have someone else do all the work. I know a great place downtown, the operators scored the rights to a burnt out Laundromat in the middle of the old industrial district. No cops goin' on patrol. No squatters dropping by unannounced. Top choice prime rib, baby."

The need of Living Flesh for Grandes creates quite an unanswered demand. Ambition has a place in Living Dead culture just as much as in any other. As such, special cadres have organized "markets" of various sizes and levels of influence that sell off Living in exchange for cash or other goods. Most markets are your average local cadre selling off drugged up hookers or drunken homeless people from the back of a delivery truck. There is one, nearly legendary, market that works on an international level as a mail-order-bridge service. They bring in unsuspecting foreign females, sometimes males, and sell them off to any Grandes who can meet their astronomical prices.

The hypocrisy of supporting the Market while opposing the practice of Zombie slavery is not lost on most Grandes, the convenience and relative safety of the Market is simply too tempting to resist.

Johnny's "List of Shit You Don't Do"

"There's a couple things you gotta know before we turn you loose, Pelé. Some folks wanna codify these rules or whatever, complete with punishments and everything. That's pretty pointless, if you ask me. It's common sense, dumbass."

There are certain things that you don't do when you're a Zombie. These things aren't laws because, frankly, they don't need to be enforced. That and there's no one to enforce them. No, these are simply things that aren't done. If they are done, the unfortunate Zombie will often find himself in a very dire situation.

"Don't shit in your food bowl."

Don't go hunting near your safehouse. Hunting near your safehouse makes it not that safe anymore. It's best to go hunting several blocks and possibly a

train ride or two from your safehouse. If there is an unusual amount of attention being paid to a certain area's recent deaths, don't hunt there. Have a plan for the night's (or day's) hunt and have contingency plans in case trouble comes up.

"Don't fuck over your cadre."

If you want your cadre to look out for you, you're going to have to look out for them in turn. If you can help it, don't do anything to endanger your cadre and always help out if a cadre member really needs it. Then again, if a member screws **you** over, you and your cadre are well within your rights to sell him out to the nearest slaver.

"Don't forget to keep your damn mouth shut."

...Meaning you shouldn't go telling everyone you're one of the Living Dead. You never know who is listening. Zombies know how to hide when the shit hits the fan so a horn-blowing Zombie will often find herself all alone surrounded by slayers. Dispose of "leftovers" in a quiet fashion, don't get caught feasting, and don't go after the rich and/or famous.

"That's it, three little reminders that can keep you alive for a long time, Pelé."

Cells

"Soon, you're gonna get recruiters coming to you from all over the place trying to get you into their little faction. You'll prolly hear the names Circle and Echelons too, don't listen to any of them, Pelé. They're just bad news all over."

Differences in philosophy have caused the most prominent and active Cells have split themselves off into two factions, one being the Circle, the other being the Echelons. The Circle's membership is inclusive of Jackals and Grandes but Grandes definitely hold most of the sway. The Echelons are exclusively Jackal, however. The Circle is a barely organized band of Cells sharing a common interest in the care of Grandes and by extension, the Living, at least that's what how the party line goes. The Echelons are tightly organized with central leadership. With their membership being entirely Jackal, the Echelons couldn't care less if the Living remained Living. A Jackal's gotta eat and if there's one more dead human, all the better for the eating.

The majority of the Cells can be more accurately described as "scenes" or independent decentralized subcultures based on various belief systems, interests

or even tastes in music. These independent Cells view the rivalry between the Circle and the Echelons as little more than a playground feud, at best. At worst, it is a rivalry between two psychopathic extremist groups that will inevitably get the independent cells caught in the crossfire.

Keep in mind a Zombie can be of many Cells at once, as membership requirements vary widely from Cell to Cell. Since there are so few Living Dead, the Circle and the Echelons realize that each new member they accept is very valuable and actively try to recruit Newborns. This active recruitment often, ironically, frightens off potential members leading them directly into the Independent scene.



A Word from the Developer

So, you've been reading *Zombie: the Coil* this far, you've gotten a handle on the setting, the people and the multi-layered history. Since this is a *World of Darkness* game, one might think that it's almost obligatory to have a bunch of groups of supernaturals with possibly conflicting goals and practices, or splats. Vampire's splats are called Clans, Werewolf has Tribes, Mage has Traditions, and so forth. *Zombie* has the Cells.

As much as I've tried to make them interesting, you may just really dislike some of these guys. That's cool. In the spirit of White Wolf's Golden Rule, the Cells have absolutely no effect in game mechanics or character creation. Think of each Cell as modular, you can mix and match the Cells that exist in your game or you could easily play a game in a setting where none of the Cells have ever existed. If that's your thing, go for it. After all, it's not like there's such a thing as Cell Vivas or Affinity Vivas to tip-toe around and there's plenty of background to run a splat-free *Zombie* game anyway.

Enough of this, just play. Have fun!

Format Narrative

If you've read other *World of Darkness* books, you'll note that each of their respective group write-ups have an in-character quote as spoken by a member of that group. In *Zombie*, that quote has been replaced with an extended piece of "flavor" fiction. This is designed to give players and storytellers a better idea of what sort of moods can be evoked with the use of that cell in an actual game world.

Description

This is pretty self-explanatory. A bit of history, a bit of the Cell's practices, and a general state of affairs as they stand now.

Compulsions

Compulsions factor heavily in a *Zombie*'s decision to join any particular Cell. Say a *Zombie* has

Compulsions of compassion, caring and looking after the general well being of others. Chances are that *Zombie* will look upon the Dalinari with disgust and join a Cell like the Mercies. Alternatively, in the *Zombie*'s mind, the Dalinari practices may in fact be for the betterment of the people around them and immediately go through the Dalinari initiation. It's a complicated matter so a small list of Compulsions common to a specific Cell really won't do the matter any justice

Stereotypes

This follows the usual *World of Darkness* format. It is a list of the general opinions a particular Cell may have of another. Opinions are like assholes, as the saying goes. Everyone has one and they all stink.

Subcultures

Before we go any further describing the individual Cells, time really should be spent explaining the three primary subcultures that have sprung up in the years after the Rush. These are not "Cells" proper, more like super Cells to which no one really gets any initiation or membership card. Members of any Cell can be found in the ranks of these three subcultures. Further subcultures have yet to be discovered by the Living Dead anthropologists but they are sure to make themselves known eventually.

Crats

The hum of an expensive little life support mechanism reverberates underneath the long oaken dinner table. In a large, private banquet hall rented at several thousand dollars a night for the convention, about two dozen Zombies in various states of decay make small talk about investments and stock options. Their dapper clothes supplied by a kaleidoscope of Italian fashion designers. The doors are secured shut, no hotel staff are allowed inside, nothing but complete privacy. A particularly regal Knochen strikes a small baritone bell three times and the group together around the table.

"Gentlemen, ladies, distinguished investors, we are brought here to celebrate the success and five year anniversary of our corporation."

The assembled group applauds politely. The Knochen almost seems to be blushing, through body language at least, certainly not literally.

"It's been a fun ride, who would have thought the dot com market would be so trecherous in the coming years? But as we have for so many centuries, we managed to survive. We are now in the top ten most profitable online businesses in the country. We have secured our position here, now, but it's time we move forward. As of now, we are extending our infrastructure to London, Hong Kong, Beijing and Tokyo."

A rambunctious young Pelé cheers his approval. The rest of the table stifles a giggle, putting up with his rudeness because of his highly useful computer skills.

"Yes, well, thank you. Enough of my dull rambling, let the feast begin!"

Several naked mortals are carted into the dining hall by the Knochen's Féo servants. The unfortunate

mortals are bound, gagged, shaven and moistened for maximum ease in consumption. The mortals are hooked up delicately to the life support mechanism underneath the table. (A remarkable invention donated to the corporation by a money-friendly Pulse Waver.)

Attached to the machines, the Crats could now eat at their leisure without fear of the mortal dying abruptly. The Crats sharpened their forks and knives. The mortals' screams were muffled as the Crats' serated edges scraped every grain and sinew of muscles and fat.

"Crat" is a slang name for any Zombie who has achieved a certain level of material wealth. At first it was a derogatory term coined by Zombies resentful of their peers success despite the setback of being Living Dead. Later on, the Crats have taken the name as a source of pride. A sign that they can overcome any obstacle and nothing can stop their ambition. Nothing can stand in the way of a Crat's strength of will and fierce intelligence.

Many Crats have taken control of the Markets of various cities, running the harvesting of humans and their transportation to waiting Living Dead. Sometimes Crats gain their riches by investing under false identities. A few highly ambitious Crats have taken to forming companies with a Living figurehead. The Crat who tells the figurehead which directions to take the company, the figurehead gets all the glory and fame for being responsible for a successful company plus a respectable share of the profits. The Crat doesn't mind not getting the fame. Fame is not conducive to the machiavellian politicking in which Crats so often indulge.

Without necessity for medical assistance, normal food, shelter or much of anything else aside from human flesh, most of the money gained by the Crats is put towards secure mansions far from the prying eyes of the media. Of course, the money is also put towards many, many social activities for Zombies with a certain level of financial success. Crats stick together because they'd rather socialize with the elite than meddle with those of a lower "caste."

The Crats do tend to be highly arrogant and cliquish even among themselves. They don't often dabble with their own supernatural abilities or dirty their hands with any type of menial labor. Most even have underlings sent out to retrieve fresh mortals

from the world below their skyscraper penthouses. Sedating a mortal then eating their flesh with a fork and knife is common.

Common Compulsions: greed, ambition, arrogance, leadership, control

Penitent

"Let's talk about how you feel about being a Zombie." Sarah spoke in a soothing voice. One must always walk on eggshells for the Penitent.

"Do we have to? I hate coming to these sessions in the first place. The only reason I come here is to appease Donna's concerns. I'm honestly quite fine. Yes, I am a Zombie. Yes, I am a Grande. Yes, others must die so that I might live. No, I do not enjoy it. No, I do not understand how anyone cannot feel guilty about this situation. There, is that satisfactory?"

"You tell me."

"Oh come on, don't do that to me. You know damn well that we've not gotten any progress in the six months I've been coming here."

"Resolution takes time, Cassidy."

"Yeah, well you know what? You've been punished, my friend. You've been trapped inside this decaying shell. So what happens when you keep on living? Hm? Others gotta keep dying."

"Wouldn't they have died eventually anyway?"

"It's not the same! Geez, you Mercies are heartless."

"I'm just playing devil's advocate here. Wouldn't they have died eventually anyway despite your involvement in their deaths?"

"Yes. But I still feel guilty. I keep feeling like there is something I was supposed to do. Something I had the ability to prevent but didn't. You know, I heard about this one lady who got raped in front of a housing project. The fucker left her there crying in the grass and came back a few minutes later to finish the job. Dozens of people were there. There were only a few witnesses. No one wanted to get involved."

Sarah jotted down a few notes.

"So... what if I was there?" Cassidy continued.

"What if I had been there and had prevented the act from occurring. What would happen? She'd die eventually, but not that night. I could have saved a life. A lot of people have died because of me already. There's got to be something I can do to help, isn't there?"

"That's quite the burden to bear. What if there isn't anything you can do? If everything dies, does that imply that there is no balance, as you imply it?"

"No way. Sometimes the bad ones come back. Like us. We've all done something bad somewhere down the line and the universe says we need to pay the price. I could just kill myself but something worse might happen then. Going to the Coil is the easy way out. The smart ones pay their dues right now."

"Uh huh..."

"But there's the problem. To keep on living and helping, even more people have to die. Two steps forward, one step back. It just never ends."

Living Death often evokes a sense of survivor's guilt, but for most it is merely a passing sadness. The gift of a second life, for those happy few, that initial depression never rears its head again. For the rest who do not enjoy the luxuries of carefree happiness, the only gift a second life grants is an opportunity for penitence. Penitence isn't so much a culture or cell as it is a frequently occurring personality quirk in the Grande community. Few Jackals ever manifest symptoms of penitence, probably because they are not forced to kill the living for sustenance. Some Pulse Wavers have sought to officially declare penitence to be a treatable disease just like depression among the Living.

In any case, these Zombies feel immense guilt for a wrongful deed they performed sometime during their time as a mortal. It does not matter whether the Penitent is actually responsible for her actions, her Whispers simply make her believe that a horrible act took place and she is responsible. This guilt drives her to perform helpful acts. Unfortunately, "helpful" is a highly subjective term and the methods of helping might end up doing more harm than good. Outsiders can rarely distinguish the actions and goals of a Penitent from a Yuya. Penitents know, however, that their actions help to redeem them. Aside from conspicuous actions, a Penitent truly does seek to redeem herself, even if she cannot remember what she is redeeming herself for.

At its heart, penitence dictates that Living Death is a punishment. Opinions vary about who deals this punishment, of course but the cause is rarely spoken of in casual conversation. Living Death has to be a punishment. Some wrong must have been committed to warrant a punishment of this magnitude.



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These beliefs frequently manifest a vicious cycle of guilt, anger and remorse. A Penitent driven to protect the innocent presents the problem of protecting someone you might end up eating tomorrow. This increases his desire for redemption. The frustration of redemption as the metaphorical carrot perpetually held in front of him eventually takes its toll. Eventually, his willpower will cave in and his Lich will be their waiting to bring him back to the Coil.

The unfortunate victims of penitence are used as evidence to support the hypothesis that it is a new tool being used by the Coil. Few understand Penitents, usually wondering why they can't just snap out of it.

Common Compulsions: Guilt, Depression, Repressed misanthropy, Redemption

Yuyas

I pace around this little basement room for days on end. I've long since worn a smooth, circular little groove into the sticky, shag carpeting. I walk and wait. I wait for the hunger to come back. I wait until the hunger, the Fever, becomes so intense that it feels like my bones are about to shatter under the fires in my marrow.

I do this because I want to. I do this because I want to feel the sensation of being hungry. I walk around in my little worn circle and let the hunger slowly build from a dull aching to sharp cramps to unbelievably painful pangs of emptiness. Emptiness in my stomach, my body, my soul. There is so little in my life worth living for, except them.

Those living bastards. Every single one of them, I see them through my window as I walk past it in my little circle. I see the world out there and feel nothing but contempt... and disgust. I wait, walking in my circle, waiting for the hunger to create its little fires of agony across my skin and eyes and thighs. I wait for my hatred of them, of my dependency on them, to blossom like an exploding star.

I start to hear the Whispers then. They tell me to burn things and love things and hate things and fuck things. They tell me I shouldn't be doing this to myself, I should find some help, maybe go talk to that nice Pelé who came to me a few months ago. He was kind of cute. He left his card, I dropped it on the floor. I've passed it several thousand times while I walk in my little circle, memorized every little crinkle

of the cardboard, fallen in love with the soft ivory color.

Every time I walk in my circle, I feel the overwhelming joy and passion and.... happiness... when I walk past the card. Then I keep walking, I see the window. I see the focus of my hatred. I see their mindless little feet in reptile skin shoes and grease stained synthetic emotions. I see the monsters crawling underneath their skin. Their denial of what they truly are. At least you can see under my skin. You can see I'm no monster. Just skin, bones, flesh.... flesh. I hate it. I hate needing it. I have to be stronger than my need.

Then I keep walking in my circle. Halfway between the window and the card. Where there should be numbness, a complacency between happiness and disgust, I feel nothing but pain. The taint of my hunger and addiction casts a foul hue across everything I see. Cheapening my happiness. Adding fuel to my hatred. I keep walking in my little circle and I pass the card and see the little grooves where the soy ink letters were pounded mercilessly into the mother-of-pearl fiber.

I stop walking in my circle. I slowly lurch forward. I am hungry enough to leave. Yes, but where will go? Will go to the address on the I mother of pearl card? Will I just succumb to my weakness?

I open the door in a jerky motion, just barely able to move without excruciating pain. I walk up the stairs onto the ground level. It's night time I think, as I walk through the alleyway. The neon lights of the XXX shop are flickering nervously. They're as indecisive as I am."

There are some among the Living Dead who find themselves with Whispers of a corrupted or schizophrenic nature. Some theorize that the Yuyas possess the Whispers of a previous life that indeed not belong to the body they currently inhabit. Some say that in their previous life they were mistreated, repressed, or just plain nuts. Still others say that Yuyas hear the Whispers of not just one previous life, but many... possibly even other peoples' previous lives layered on top of their own.

With such a cacophony of voices all fighting for the attention of the Zombie, it is no great surprise why Yuyas seem completely insane. But through the din of images, voices, and memories a Yuya can find a profound clarity that few but the mad can appreciate. Often they will receive visions or messages from



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beyond or within, depending on the belief of the Zombie. They even have the latent ability to absorb vague memories from the flesh of the people they eat, though they cannot control this and it often leads to frightening bouts of gibbering, screaming, and violence.

A Yuya's insanity is rarely directly leads to violence, more often there is a misunderstanding between the way a Yuya perceives reality and how

others perceive it. A Yuya's reality is the only one of consequence to the Yuya. Yuyas claim to see things as they truly are. They are often the most vocal in debates over the nature of life and what constitutes consciousness. Most are hesitant to truly believe a Yuya's ramblings. Yuyas claim it is because they speak truths others are not ready to hear.

Common Compulsions: Schizophrenia, Obsession, basically anything out of a psychology textbook

Independent Cells

The Indie cells are most easily defined by what they're not. The Indie cells are not definable. Peculiar, eh? To make things simpler, consider a Living Dead counterpart to a Living subculture. Whatever you get from that hypothetical situation probably has a representative Independent cell. There are religious cults, underground music scenes, radical political thinkers and all sorts of other Cells that can be considered "Independent" so long as they are not affiliated with the Circle or Echelons. Still, seeing as how Independent cells can be damn near anything, it's impossible to know how many are out there.

Crying Skull Posse

"Hey, sweetheart. If you're listenin to this tape, I prolly didn't come out of the last mission too well. I guess you should know what I've been doin all night since we met. See, me and my crew, we were sick of the shit going down in the hood every day. All the kids playing around in the park with crackheads sleepin on benches a couple feet away. Those kids, they'd be the ones sleepin on the benches in a few years if someone didn't do somethin. The police should've done somethin, right? Fuck the police. They're too scared to even come 'round here at night.

"It ain't just the pork, though. The Livin don't give a shit about what goes on deep in the needle alleys n' crack shops. The Livin' don't even care about their own kind 'round here. That ain't right. So anyway, me and my crew, we hear about this posse over in 153rd and Parsons. Heard they got into a little... community service. Goin' all Robin Hood, you know what I'm sayin? Bustin heads, goblin guts. The police don't care what happens to a few fuckups and the people never see us helpin them out.

"Since I got Born, I had these, you know, Whispers... like, I shoulda done somethin back in the

day before I got Born. I dunno. Fuck, maybe I was just as much of a crackhead as the sacks of shit I eat every day. Since I got Born and I met the rest of our people, I saw 'em all thinkin and wonderin 'Why am I here?' and shit. What the fuck? The way I figure it, you been given a second chance. Don't waste your second chance on wonderin why the you got a second chance... just take it.

"So we join up with that posse up on 153rd for a lil' while. They tell us all 'bout how to smash up the crackhouses and not get seen. Then we come back down to our hood, see all the same old shit that we saw everyday that we used ignore, you know? The redtop crack vials in the cracks of the sidewalk. The junkies running into their holes when morning comes. The wife-beaters, corrupt cops, all that. Shit, how could we not do something about all this?

"We're in the thick of shit every day where even the rest of the Dead are afraid to go. This is where we're needed, this is where we'll stay. People 'round here ain't low-ridin, 45 guzzlin Gs doin fistfuls o' crack every mornin. They're real people tryin' to get their shit together. The Skulls make sure no one gets in their way.

"Well, I guess the Posse is short one member, eh sugar? Now, I know you ain't one to put yourself in danger for anyone else and I don't wanna put you in a delicate situation or nothin... but joining the Posse was the best thing I ever did. I left a letter with T-Dawg sayin you might show up at his door. Love you."

Even in the inner cities, especially in the inner cities, Zombies gather together. The cycle of life and death has a special place in an area where the only thing higher than the infant mortality rate is the junkie down the block dusted to the eyeballs. Far from the gothic night clubs and neon-lit streets is another world of crime, sweat, and "honest folks" trying to



make the best of the worst possible situation. The Whispers of the Crying Skull Posse remind them of these people.

Most members of the Posse are culprits, or victims, of the worst aspects of the ghetto. Rapists, drug dealers, flesh peddlers, and all the rest come back to find with new eyes the results of their work. Sometimes a Posse member didn't have a damned thing to do with the inner city environment when they were alive, they simply see what they consider to be a situation that needs correction. So, the Posse goes out and practices their unwritten code of chivalry and protection of the innocent. Don't assume that they're simply urban knights on white steeds coming to save the day. They're realists. They know that the streets don't appreciate the interference of superheroes. The only reward your average hero gets in the street is ingratitude and hostility. The innocents will hopefully never see the person who protects them everyday, at least that's the plan. The only ones who see the face of death are those guilty of crimes to the community. Their punishment tends to leave quite a mess.

The judgment of innocence or guilt is left completely up to the individual member. The deliverance of punishment then falls on the shoulders of that individual's cadre. "Judgment" is one of the

more difficult tasks though. As stated before, the Posse members are realists and they know that sometimes crime is the only thing left for a destitute community. If their cadre agrees with the member's judgment, then heaven help the guilty.

Common Compulsions: Aggression, Compassion, Group mentality, Judgment.

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: They need to peel their eyes away from their books and point them at the reality of the street.

Crats: Zombies are movin' on up. Getting themselves a penthouse in the sky. Where they don't have to look at us anymore.

Dalinari: I sure as hell didn't ask for any more vigilantes walking around in my hood.

Holy Order: Walk on by, preacher man. Let the folks here keep their own faith.

Lanmora: Who?

Mercies: Hippies hang around the new age district. Far away from here.

Morlocks: I heard some fucked up stories about the things in the sewers, man. Fucked up stories.

Mortuum Templum: You're kidding me, right?

Penitent: In the hood, it's pretty tough getting on without going penitent somewhere down the line.

Prima: Don't believe them. Don't trust them.

Pulse Wave: Science-types don't do jack shit for the working man in the ghetto.

Seraphim: There ain't no angels. Never were. Never will be. No matter how hard some people try to become them.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: It's gettin' harder and harder to find a decent Zombie shorty these days.

Yuyas: There's some crazies walking through our streets. No surprise that some of them are Zombies.

Zahn: How come no one does an exposé on the shit going down here. Probably because people don't wanna hear about it.

Dalinari



From the rooftops, I could see the lone mortal stalking the greasy alleys, searching for trouble, searching for me. He was packing some pretty heavy firepower too. He was still wearing his Conglomo Burger uniform. I guess that high-stress profession could make anyone snap. Sure, I got a kick out of seeing this pimple-faced patty-flipper lurking around my



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neighborhood with a gun as big as his chest. At least, that was until I saw him fill some harmless, drunken bum full of super-sonic metal bits.

Things got a bit weird after that, lemme tell ya.

So the burger boy blows the bum away and finishes him off with one last silenced bullet to the face. The squeak of the barrel was barely echoing by the time I jumped on the psycho's back. I grab his gun and throw him into a wall. I threw him hard enough to knock him out but he just kept on coming. I don't know where the hell he got it from, but he fucking pulled out a sword. Now, I mean, I know he got it from some lame novelty mailorder scifi catalog. What I mean is, I don't know where he was hiding the bloody thing.

Anyway, he starts swinging it like crazy. He obviously got it for the poser-factor and not for usefulness. The alley was barely wide enough for him to swing it fully. He slices a few chunks out of me. By accident, I assure you, but I got pretty pissed so I get going with my little speech. First, I kick the sword out of his hand and pin him to the ground.

"Welly welly welly well... Little burger boy, you're far away from home aren't you? You must have walked a long while from the suburbs... What's this tag say? Dave. Well, burger boy Dave, you've gotten your ass in a world of trouble, you know that? Sure, the cops don't come here much. But, y'see, we've got other kinds of police around these parts. Welcome to the 43rd precinct of the goddamned Karma Police, motherfucker. I hoped you enjoyed your stay."

I kicked him in the balls a few times before I finally started gnawing on his arms. Always start with the arms. Something about the pain causes some sort of chemical or something. I'm no Pulse Waver, but all I know is that the pain seasons the meat just the right way. Mmm. Where was I? Oh yeah, the weird thing was that the bum just wakes up after a little bit. Turns into a fucking sasquatch or something. I think he growled "thanks" or something then walks off.

I tell ya, this town is getting pretty crowded.

The Dalinari were born during the late 1970's as the delusions of conservatism in the fifties and the flower power of the 60's gave way to disillusionment, drug abuse, anger and disco. Presidents lied. Presidents died. No one was innocent anymore. No one is safe from the hands of justice. No one is safe from the Cleansing. Ah yes, the Cleansing. A few Zombies attended a meeting in the basement of a

dance club where a charismatic speaker named Charlie Rayburn expressed his disgust with the current events of the Living world. How many of the Living Dead ended up this way as a direct result of a violent crime? Rather than tackle their own personal demons in a lone struggle, they should organize and help each other. With the pooled resources and skills of the Dalinari, injustices will be no more.

Over the years, Charlie Rayburn has grown restless. Some say he has become a Yuya. He has long since righted the wrongs committed against him. In 1984, he announced a new mission statement for the Dalinari. Living Death is proof of right to be judge and executioner for the Living population. A Dalinar's eyes are unblemished by the concepts of emotional attachment. A Dalinar's eyes see the truth of the souls of all Living beings. All are guilty until proven innocent in the eyes of the Dalinari. Some Dalinari, still loyal to the cause, have decided to work against their mad leader's insane whims.

The Dalinari have been called many things since their inception, guardian angels, sadistic vigilantes, and self-righteous psychopaths. The Dalinari are a direct result of the frustration with poverty and a soaring crime rate in the cities of the World of Darkness. The police are corrupt symbols of the rotting pile of dead dreams once associated with law enforcement. The politicians are paid and controlled by outside forces that can be scarcely conceived of. Everywhere, criminals stalk the streets and justice goes undelivered. Everyone is guilty. Everyone must pay.

The Dalinari must do something to cleanse this guilt-ridden world. That is the purpose of Living Death. The Coil is just as sick of the societal decay as the Dalinari. That is why the Living Dead are here. Zombies fill a societal and evolutionary niche. What more efficient way is there to scrub away the refuse of humanity than by eating it? Occasionally, one Dalinar might be caught in the act and slaughtered. Though one Dalinar falls, the Dalinari live on.

While most Dalinari start out as little more than half-involved rooftop detectives, soon the Cleansing becomes their entire purpose for living. They become obsessed and sadistic. They pick out a person they find is guilty of a criminal act and dub that person their "pet". For the next few weeks or so the Dalinar will use all of his skills to turn his pet's life upside down. Leaving faked pictures of them cheating on

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their spouses in the house, erasing financial records, and framing the pet for heinous crimes are all the least of what a Dalinari can think of to make their pet suffer before finally eating them. Few understand the motives of such a long and unnecessarily labor-intensive meal; even fewer understand why the Dalinari enjoy it so much.

Common Compulsions: anti-social behavior, criticism, fastidiousness, sadism

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: Their concerns are not mine. They stay out of my way, I stay out of theirs.

Crats: One must wonder what sort of crime had to have been committed for a Zombie to get that much money.

Crying Skull Posse: They are like little siblings trying to do the older sibling's work.

Holy Order: Crime and faith are not mutually exclusive.

Lanmora: Chances are that they had to commit several wrongs to catch all those bodies.

Mercies: We punish, they release. Same ends, different motivations... and targets.

Morlocks: Injustice knows no boundaries.

Skyscrapers, slums and sewers. No one can hide from the Dalinari.

Mortuum Templum: Their blind optimism is a counterpoint to our realism. Their efforts are misguided.

Penitent: No need to feel guilty where there is no crime. Guilt signifies a wrongful act.

Prima: Good sources of information but you never know if you're being manipulated.

Pulse Wave: Their tools can be invaluable in the service of the Cleansing.

Seraphim: Angels are not without sin.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: At times, they do our job for us. Other times, they are our targets.

Yuyas: Psychopaths, yes. But their distorted vision can sometimes be of use to us.

Zahn: Also good sources of information, but you never know if they're just delusional.

Lanmora

"So you afraid o' da big bad Coil, eh chile?" Mama Bones sighed, speaking softly to the attentive Newborn. "Well rest yo' worries and set yo'self in dis chair by me den. Ah'll tell you a ting o' two about da Coil."

"Da coil be menny tings to menny people but to me, da coil ain't nothin but da weather, chile. It's just gravity, things fall when dey thrown. People n' animals is born. Dey live, den dey die. Is natural.

"Now, yo Mama Bones ain't one to question da natural order o' tings but it seemed to me dat everyting ought to be able to have children. Everyting alive, dat is. Now, you and me, chile, we're dead. Dat's a fact, but we's also alive. How else we live here in dis fine li'l cabin I got set up for us? We cain't do dat if we's stone cold in da ground, can we? No chile, we can't.

"So one day I says to maself, 'If I'm alive, I oughtta be able to have a chile o' mah own.' Well, yo' Mama Bones ain't called Mama bones for no reason, as you can see. Da ol' fashioned way ain't gonna do me no good if I's is to have a chile. This was a while ago, mind you, when I was just a few decades olda den you, chile. So I go ask da others in da village if dey knew how one would go about making demself a chile if dey was in mah situation. None o' dem knew, told me I best not try it or else bad tings'd happen. They

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said we ain't even supposed to be existin' let alone havin no children.

"Well poo on dat.' I says. So I head out on mah own learnin' me some secrets about da Coil and figurin' out a way to make my own chile. Thas you, young'un, you my first chile. Yo' Mama Bones gonna take good care o' you."

Many see the Lanmora as nothing better than traitorous wanderers. That is, those who know they exist. For they're own reasons, some Zombies have chosen to ignore common sense and better judgement to become augurs. These Lanmora wander and hide, keeping their activities a secret lest neighboring Living Dead would shun them. The Lanmora see things differently from everyone else, of course. The raising and control of Féos has a few different purposes. The most notable one being safety.

Without the intervention of the Lanmora freedom fighters, most Hounfars would become far more bloody than they already are and attract more attention than they do. The Lanmora corral Féos together and guide them, hopefully leading a few of them to Birth. This protects the Living population from a rampaging hunger of the walking dead, it protects the Féos from the slavers, most of all it protects the population of the Living Dead whose only real defense against supernatural and Living aggression is number. The pain of being a Zombie is considered the lesser of two negative outcomes when compared to a life of slavery and oppression. The more intellectual Lanmora use their knowledge of augury as valuable tool in the discovery of the secrets of the Coil. Those who study this dangerous subject believe they will find the ultimate escape from the cycle of mortality. Their final goal is the resolution of Fever, Whispers and Compulsions so that they can lead peaceful lives again. With righteous zeal, they pursue their studies knowing that their efforts will eventually be told in stories and legends.

Of course there are a number of other reasons to raise the dead some only raise one Zombie so that they might have a companion or child in their life.

Common Compulsions: Compassion, Dignity, Secrecy, Self-Righteousness, isolationism

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: Anthropologists. No concern of mine.

Crats: We count some crats in our number. Nothing wrong with money.

Crying Skull Posse: Urban caregivers. No concern.



Dalinari: What a peculiar fascination with brooding superheroes.

Holy Order: Their faith can conflict with my practices.

Mercies: Yes, let those poor souls be free. Let me have the leftovers.

Morlocks: Sewer-dwellers. The product of distaste for the Living World. I can appreciate that.

Mortuum Templum: Often, these vigilantes come to my door. Rarely do they ever leave.

Penitent: No time to be depressed in my line of work.

Prima: They'll never be able to fool me with their propaganda.

Pulse Wave: Sometimes their toys are useful. The toymakers themselves can be a nuisance.

Seraphim: Many of these poseur gods wouldn't have existed without the help of an augur.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: I've heard of them, don't know much about them though.

Yuyas: Rarely, we fail in our augury attempts. While the rising is a success, their minds are fractured.

Zahn: I certainly hope they don't stick their journalistic nose into any of my business.

Mercies

"Ma'am, how are you feeling? Are you doing okay? Oh we're part of a special program from the hospital and we heard about your case, so we decided if there was anything we could do to help. As I understand from your file, you've not left this apartment for the past six months. Mm hm... no next of kin, fixed income, never married, arthritis.

"Ma'am, I'm going propose something highly unusual. Now, please be aware that we're professionals and we're only looking out for your comfort and happiness. Ma'am, do you wish to continue living? You've lead a full life, really. You've experienced many things and completed a wondrous journey. Do you wish to end your life now, quickly, rather than slow and alone? The decision is yours, obviously.

"Perhaps you'd like to know how we would perform the procedure. Well, it's quite simple really. We have the first step where we prepare your room with fragrances and pleasant music. Yes, we can play some Sinatra if you like. Next, we begin the procedure by injecting some relaxers into your IV unit that will put you to sleep within a few minutes. Next, is the final step. The procedure is painless.

"Oh, yes, ma'am. The procedure is absolutely free of charge. My colleagues here and I believe that if at all possible, one should be able to decide when they should leave this world. I'm sure you've lost some dear friends over these many years. We make no guarantees about the afterlife, obviously. That isn't our jurisdiction. But if there is something, or someone, there for you in the next world, do you really want to keep them waiting? Are you sure, ma'am? Very well, we'll begin the procedure immediately. Gerald, the lavender, if you please. Carla, can you prepare the sedative? Sam, let's hear 'My Kind of Town.'"

Mercies have chosen a compromise between eating the Living or the dead; they eat the dying. In their philosophy, Zombies are a dichotomy of life and death and thus are best suited to deliver euthanasia to those mortals who wish to end their existence. It's an odd leap of logic, to say the least, but sometimes people will do anything to give their lives some purpose. Mercies haunt violent war zones, elderly rest homes, places with inadequate medical care and, of course, hospitals. The members of this cell are highly selective of who will be granted their mercy.

The World of Darkness is drenched in hopelessness and despair, resulting in a lot of depression and suicidal tendencies. Mercies will spend a long time reading over a potential patient's dossier to determine whether the patient truly wishes to commit suicide or is simply calling out for help. If it is decided that the patient wishes to end his existence, the Mercies will send out a Pelé representative to the patient's place of residence, usually carrying a pamphlet on euthanasia.

During the visit, the representative will try to make polite, but direct conversation with the patient. Usually the fact that the "procedure" is completely free convinces many patients to go along with the process. While Mercies try to pride themselves on the notion that the patient would have tried to commit suicide anyway, this is sometimes little more than a delusion. Some Mercies do honestly try to remain impartial to their patient's situation while explaining the procedure to the patient.

However, Mercies rarely ever fully explain the precise method of death that will be applied to the patient. Often, the extreme pride of doing "good work" will cloud a Mercy's better judgement. Or worse, the extreme urge of the Fever will drive a Mercy to pressure a potential patient into a decision he would normally not have accepted. If a patient declines the procedure, a Mercy should ideally leave it at that. Unfortunately, few Mercies accept that decision, forcing the patient to reconsider over and over again until he sees things the Mercy's way. At least the patient's death really is quite painless.

Common Compulsions: Mercy (obviously), Self-righteousness, Pacifism, fear of violence.

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: Bookworms who can't they see that there are a lot of suck people who need release.

Crats: We wouldn't be able to operate if it wasn't for their funding.

Crying Skull Posse: We sometimes work the same turf. Don't know much about them though.

Dalinari: They've got the right idea but it's taken to a fanatical extreme.

Holy Order: Religion's okay as long as it doesn't force people to die in pain.

Lanmora: Great. We send them on their way, the augurs bring them back.

Morlocks: I sure don't wanna run into them late at night.



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Mortuum Templum: Medieval hobbyists, right? Too many role-playing games, not enough compassion.

Penitent: Many of us feel penitence. Often, it's what drives us to continue our work.

Prima: Peddle your information somewhere else. I've got work to do.

Pulse Wave: Got any decent sedatives? No? Not interested.

Seraphim: Talk about self-absorbed narcissists. Too busy pruning themselves to notice the suffering of others.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: Same school, different subject.

Yuyas: Sometimes a Mercy burns out, goes through a breakdown. It's not pretty.

Zahn: I got a scoop for ya. Get a life.

The Circle

The Circle is the largest faction of cells in North and Central America and parts of Europe. The cells of the Circle share a desire for the growth and health of the Grande population. Basically, the Circle does not condone anything that is not conducive to survival. The goal of the Circle is to meet the demands of the Grande population through whatever means best suited to a specific member cell. The primary survival concern of a Grande is, of course, her next meal. As such, the Circle supports the growth and expansion of human civilization through increased procreation and urban expansion to increase the feeding pool itself.

Organization: The Circle isn't an organization with a single cell placed as the leaders. Rather than having a central cell take on a leadership role, the Circle chooses to be nebulous grouping of Grandes who provide a safety net for each other most of the time. In theory the Circle is democratic, listening openly to each cell's representative. In practice, very little progress is made in favor of Grandes because of the frequent bickering.

Practices: A conspicuously successful project headed by the Circle is their very own flesh market. With outside financial assistance from the Crats, the Circle formed itself a modest market with secret outlets in a number of metropolitan areas along the eastern seaboard. The outlets act as reserve in case Living parties become increasingly suspicious of numerous missing persons cases.

The Circle as a whole opposes the practice of augury. Pragmatically, the Circle opposes augury because of the possibility of spreading the food supply too thin. There can only be so many predators out there before the prey die out completely. Of course, there is also the emotional outrage at the very concept of augury. Even the word augury is considered distastefully politically correct. More often, augury is called outright slavery. Most Zombies of the Circle do not see a difference between the two.

It is generally standard conduct for a Circle member to aid or shelter to any Zombie, Grande or Jackal, who has foolishly made their true nature known to others. Word gets around fast and no one wants to throw in with a squealer. The Circle simply does not exist any more to the unfortunate tattle-tale. Safehouses are locked and shut. Markets won't serve. The Circle doesn't actively do anything to "punish" the snitch. It's just unnecessary when you've got gun-toting maniacs roaming the country looking to bag themselves their a real live zombie.

Membership in the Circle is dominated by Grandes with only a few Jackals accepted into any Circle-affiliated cells. Jackal-friendly cells are sometimes recognized as affiliates of the Circle, while other cells refuse to be associated with any Jackal-loving cell. The cells who do accept the membership of Jackals also tend to be mistrusted by more conservative cells. Technically, the Circle has no written rules nor any codified prohibition of Jackals as members, but Circle Jackals are still frowned upon and usually treated as than equal by their Grande peers.

Current Political Situation: The Circle currently maintains a cease-fire between itself and the Echelons created through the Accord. Few, if any, current members of the Circle or the Echelons remember who agreed to the cease-fire and some Circle members choose not to recognize it entirely. Some believe the Accord to be a myth, even though it is technically just over fifty years old. Since there is no documented evidence of its existence, those rebels see no reason to acknowledge any truce. So far, the Echelons have been more than patient with the younger, more rambunctious Circle members, but there is talk of the Echelons' patience wearing very thin.

Cell of Eyes

"Now, I asked the rest of the group if you could come along for the ride, son. Don't talk unless we say you can talk. The specimens have enhanced hearing and we can't risk revealing ourselves after these years of observation.

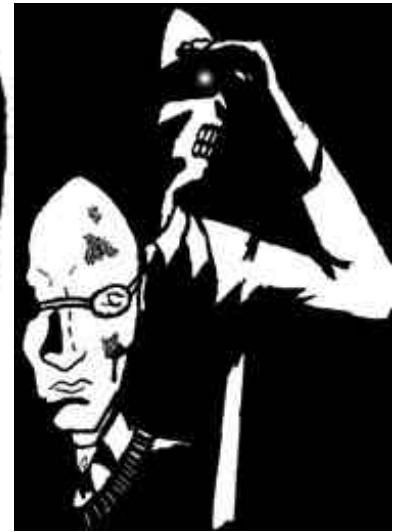
"Quickly, duck under here. Do you see the alley over there? Hey, you're holding the binoculars backwards, you moron. There, okay, do you see the trashcan fire? Look closer and eventually might see them, the vagrants dancing around in circles. We're presuming the homeless people in this area are of some cult. Late at night, often in correlation to the lunar cycle, you can see them dancing around that very trashcan fire. We've not been able to record what they're chanting, unfortunately.

"Every time we bring recording devices, they malfunction. We suspect it has something more to do with this area's nature than anything they're actively doing. From firsthand accounts, we've determined that they're some sort of local cult formed out of homeless people. They seem to have adopted a sort of new age Native American belief system. Some sort of lunar-worship mixed with reverence to local concorporeal supernatural entities. The specimens sometimes disappear directly from sight after several hours of dancing. Very fascinating. Then again, we've heard accounts of them chanting something about worms and geishas.

"Apparently, noncorporeal entities in this area have really taken to this religious movement and have granted the local homeless here the ability to change their form at will. Unlike Jackals, they don't have to eat flesh to change their forms either. Highly unusual. We've heard of some stranger things going on here as well.

"Some businessmen came down here one night and spent hours talking to the vagrants. We don't know what they were talking about but we got the impression that there was some animosity between the two parties. At one point, one of the businessmen transformed into, as a younger pupil described it, a Wookiee. The "Wookiee" was apparently trying to antagonize the homeless into a fight, but they remained peaceful.

"But, as usual, we can't be sure whether any of this information is accurate. We assume, at least, that the vagrants here have some sort of wider goal than



spending hours every night dancing around a trashcan fire or something. Then again, maybe they don't have a wider goal. Perhaps the desperation of homelessness has caused them to truck with bizarre spirits in exchange for wondrous supernatural abilities. We can't be certain of anything. The stuff about worms, geishas, spiders and tornadoes can't be right, but it's the best information we can gather without overtly talking to them. No, we can't just go up and say hello! Have you seen what these things do to the bloodsuckers? How can you possibly be so goddamned stupid? Did the maggots have too much of yo--

"Oh... uh, hello... gentlemen. Er... Lovely evening to have a chant, isn't it? Just a great night to RUUUUNNN!!"

Zombies of the Cell of Eyes believe, as the amalgamation of life and death, a Zombie should spend as much time as possible learning about other people of other supernatural origin. Working from the theory that all supernaturals are somehow connected, the Cell of Eyes believe that to learn the nature of others is to reveal the nature of oneself. The Eyes share an intense curiosity for the occult and the supernatural, usually this curiosity leads the Eyes into highly dangerous situations. Of course, only the younger, more adventurous Eyes go about traipsing through vampire or werewolf territory. The "retired" eyes simply sit back in their old lounge chairs reminiscing about their wild youth and sharing exponentially outlandish tales of near-disaster. That is, those who survive that long.

While young, a member, aptly called a Pupil, often goes tagging along with other groups of Zombies, learning first what the Living Dead culture



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and practicing for more scholarly intellectual pursuits. Eventually, the pupil will graduate to full observer status. During this time, the Eyes will spend years observing a specific supernatural community learning as much as possible about them. The rest of the Circle finds this information exceptionally useful even if the "information" only ends up being 30% accurate.

Some truly ambitious Eyes will attempt "first contact" with their studied community. Before doing this, the Eyes meet in large groups deliberating whether this presumptuous young observer is worth the trouble. If the Eyes agree, the observer approaches the supernatural community, sometimes posing as one of their own, sometimes openly stating her true nature. There are some supernaturals, however, to whom the Eyes have a strict non-communication policy because of the specimens' poor relations with other supernaturals. These specimens have "observation-only" status.

Aside from their duties as scholars and researchers, the Cell of Eyes is also noted as one of the oldest cells still in operation. While other cells will refute this claim, the Cell of Eyes is unique in that they have a documented history to back it up. As the historians of the Circle, they keep the oral tradition of the Zemi tales alive in the modern times. For all their intellectual pursuits, the Cell of Eyes is possibly the most elitist and exclusive cell one can find. Their ranks are determined not by hard rules or codes, but merely the opinion of one's superiors. Often, the retired Eyes have amassed quite a healthy sum of resources and the younger pupils like nothing more than to receive "grants" for their studies. When a Zombie is admitted into the Cell, no other priorities come before the cell and his studies. The Eyes consider themselves the parents of the circle, frequently speaking in a condescending manner. Eyes are easily frustrated when others, especially Zombies, can't keep up with their esoteric ramblings.

Common Compulsions: Study, Reading, Learning, Curiosity, and Voyeurism

Stereotypes

Crats: Oh yes, our research is going very well. A grant could certainly help out though.

Crying Skull Posse: Ruffians. Go back to the street.

Dalinari: Sadistic monsters.

Holy Order: Potential scholars blinded by faith.

Lanmora: Zombies creating more Zombies?
Fascinating.

Mercies: Euthansia doesn't interest me in the least.

Morlocks: You say there's an entire subculture living down there? Hmm...

Mortuum Templum: Ack! They're destroying the subject of our research!

Penitent: Lighten up, there's a world to study.

Prima: They corrupt history to their own whims. Highly disreputable.

Pulse Wave: Fellow scholars, though our studies differ greatly.

Seraphim: Secretive. All the more tempting for study.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: Observation-only.

Yuyas: Occasionally, our studies will bring us so close to unknowable entities that madness soon results.

Zahn: Upstarts. Misguided youths. They'll come back to us soon enough.

Mortuum Templum



Kneeling in an alley, the four brothers of the Templum are praying together before the battle that lay ahead of them.

"Zemi, in form of spirit or flesh, watch your children, protect us in our noble cause." Sir Alan, first in command of this assault, led the prayer. "We who are about to die pledge our allegiance to you bles-"

"Are we done?" The impetuous scout saunters into the alley, interrupting the prayer. The four ended their prayer and stood proudly.

"Yes, we're finished, scout. What have you found?"

"The augur's safehouse is a few blocks away like the Zahn said. The vamp's holed up in an old loft. Got some grunts guarding the place, too. Their lines are nice and juicy. My guess is they're just meatbags on the payroll. I couldn't get a good look inside though. The shamblers are probably still inside."

"Not bad, scout." Derek, second in command, nodded in approval. "You might make it to knighthood soon enough. Actually, you might get promoted tonight depending on how this battle turns out." The brothers laughed heartily.

"Alright, that's enough." Alan grumbled, suddenly turning serious. "Dawn approaches. Are we prepared?"

"Yes, sir." The others spoke in unison.

"Stakes?"

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"Yes, sir."
"Silver?"
"Yes, sir."
"Holy water?"
"Yes, sir."
"Garlic?"
"Yes, sir."
"Very well."

The four brothers then left the scout behind in the alley. Casually, they walked towards the loft, making sure not to draw attention to themselves. Nothing but a few bums walking across the street. Just as it seemed as if the brothers were about to walk right past the loft, they stopped. Growing suspicious, one guard approached the chain link barrier and told the vagrants to shove off. The brothers ignored him. Again, the guard warned them to get away. The brothers ignored his warning. Finally, the guard called in for a backup to help him physically get rid of the smelly bums.

The guards opened the fence and cautiously walked towards the brothers. Suddenly, the brothers' clothing burst and shred to reveal a grotesque armor of spiny bone. A blur of blood streaks across the scene. Body parts fly across long distances. Amidst the wave of gore marching towards the loft, a careful ear can hear the brothers shouting...

"Freedom!"

The Mortuum Templum were founded in heat of the Hounfar Rush when it was discovered that several of the Hounfars were being instigated by structured augury operations. With this newfound knowledge, a noble, if slightly militant, Zombie named Escalante to found his own order of Zombies devoted to wiping out Hounfars at the source... augury. Following a modified chivalric code adopted from the knights of old, Escalante and his "Templars" quickly recruited many anxious young frustrated with fighting symptoms and not the disease.

The newly formed Mortuum Templum was a slap in the face to the previous practice of quiet insurrection and stealthy guerilla warfare. Few condoned the Templum's actions, often citing their high mortality rate as proof that the old techniques were best. However, no one could deny that the Templum actually produced results. The young Templars that survived built up legendary collections of augur fangs.

After Escalante died in a battle with a particularly powerful necromancer, the Templum decided to throw in with the Circle after the Rush. They elected a new leader, called an Escalante in memory of their founder, for each Templum cadre's city-domain. Within their domains, the Templum spend months organizing raids on augur hideouts. The Templum Code binds each Templar to protect their brethren and act honorably in all situations. Everywhere a Templar lives, so does the Templum as a whole.

The Code also charges a Templar prevent anyone else from suffering Living Death by actively hunting down and killing augurs. Granted, this presents a paradox, the Templum protects Zombies from slavery while preventing possible Births that may have come from future generations of Féos. This little detail is usually ignored as the Templars follow the Code with a rare single-minded zeal. Templars tend to favor archaic bladed weapons and armor molded from their own bones but some have taken to using more modern armaments.

Obviously, the Templum's crusade pits a Templar directly against mortals, augurs, and some of the more powerful supernatural elements in the world. No matter the odds, a Templar will keep up the good fight until all are safe or the enemy is destroyed. At least that's the idea. In these dark and cynical times, the Templars find it ever more difficult to have people accept the notion of a working class knight that only



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seeks to help. Even more difficult is to keep from falling into the same the faith that one day the Templum will have succeeded in their quest.

Common Compulsions: Pride, Nobility, Protection, Aggression

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: Without their knowledge, we would be at a severe disadvantage in the Revolution.

Crats: Money is no concern of a true Templar.

Crying Skull Posse: Hrm... urban knights, I suppose. Bitter but honorable.

Dalinari: They are our dark counterparts. I pray we never meet them in the field of combat.

Holy Order: Heretics are not the concern of a Templar.

Lanmora: Worst of the worst. They have turned on their own kind, damning them to Living Death.

Mercies: Strange young independent Zombies. We know very little about them.

Morlocks: Few witnesses report seeing them. There are mostly field reports of Living Dead inhabiting the tunnels and subways.

Penitent: Living our duty can wear on the psyche of an old Templar. Soon it's time for retirement.

Prima: Leaders of the Echelons perhaps, but the Templum.

Pulse Wave: Their innovations have greatly reduced casualties.

Seraphim: They test our patience with their arrogance. Let's hope they never turn to augury.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: Their temptations have no effect on a well-trained Templar.

Yuyas: Many have gone mad when facing the horrors we fight.

Zahn: Some of them fancy themselves war journalists. Often, they get in the way during a battle.

Pulse Wave

Downtown, in a beat-up loft above an all-night porn shop with an obscene neon sign, Cassady is working dilligently on his latest creation: An organic lightbulb. Surrounded in his bedroom/workshop by piles of unfinished projects and a jungle of frayed copper wiring covered in shredded plastic, Cassady thought traditional technology could take a break for now. Leaning back against his swivel chair, he places his tape recorder close to his paper-thin lips.

"Project Bio-Bulb progress report 254a: "I think I just might get this working. True, it might also sprout

legs and nibble on someone's unsuspecting toes, but that's a risk I must take for the sake of progress. In any case, if this doesn't work in the next few days I'll move on to something else and come back to the bulb later. I will. Mustn't work myself into a rut, that leads to stagnation. No room for creativity and progress when I'm stuck working on a bloody bulb. For the future..."

In the next room, Lisa is practicing her Viva techniques. Quietly, she sits cross-legged staring at a penny on her bare wooden floor. Lisa slows her thoughts and focuses on the energies holding her mind, body and soul together. She expands her awareness into the cosmic transcendence of universal oneness. Her mind disperses freely across the stars, the harmony of reality teasing the edges of her consciousness.

But the damned penny still won't move.

"Ugh! So much for psychokinesis." She groans. "How the hell did those Carnes do it anyway? It had to have been a trick." She stands up, paces around the room a bit. She eventually comes to her Einstein poster bearing one of his famous quotes: If we knew what we were doing, it wouldn't be called research. Re-invigorated with the fires of inspiration, Lisa sits back down and stares at the penny. "Gotta keep trying... for the future."

Meanwhile, in the living room, Jim and Nikki are listening to a Hendrix vinyl wondering just what it would take to get a Zombie high. For the future... really.

The Pulse Wave has its roots in a movement popular during the turn of the century. Just as brilliant Living minds were making waves across the world with their discoveries and inventions, copies of a short story called "A Child of Whispers" were being distributed in the Zombie community. The writer, the near-mythical Jasper Galus, was reputedly a Yuya who had written the story after seeing an exhibition of the age's greatest technological marvels.

In the story, a disenchanted and very old Zombie, also named Jasper Galus, rediscovers happiness when he finally begins listening to his Whispers. The Whispers teach the old Zombie about his past as a stuffy banker. Having seen how he wasted one life with bitterness and ennui, the protagonist devotes his life to the study of scientific principles as they apply to Zombies and their supernatural abilities. The plot of the story was hackneyed, the dialogue was predictable,

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and the characters were painfully one-dimensional. Nevertheless, the manuscript developed a cult following of experimentalists of every stripe.

Over time, advancements in science, medicine, and technology were pursued all over the world. The Children of Whispers, as the Galus followers liked to call themselves, developed innovative uses for the new technology to be of use to Zombies. They also developed new Vivas and new uses for old Vivas to finally bring the Living Dead into the modern age.

By the mid-eighties, the cult had run out of steam. The Knochen old guard from the turn of the century was beginning to work the group in the same rut they had tried to escape so many years ago. Annoyed with the lack of risk in the practices of her elders, a rebellious Carne named Darla Blitz published the Pulse Wave Manifesto. This document detailed her postmodernist belief that Whispers and genius do not come out of a vacuum but from outside intellectual stimuli. What Zombies call Whispers are actually the Living Dead superconscious acting through the Pulse to reinterpret pre-existing knowledge into new Vivas.

The manifesto was so arrogant, so audacious, so... new, that it immediately created a following of Pelé and Carne free-thinkers. Together, they are the Pulse

Wave and they will drag the world kicking and screaming into the future whether we like it or not.

Common Compulsions: Individualism, Rebellion, Experimentation, Study, Anarchism

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: Our studies may differ, but they share our passion.

Crats: Oh yes, our research is going very well. A grant could certainly help out though.

Crying Skull Posse: I sure am glad I'm smart enough not to end up in that slum.

Dalinari: Whoa... don't get on their bad side.

Holy Order: Feh. Who needs some dogma? I've got my own power.

Lanmora: Damn, if we weren't part of the Circle, we could be experimenting with augury too.

Mercies: Euthanasia's fine for the ones who are ready for it, but I'm not done yet.

Morlocks: Sewers are not the place to be for the next new thing.

Mortuum Templum: Knights are cool. But so were bell bottoms, get with the future.

Penitent: Who's got time to be depressed when there are new things to discover?

Prima: They can say what they want, we know the truth. We're discovering new truths every day.

Seraphim: Three eyes and six wings are nice for a little while, but they draw a wee bit too much attention.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: Sexy chicks but they're not really into the geek chic thing.

Yuyas: The line between genius and insanity is pretty thin.

Zahn: Those kooks are always hanging around trying to find out what we'll think of next.

Seraphim



The group is gathering on the roof of the long-ignored chapel. Overgrown with weeds of the surrounding forest for the past fifty years, few of the Living even remembered it existed. Those who do remember speak in hushed whispers about the guardian monster-angels who gobble up bad little children who stray too close.

Alpha swooped down from the clouds on tattered grotesque excuses for wings.

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Still carrying a half-eaten corpse, he finished his meal and dropped it onto the dark, soft loam at the foot of the church. Alpha sat down on the sloping roof, waiting impatiently for the rest to arrive. The body twitched weakly, trying in vain to hold onto its vacating soul.

"Isn't this a bit dramatic for an initiation, Nigel?" Alpha spoke into the shadowy darkness.

"Oh I don't think so." Climbing up to the roof on long, spindly legs attached to his shoulders, Nigel took a seat on the opposite side of the chapel roof. "I rather like the view myself."

"I guess there is that." Quietly, Alpha peered through the trees. The glowing dome of the neon signs and street lamps illuminated the midnight-purple sky. Even the light wanted to get the hell out of that damned town. "Still, Nigel. There are certainly safer places for the ceremony. You know how I feel about these wooded areas. The Eyes speak of howling wildmen."

"What do the Eyes know about anything, really?" Nigel's chitin legs folded and retracted into his back as he laid his belly against the warped shingles. "It was just short of forty years ago since we initiated you, wasn't it? The best day of your life when we gave you those godawful things." Nigel gestured towards the restless wings clumsily shuffling on Alpha's back.

"Life, Nigel!"

"Well, you know what I mean."

"When are they bringing the little one?"

"They should be here any moment."

"Anyway, I like my wings, thank you very much."

Alpha glances over his shoulder, taking a peak at the appendages twitching beneath Nigel's back-skin. They're certainly better than those horrific spider things of yours. I still can't figure out where you got legs that size. There isn't a spider that size in the entire world and the things certainly don't look assembled from smaller parts like my wings."

"My little secret, young one. Pray you never meet the thing from which I took them."

The Seraphim may not have the written historical documents to back up their claim, but few doubt that the Seraphim are the oldest cell currently in existence. In one form or another, the Seraphim have always lived, or so they say. Taking their name from the one of the legendary choirs of angels, Seraphim are Zombies who find their physical condition to be a sign of true divinity. The Seraphim



feel that being a Zombie is the highest order of existence there is... but that doesn't mean that they couldn't be better. Ambitious and aloof to a religious degree, the cell seeks to convert as many of the Living Dead to their cause as possible. All must be exposed to the truth of their state. The Living Dead are gods amongst mortals.

A Seraph's arrogance can be seen in the modern Seraphim mantra: "We are of life. We are of death. We are of both. We are of none. We are at the top of the spiritual, biological, and evolutionary ladder. We look down upon the rest of the world from our high perch and pity it. We have to leave that ladder and ascend even further on the wings of our perfection."

Within every mortal is the seed of a power more powerful than any god. The process of death, reanimation and Birth allows that seed to blossom into a flower within the soul. Mind, Soul and body unify into Living Death. The Seraphim utilize the Vivas granted to them by their special nature to manipulate their bodies to match the divinity hiding



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inside their bodies. Dembellah is used to attach animal, human and even supernatural body parts to themselves then use Erzulie to make such alterations nothing less than beautiful and godlike.

Indeed, some older Seraphim barely even maintain a humanoid appearance, finding it distasteful at their level of ascension. At first, an initiate is re-educated to appreciate the gift of Living Death. Once the initiate's education is complete, she will begin training the arts of bodily manipulation, following a "theme" of her choosing. Each Seraph has their own theme of transformation; common ones include but are not limited to animal gods, minimalism, battle and subterfuge.

Of course to be unified with one's own divinity, one must have their followers. The Seraphim, as a group, believe the Circle to be their follower's. Historically, the Seraphim have been instrumental in choreographing "visions" so that church officials would not investigate Zombie-related attacks. Rumor has it that the Seraphim even saved the Living Dead from feeling the brunt of the Inquisition in the dark ages. The Circle owes the Seraphim big time.

Common Compulsions: Control, narcissism, Religion, Ego, self-improvement

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: They find our acceptance of our divinity to be a point of study. We tolerate their prying eyes.

Crats: Perhaps they'd like to pay tithe to us?

Crying Skull Posse: Lost little lambs running through the streets.

Dalinari: They place themselves as judges of all others. At least they understand their divinity.

Holy Order: Damned servitors of the Coil. No better than Lichs.

Lanmora: I understand the appeal of augury, but why build followers who can eventually gain sentience?

Mercies: Apparently, they've chosen to be deities of quiet death. A somewhat skewed perspective.

Morlocks: Under-dwellers. Gods of a different sort.

Mortuum Templum: An odd sort of divinity but noble nonetheless.

Penitent: There's no reason to be depressed. We're gods!

Prima: They may act like they are gods and leaders but they are not

Pulse Wave: They seek to play with the gods through their toys. The attempt is notable but the effort is for naught.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: Whores.

Yuyas: Mad gods are common in mythology. However, in the modern age madness is more of a handicap.

Zahn: Far too curious for their own good.

Zahn



"And so, with your continued support and with our new plan for the next five years, Eidelon Technologies will be as successful as it has been these past two quarters! Thank you all!"

The gathered convention of shareholders cheers their approval of President Bailey's leadership of their company. Still buzzing from

his own success, he decides to let loose some steam the the men's room. He always has to go to the bathroom when he's nervous. Marching proudly through a gauntlet of handshakes and pats on the back, he escapes the crowd in the still solitude of the hotel corridors.

In the bathroom, he quietly approaches the urinal when several men in zombie masks crunch his skull into the cold tile wall and hurl him into a toilet stall. Two of the men peer intimidatingly over the walls of the adjacent stalls. bailey wonders how those cheap-looking masks can so convincingly express ravenous hunger. The leader, a frail-looking woman with a foul stench, wraps her legs around his waist and sits on Bailey's lap.

"So Bailey." She taunts. "How are you doing? You good? How's that E-chip projecting coming along?... File please." Another man behind her hands her a manilla folder thick with frequently fondled pages marked top secret. Bailey recognizes that file. That E-chip was commissioned by seventeen different corporations for consumer information-gathering purposes.

"Wh-who are you? What do you want?" Bailey shivered in fear.

"Who the fuck said you could talk?" The leader growls, baring her crooked, narrow teeth. "Now, we know your secret. We know all about the project. You're going to call it off. You're going to publically announce the intent of the E-chip. If you do not do as I say, these boys are going to eat you alive."

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Bailey squirms and tries to scream when a wad of wet, feces-soaked toilet paper is sealed in his mouth by a stretch of duct tape.

"So, Bailey. You're going to call off that project, right?"

Bailey's forehead crumples into a fearful expression as he nods frantically.

"Good boy, Bailey. Dante, take off the tape." The tape peels off of Bailey's rough, wiggling face and he spits out the toilet paper weakly. "And, quite frankly, Bailey," The leader continues. "I'm surprised you didn't recognize me... heh... Good night, sugar bear."

"Marcy?" Suddenly alone in the men's room, sitting fully clothed in a men's room stall, the President of Research and Development of Eidelon Technologies, Charles Bailey, peed in his pants.

During the 1800's, in the days of Nikola Tesla, the Tunguska explosion, the birth of Egyptology and crackpot stories of Atlantis and Mu, three Carne pupils within the Cell of Eyes began creating theories on the nature of the mysterious and, using the newly coined term, paranormal. At first, the Cell of Eyes kept their patience with the ridiculousness of this group's claims. Usually their outrageous hypotheses were the source of humor among the rest of the Eyes. Desperately seeking to validate themselves to their peers, the group decided to solve one of the greatest mysteries plaguing Europe at the time. Who was Jack the Ripper? After a few months of light investigative work, committing several acts of breaking and

entering, illegal surveillance and robbery, the group announced a grand meeting for all the Eyes in Europe to be held in Paris.

At this meeting, the group presented to the rest of the Cell what it believed to have been conclusive evidence linking the chief of Whitechapel police to the Jack the Ripper murders. With much drama and ado, the group displayed a glass jar containing a single human tooth. The group then explained to the grand convention that supposed evidence was a tooth supposedly belonging to one of the murder victims. This tooth was supposedly obtained from the supposed dresser drawer of the police chief. Supposedly.

The rest of the Cell was disappointed, to say the least. The Cell usually doesn't involve itself with current events, let alone non-supernatural current events and to hold such a grandiose gathering only to see a human tooth was very anticlimactic. Those Eyes that did not immediately leave in disgust decided to inspect the evidence. A few minutes later, the evidence was debunked as a tooth that fell out of the group leader's mouth while she was rummaging through the chief's personal possessions. The Cell of Eyes viewed this strange interest in non-supernatural dealings to be a waste of resources. Furthermore, the Cell found the irresponsible behavior and conduct of this group of uncontrollable young pupils to be reprehensible. Quickly after the tooth incident, the group had their safehouse and equipment repossessed by the Cell and received an official letter of excommunication from the Cell of Eyes.

To the very end, the group believed the Police Chief was responsible for the murders. Still, there was no use in explaining this to unreceptive ears. The group decided to form their own Cell in the United States calling themselves the Zahn, the German word for tooth.

Today, the Zahn have become a rather established cell of conspiracy theorists, renegade journalists and anarchist computer hackers. Rather than robotically record and observe events as they happen, the Zahn have decided to take an active roll in their chosen investigation. The Zahn are what every journalist wishes she could be every time she is stopped at a line of police tape or forced to keep things "off the record." In the spirit of Hunter S. Thompson and Spider Jerusalem, the Zahn aren't afraid to piss in the face of "protocol" or "ethics" if it



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means blowing the lid off of the tribe of sasquatches in the forests of northern Canada or the disturbingly frequent exsanguinations in New York City.

Individual Zahn create all sorts of wild speculations to explain the unexplainable, each member choosing a pet scapegoats as the crux of their entire unified theory. Aliens are a long-time favorite but with such limited evidence, most Zahn have chosen more earthbound, but equally ridiculous claims. For example, there is a small faction of Zahn who insist that an international organization of blood-drinking aristocratic families has been manipulating the mundane population for the past several centuries as pawns in their own interpersonal wars and conflicts. However, even other Zahn laugh at such an assertion. More often, Zahn pick the most obvious target, the Government™.

All this effort to discover the truth would be for naught if the Zahn couldn't tell someone out there about the things that go bump in the night. Unfortunately, the risks of revealing oneself are too great and the Zahn realize this. With the advent of the internet and extraordinarily inexpensive home publishing utilities, several Zahn cadres have gotten into the business of conspiracy newsletters.

The only reason the rest of the Circle puts up with all this nonsense is that, despite the Zahn's questionable motivations and peculiar beliefs, they are masters of intelligence gathering and security systems of any kind. Unlike their parent Cell who have their noses pressed into dusty old notebooks, the Zahn have kept up with the times including modern spy technology and computer hacking. Of course, simple knowledge of how to use state of the art micro-cameras doesn't mean the Zahn don't bumble things up occasionally. Still, their skill with silent breaking

The Echelons

The Echelons are a collection of localized, highly structured cults and cadres seeking to support the Jackal community through the propagation of the Zemi myths, providing counseling and organizing safehouses for Newborn Jackals. Since the Echelons aren't as obsessed with sheer survival of its members like the Circle, they are free to pursue higher intellectual pursuits. Echelon members tend to be highly cultured and extraordinarily pompous. When speaking with them, one almost forgets that these are indeed Jackals who can, and usually will, transform into hideous beasts at the slightest sign of disrespect.

and entering is invaluable to other Circle cells with a desire to shut down augury operations.

Common Compulsions: Paranoia, misanthropy, persecution complex

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: These guys are stuck in a rut. We've got the real scoop.

Crats: Where did they get their money? Sounds suspicious to me.

Crying Skull Posse: Street avengers? Riiight, what's the real deal?

Dalinari: Geez, they need a serious wake-up call. Maybe a full page exposé is in order.

Holy Order: Have you heard about their connection to the Vatican?

Lanmora: What are you talking about? Zombies wouldn't be augurs, would they?

Mercies: You've got to be kidding me, they can't have the best interests of their "patients" in mind.

Morlocks: Mutants lurk in the sewers beneath our homes. It's true.

Mortuum Templum: Zombies risen from the grave to become modern day knights. Now there's a headline.

Penitent: The quest for the truth leaves little room for angst.

Prima: Feh. Their lies conflict with our search for the truth.

Pulse Wave: Kindred spirits, baby. But where do they REALLY get those wonderful toys?

Seraphim: The freaks in the sewers are one thing, but people voluntarily become these things?

Sisterhood of Sharqata: So what happens to the guys who fall in for these chicks?

Yuyas: These guys are a-okay with me. They're the only ones who'll believe us.

Organization: The Echelons are not a democracy. The ranks of the Echelons are not quite military, nor do they quite mimic religious ranks, but they fall somewhere in between. You obey your superiors as if they were a military commander but you do not do this because of some brutish military presence. No, you listen to your superiors because you know they are more wise than you. You have faith in the intelligence and capabilities of your superiors. You love your superiors. If you disobey your superiors, you run the risk of literally being eaten by them.



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Anyone is free to rise in the ranks if they have shown great strength of faith and love for the Echelons. As a whole, the religious organization of the Echelons is called the Synod.

At the lowest rank of the Synod are the choir members. Each choir is based in a single safehouse. These are the grunts who are often assigned to run terrorist and vandalism operations. Their orders are usually to kill as few people as possible, just destroy lives. The two acts are entirely different in the eyes of Echelon leadership.

A step up from the choir are those who have shown enough courage and faith to command their own choirs. These are the preachers. Though preachers are still obliged to follow the orders of their superiors, they are free to actually run their choir as they wish. One of the duties a preacher has is to, well, preach. The preacher regularly holds his or her own version of Zemi worshipping. This can vary from a Living Dead parody of Sunday church service to all-night chicken-sacrificing dance-a-thons.

Still higher up the food chain are those who advise the commanders of several safehouses in a city. These ministers, collectively called the ministry, wield a great deal of power. They are not in view of the political eye yet they still have an ear in the direction of the goals of the Echelons. Ministers command their own mini-choirs, each member of which is called an under-priest. Under-priests are those who spy in the rest of the Echelons, making sure there is no dissidence. If there is a sign of lack of faith on the part of an Echelon Jackal, the offending member is reported to the local minister. The minister then orders the faithless member's preacher to eat her.

The highest ranking officer in a city is the Jackal who commands all of the Echelon controlled safehouses in a single city. She is the cardinal. She answers to no one save for the times when several cardinals of different cities collectively decide a course of action. In this case, the majority act as a single "superior" to which a disagreeing cardinal must show respect and obedience.

Practices: The further goals of the Echelons are less noble and certainly less well-known. Jackals need ripened human flesh to survive. Despite what one may think, this isn't exactly all that easy to obtain. There is not much meat on the bones of corpses that have been buried for a few years. Nowadays, most bodies go through such massive preservation

procedures that the meat takes quite a long while to ripen. Even this is before the bodies are buried to boot.

So, there are two solutions. One being to kill people and wait for them to ripen. Non-Echelon Jackals sometimes do this but the Echelons generally find it distasteful unless the action can be effectively argued on a religious basis. The other solution is to hunt in areas with such inadequate medical care and with such destitution that no one will notice a dead body before a Jackal can fetch it. These tend to be third world countries for the most part but in the World of Darkness, there's a shithole district like this in almost every city. Of course, there is the third solution of consuming other Zombies and indeed, Echelon teams are frequently sent out to retrieve Féos from hounfars for consumption. In desperate times, the Echelons will even be driven to attack augur operations to steal the Fèos from there.

The Echelon cells are disgusted with humanity, all that potential wasted on coffee shops on every corner and sneakers with lights in them. At least humanity's decadence can be of use to the needs of the average Jackal. The Echelons subversively seek the degradation of human civilization to a point where they will still continue to reproduce but will be unable to maintain a standard of living above the poverty level. Nothing ruins an Echelon hunting ground more than some Living community service group distributing clean clothes, compassion and food. Even the existence of a middle class hinders the maximum feeding pool available to Jackals. A wider separation of financial classes usually results in a lot of dying homeless people, or at least a lot of people who won't be missed if they were to die suddenly.

The Echelons' main point of contention with the Circle lies in the Echelon stance on Grandes. The Echelon Jackals think of Grandes as abominations. Killers without mercy. Echelon members are taught that Grandes are impure and have been punished by Zemi, the great god of mortality, for some great travesty in their past. Jackals are the truly blessed, given a new life by Zemi and granted His mercy by not having to kill for survival.

The Holy Order



A rumbling clatter of the opening tomb door startled the half-naked and bleeding Mon Signor Rodriguez out of his nightmared slumber. He stood up, trying to show some sign of dignity despite his vestments being covered in his own filth. The tomb door allowed a shaft of dusty, fly-riddled light to enter and momentarily blind him. A familiar silhouette slithered across the smooth stone floor as the

Interrogator paid a visit to Rodriguez. Two aides quickly set up a small table with a candle and two chairs. The door closed as they rushed out, leaving the Interrogator alone with Rodriguez.

"Como estas, Mon Signor?"

"I am still alive, demon."

"Yes, I can see that. And still stubborn. Hm... I wonder if I should feed you today."

"You'll not force me to beg for food, demon.

You'll not force me to sit at your table. And above all you'll not convince me that I am dead and this is Hell. I may not know where I am, but I am certain that this damned place is not in Hell. I have been faithful to the Lord and there is no room for faith in Hell."

The Interrogator restrained a giggle.

"What is so funny, demon?" Mon Signor boomed, rebelliously.

"Oh nothing. When you started talking, a maggot crawled out of the rotted part of your neck."

Rodriguez hadn't even realized that he was rotting.

"Mon Signor, listen. You are dead. You have been dead for a long time. This body is no longer your own. Let Minister Talon have his body back. Get thee back from whence you came, Mon Signor. Repeat after me. Mortality is the center of faith. Fear of mortality is the fear of faith. Know Mort-"

"No, you'll not convince me of these infernal lies, demon!"

"Oh? Fine, Mon Signor, be difficult. Tell me, why do you fear your god? Because he is almighty? Because he loves you? Or is it because you're afraid of what will happen after you die? It's that fear, isn't it? That's the only thing that powers your devotion, when all

pretext of honor and duty is stripped away. You're a squirming child fearing punishment of a parent."

"Melissa... you can stop now."

"Minister Talon?"

"Know Mortality. Release the fear."

"It's good to have you back, sir."

For those who care about such matters, there is much contention over the issue of whether the Holy Order or the Prima are the eldest of the cells. The Holy Order, sometimes calling themselves the Nephilim, hold a staunch belief in a karmic cycle. They hold that the Coil is best visualized as spiral shaped into a cone. The Living are at the lowest, widest end of the Coil. The Living are unaware of their mortality. They take their existences for granted. Slightly above them are those mortals who have some religious belief.

The Holy Order holds that all organized religion has a common obstacle, how to maintain faith among a vast group of people. The most universal aspect of the Living is the curiosity with and fear of their own mortality. As one ascends the Coil, they grow to be more aware of their own mortality. This places the Living Dead at about midway through the path of ascension. To understand life and death, one must become both. Those few who reach this point of ascension are the truly enlightened, but still not as enlightened as the Jackals. Jackals are not only alive and dead but must consume the dead. Consume the sign of mortality itself. Still, there are some Jackals who do not understand their holy place in the Coil.

Those who do understand their enlightenment undergo several rites of passage and then become Nephilim, members of the Holy Order. The Holy Order believes itself to be more enlightened than the entire mortal and Living Dead population by several orders of magnitude. At the top of the metaphorical Coil is the complete absence of fear of one's own mortality. To know death is to not fear death and thus allows one to truly live.

The Holy Order is aligned with the Echelons only because they are viewed as being on the brink of attaining a rank of ascension equal to the Order itself. It is the Order's duty to give the Echelons one last helping hand to reach the next level of enlightenment. This helping hand means having the entire Echelon organization being subsumed into the Order itself.

When the Order has dealings with the lowly mortals, it is usually in an attempt to create conflict



between two mortal religions. To reach a state where one realizes the inherent flaw of the fear of mortality, one must usually find that flaw in another's belief system. For a group who cause such chaos in the religious world, they are surprisingly dogmatic in their own faith, often ranting about glorious ascension.

Common Compulsions: Faith, perfectionism, condescension, pedagogy

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: We have no need of their knowledge. Our education will suffice.

Crats: Often, our preachers are quite well off. Money is nothing to be ashamed of.

Crying Skull Posse: Gutter trash in need of spiritual guidance.

Dalinari: Self-appointed executioners. The worst of the worst.

Lanmora: Certainly there's nothing wrong with building your own choir when one will not come to you.

Mercies: They seek to give peace and release to dying souls, but there is no peace without understanding of the Coil.

Morlocks: Sewer trash in need of a bath and even more spiritual guidance.

Mortuum Templum: Knights in the service of no religion are not knights at all. Haven't they heard of the Crusades.

Penitent: Lost souls with a hole in their heart. A hole that can only be filled with our clarity of vision.

Prima: We share a special vision. If they only knew how close they were to our level of understanding.

Pulse Wave: A secular pursuit of wonders can only lead to unhappiness and despair.

Seraphim: False prophets. They seek divinity through the physical when it can only be gained through the heart.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: Whores. But not without a special vision of the Coil.

Yuyas: Many of us have been granted the divine insanity, perhaps this is the next level of spiritual ascension.

Zahn: "Journalists" that would seek to sully our good name in their sinful newsletters.

Morlocks

"Welcome to the Down Below, newbie."

Paper Heitch, the biggest zombie I ever met, decided he liked me. What the hell did I do to get sucked into this shit? I could've lived my entire life without ever knowing what goes on in the sewers and subway tunnels of my city. The stench of the oily rainbow of human waste raped my throat and tried to pull my stomach inside-out.

But Paper agreed to let me interview his group for the Worldly News, dirtiest rag I ever worked for in my short journalistic career. Damn, I just realized that I'm sloshing knee-deep in toxic waste for a story that no one outside of the staff and our few dozen subscribers is going to believe.

"Paper? Are we there yet?"

"The smell's getting to ya, is it?"

"You could say that."

"Feh, you get used to it when you live down here." His shadowy form lumbered in front of me. I had no idea where we were going. Maybe he was

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gonna eat me. I heard Jackals do that sort of thing to Grandes.

"Could you tell me now where we're going?"

"Hold on."

"What is-"

"SHH!"

Something was spooking Paper Heitch. Nothing that can spook a Jackal his size can be conducive to survival for yours truly. I thought about booking it out of there, but I had no idea where the hell to go. "Alright, Newbie. Stay here and be quiet." He placed his huge index finger across my lips. I nodded in acknowledgment of his order. "I'll be back in just a second."

Paper Heitch went around a corner into another I guess, I didn't really see where he was going. Seems like my flashlight decided to die at the most dramatic moment possible. I found some weird writing on the walls. I couldn't quite make it out with my flickering light but it looked like some crazy-ass prophecy. Goddammit, why did Paper have to take away my camera? I heard an echo of an echo of some kind of struggle. There was hissing. I heard Paper grunt. I was about to peak around the corner when he suddenly appeared.

"It's clear, Newbie. Come on in, they're waiting to see you."

"Who?"

"The rest of the Community, dumbass."

In the early 1990's, a journalist from California named Jennifer Toth wrote a non-fiction book documenting her experiences in the New York City subterranean community that urban legends named "the Mole People." At first, there was great outrage expressed by politicians and armchair activists. Since the dust settled, there has been a great deal of criticism to concerning her descriptions of locations she supposedly visited and speculation that she may have simply invented much of the information. Journalists and politics aside, even if Ms. Toth had seen some peculiar things, the terrors lurking in the NYC tunnels of the World of Darkness would have sent her into immediate shock on sight.

The Jackals who choose to live in the Down Below with the victims of drug culture and a merciless economy call themselves Morlocks. Morlocks have grown disgusted with the dishonesty and treachery of the Surface People. According to their philosophy, one must maintain a continuous sense of honesty to



be true to oneself. This often comes off as tactless and rude to the uninitiated, but after a few weeks of hearing exactly how another person feels, newbies tend to also grow displeased with the deception of the surface world.

Towards the end of true honesty, Morlocks rarely, if ever, shift their Beast Form. They believe the Beast Form to be the true form of Jackals and all other appearances are merely tools to appease and deceive the people above. Morlocks have a special dislike for the idle rich, those who achieve a certain financial level of extreme decadence without giving something back to the community. Morlocks find them to be the primary source of the dishonesty of the entire surface world.



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There is truth to the quote, "Clean gloves hid dirty hands." The idle rich pump out MTV-driven mania for merchandise and super-cute hot pink purses. To Morlocks, these are all tools to hide the monsters inside. Morlocks usually hunt in packs, waiting for someone of obvious wealth to foolishly walk by. They make certain not to get anyone too rich so as not to attract unwanted attention. Swiftly, they gather a few bodies then return to their homes for a few days, waiting for their catch to ripen.

This hunt is obviously not their sole source of sustenance. There are usually enough bodies of overdosed junkies and homeless people to satisfy all appetites. It's not uncommon for the local crime syndicate to dump their kills in the Down Below. The Echelons actually asked, quite politely, for the membership of the Morlocks when Toth's book had confirmed that there really was a subterranean community. Despite the distasteful politeness, the Morlocks found the Echelons to be not entirely deceptive and agreed to join. Morlocks are unsurpassed in their knowledge of the underground cities populated by people and things that would turn even the strongest stomachs. Though social during a hunt, Morlocks are extremely territorial. Despite the Morlocks' best efforts to keep a low profile, locals will often trade stories about the monster who eats up all the dead bodies that are dumped in the city. Morlocks view their societal niche as one of duty and passion.

Common Compulsions: Honesty, community, loyalty, survivalism

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: It's easy to be fascinated with the supernatural creatures when you're not living in a sewer.

Crats: Decadent. Dishonest. Dead.

Crying Skull Posse: I understand where they're coming from, but we're still in the deeper shit.

Dalinari: We're doing a good enough job without their interference.

Holy Order: I wish we didn't have to be associated with these fanatics, but at least they're honest to their faith.

Lanmora: Why bother making more Zombies if they'll probably end up in the Down Below like us?

Mercies: I support their cause 100%. More dead means more food.

Mortuum Templum: Knights. Zombies. I'm not seeing the connection.

Penitent: Yeah, I can see how this sort of life could drive us to penitence.

Prima: They're polite. Too polite. But at least they're open about their motivations.

Pulse Wave: If they're so smart, why can't they figure out how to get some of us back on top?

Seraphim: I dunno. Changing your appearance into a more truthful form? It sounds suspicious.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: Gorgeous dames, but they sure as hell wouldn't put out for any of us.

Yuyas: Again, I can see how living down here could drive someone crazy.

Zahn: They might be searching for the truth, but how much you wanna bet their search won't lead to the Down Below?

Prima



"We are Prima, the first among the blessed. We have held our people together from the start. Until death, we shall maintain our united spirit." Preacher Martin repeated the prayer calmly through a megaphone into the vast warehouse packed with workers stripping the ripened, hanging corpses of their flesh.

"We are here. You are not. The Prima is life. The Prima is mother. The Prima is father. You owe your Living Death to the Prima and Zemi." Martin paused for a moment to whisper to his apprentice.

"Now wait just a goddamned minute!" A voice of defiance bellowed from a distant corner. "The Prima is dead and chances are Zemi never existed. How the hell are either of them responsible for me being here?"

"Choir, eat him." In a placid tone and an almost caring demeanor, Martin placed the megaphone to his receding lips. "And remember, infidel, just because you do not believe in the Prima and Zemi does not believe they do not believe in you. Pray they have mercy on your soul when you reach the Coil."

The screams of agony and the snarls of the Beast Choir echoed across the vast warehouse. Preacher Martin took a moment to give his apprentice a lesson. "Remember, the appearance of power is actual power."



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The Prima are organized around a single myth, though if you call it a myth to their face, you'll soon find yourself without a good portion of your vital organs. Prima preachers teach that the Prima was actually a single person, a Jackal, the first Jackal to be Born. His name and "his" gender are long forgotten save for his title, the Prima or, the First. The Prima supposedly rallied the Jackals together and set up raiding parties across Europe to hunt down Grandes during the dark ages. After years of Prima leadership, other Jackals began to get their own ideas of self-rule. The Prima realized that they could no longer rally their people around a dated concept of constant rebellion.

The Prima, the person and the group, agreed to peace talks with the Circle for the sake of all Jackals. When the Prima brought word of a "complete Jackal victory," some rejoiced while others defected, dissatisfied with the Prima's leadership.

Eventually, they organized a stable system of government set upon ideals created by the Prima himself. The Prima set up small strongholds in local areas and maintain lines of communication between the other cells that separated themselves from the Prima but still allied themselves with it. These united cells of Jackals were dubbed the Echelons.

Then again, all that could be a lie. Certainly, it would not be far-fetched to assume that there is no one currently alive to lend credence to the Prima's claims. The tales also conflict with any number of established beliefs and timelines. How is it that the Accord was established during the Dark Ages? If the Prima were hunting down Grandes left and right, why bother striking an Accord at all?

The Prima have become, above all, excellent rumor-mongers. Though the Prima do maintain the Echelons' control over various aspects of mortal society, they're power is very limited. They spread exaggerated reports of their influence of the Living and stealthily trick others into telling secrets of their own. Because of this appearance of power, many fear disobeying the Prima law. Indeed, many fear that a Prima under-priest is watching them right now. The Prima use this fear to tenaciously hold every port of political authority available to them, even so far as to run for minor office in the mortal governments.

The Prima make sure that misinformation is flowing readily between Jackals. It is almost assuredly the only thing that keeps many Jackals from openly

defying the Prima. It is even whispered that when **the** Prima, the First, was killed by an assassin; the cell they blamed it on was not really responsible. They were simply scapegoats and the real killer was actually another Prima who wanted the top seat of authority over the Echelons.

This conspiracy theory is obviously false, or maybe it's not. There's yet another rumor that the conspiracy was really fabricated by a Prima Minister. He fed this information, and a few forged documents, through various sources to a rather unintelligent rebel who wished to single-handedly overthrow Prima rule. Once this amateurish detective presented the "proof of a long-standing practice of hiding information," the Minister simply laughed off the claim as hearsay, pointing out well-hidden, intentionally planted flaws in the documents. The "detective" was labeled a psychotic and sent away for feasting.

The most frightening truth that without the Prima, all communication, real and false, would collapse between the Echelons and, without guidance and leadership, everything would fall into chaos.

Common Compulsions: Megalomania, Deception, Condescension, Leadership
Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: Too bad these scholars have chosen such distasteful company.

Crats: Some might call our more elite members "crats." I take it as a sign of pride.

Crying Skull Posse: Rabble. Nothing more than criminals and punks.

Dalinari: Sly killers. Never cross a Dalinar.

Holy Order: Comrades, if not in faith than in devotion.

Lanmora: Their motivations are a mystery to us. Mysteries must be controlled.

Mercies: Compassionate but misguided.

Morlocks: Though their rude lot lurk in the tunnels. Their knowledge is invaluable.

Mortuum Templum: Delusional heroes searching for a cause.

Penitent: How can one be depressed when granted a second life?

Pulse Wave: Their services and innovations are of great value to us.

Seraphim: Monsters. Killers who believe themselves to be gods.

Sisterhood of Sharqata: Value these ladies' alliance while you still can for they are fickle and deadly.

Yuyas: Insanity can afflict anyone, but certainly not the Prima.

Zahn: It's unfortunate that they seek to distribute their version of the truth. We must do something about this.

Sisterhood of Sharqata

The smoke-filled tavern was packed to the brim tonight. The mob crowd was in tonight too. Billiard balls clunked together as the goons played dangerous games of pool. Rhonda was up on stage singing a sad set, the spotlight turned her sequenced dress into a glittering red sea sagging off her frail shoulders. I was tending bar.

So these fellas come in, rivals of the guys that had already gotten comfortable here. It's a damned good thing Mr. Rossini made this joint neutral territory or else I would've been filled with bullets a long time ago. Anyway, the guys walk in, swaggering around in their cheap imitation zoot suits. Most of them immediately came to the bar to ask for some god-awful drinks and to watch Rhonda sing. But one of them, a tall pretty boy you could tell was new to the business, went over to chat with one of the lady regulars. The spider lady, I called her.

"Tell your buddy to watch out." I warned the fellas at the bar.

"What? Is there a contract for him?" The leader smirked.

"No, you mook. Tell him to watch out for the lady there. She may be hot stuff, but why do you think no one's sitting with her already?"

"I dunno, maybe she's got syphilis."

"Whatever, I never seen anyone leave with her ever come here again."

"Maybe it's your rat piss drinks, Mel!" The tough guy at the end of the bar joked.

"Hey shut the fuck up, numb-nuts. You drink your rat piss and you like it." I returned my attention to the leader. "Look, all I'm saying is that the chick is trouble."

The pretty boy was walking out with his arm around the Spider Lady's shoulders.

"And it looks like that trouble got herself another piece of ass tonight." I whispered to the leader.

The fellas at the bar blew me off after that, I wonder if they ever found their buddy again. Probably not, maybe it really is just my drinks. All I know is

that I sure as hell am never gonna say a goddamned word to that lady. But she sure is pretty.

There is a small, relatively localized cultish organization led by a female Jackal who calls herself Sharqata, the same name as the founder of this cell. The founder is reputed to be a woman of legendary beauty and intelligence who worked her way to a leadership position by killing and seducing the men above her. There are no two similar answers as to her purpose in this ambition nor where, why or when she founded the Sisterhood. Few Sisters actually care about such things anyway.

The current bearer of the name Sharqata is little more than a husk of the legendary founder. She uses her power over the Sisterhood's choirs to her own ends. Few understand why she orders her choirs to seduce and sometimes kill male members of various crime families. Rumor has it that the current Sharqata is a very lonely Knochen embittered with loneliness and alienation. She uses her Machiavellian influence over organized crime as a substitute for the companionship she desires. In other words, rumor has it that she's a complete loony.

One never says such things in public, however. So why do the Sisters continue to squirm their way into organized crime? There is certainly a safety for women unparalleled in the criminal underworld. Any abuse is often countered with the Sister's more than suitable combat abilities. However, a lot of Sisters keep up the business because it's just fun.

Of course, all of the "grunts" who actually do the seduction-betrayal act are Pelés. The preachers, ministers and under-priests of the sisterhood vary in Rot. To rise in the ranks of the criminal world, many Sisters will volunteer to single-handedly dispose of bodies. Little more than bits of bone are left after a Sister's feasting. Some of the more risky Sisters actually become "hitmen" for their chosen crime branch. A Sister's methods are rarely questioned as they produce such clean results. A favorite trick is to seduce one of their many beaux into a state of complacency, strap them to a sturdy object, then shift into Beast Form. Just the look on the unsuspecting Mortal's face is reward enough to a Sister.

The Sisterhood is officially an all-female sect but there are some male "sympathizers" who misunderstand the Sisterhood's goals as some sort of equal rights campaign for the Living Dead of both sexes. Stupid men. Often, these sympathizers are only

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looking for some action since no Living woman would ever give them a chance.

Common Compulsions: Ambition, loyalty, seduction, sadism

Stereotypes

Cell of Eyes: I'm sure those eyes wouldn't have study on their mind if they looked at us.

Crats: Money often goes hand-in-hand with power. Power has its hands around a sister's waist.

Crying Skull Posse: Poor little kids. They're on the wrong end of the spectrum.

Dalinari: Oh yeah, they've got a got a great little hobby, but there's no fun when they do it.

Holy Order: Come here, little priest. I bet you haven't had this communion today.

Lanmora: Augurs? Eh, they're just making more food for us.

Mercies: Like the Dalinari, but slower and even less fun.

Morlocks: Ew. I wouldn't be caught dead in a rat hole like that. How do they live down there?

Mortuum Templum: Mmmm... knights in shining bone armor. That's kind of sexy.

Penitent: Boo hoo. Quit your whining and live a little.

Prima: I accept their leadership in name only, Sharqata is the only one who has my loyalty.

Pulse Wave: Gotta love some of the gadgets these kids make. They make great vibrators.

Seraphim: Ugh. Do they really think all those extra arms are beautiful? Give me my makeup anyday.

Yuyas: You never know who's a psychopath these days.

Zahn: I bet they're not above drilling peep holes into a lady's dressing room.





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Chapter Four: Character Creation

Again, this chapter assumes that you're familiar with previous World of Darkness games published by White Wolf Game Studio. What are described here are the new additions to the character creation process that are unique to *Zombie: the Coil*.

Stage One: Mortality

Step One: Character Concept

The first stage of creating a Zombie character is making the human he used to be. Start by formulating a basic concept for your character. Don't worry about minute details at this point in creation. Simply plant the seeds for a good story. Create a person, no powers, no supernatural nonsense, nothing. Just a personality, a person. Now, if you'll have fun playing this character even without any nifty abilities, then you've got a good character. This is the point where you should be thinking about the job, friends and family your Zombie used to have. What was important to your character before he died? Are there any regrets? Triumphs?

Now, with this knowledge in mind, choose the nature and demeanor of your character.

Step Two: Attributes

Your character begins with an automatic dot in each Attribute, with the exception of Appearance in the case of Knochen who start with zero Appearance, but this won't come into play until Stage Two.

Distribute Attribute points. 6/4/3

Step Three: Abilities

Keep your character concept in mind when choosing Talents, Skills and Knowledges. A scientist won't likely have anything in firearms while a county sherriff probably wouldn't know anything about nuclear physics. No abilities may be higher than three at this stage. 11/7/4

Step Four: Backgrounds

You'll get 3 Background points to distribute for your character. The only Backgrounds available at this stage are Allies, Contacts, Fame, Influence and Resources.

Step Five: Freebies

Spread 5 Freebie points as you wish.

Stage Two: Living Death

Step One: Birth

What was the cause of your death? Was their foul play involved? What was the nature of your reanimation? Was it from a Hounfar or an augur? What caused the Hounfar? What were the augur's motivations? What caused your subsequent Birth? Did you have another Zombie introduce you to the Living Dead or did you have to figure it out on your own? Is there a safehouse where you can go to hide

out? Have you encountered anyone from your past? What are your Compulsions and what causes them?

With this knowledge in mind, choose your Cell, choose your Rot (Pelé, Carne, Knochen), and describe your Compulsions.

These are abstract, often irrational, urges and personality quirks experienced by Grandes and Jackals. Some cases are mild, (a fascination with games of chance) while others are quite intense (A need to count the windows on every building before walking past it). No matter the severity, Compulsions always have a major, is sometimes subtle, connection to a Zombie's previous life. In the Compulsion space on the character sheet, put one or two Compulsions for your character. These Compulsions **will** be roleplayed.

Below the Compulsions, describe your Lich. Liches not to have demeanors as such, merely differing manners of influencing a Zombie to return to the Coil during an Ordeal. The Lich's personality is often the complete antithesis of the Zombie's. All of a Lich's influence is limited to the Ordeal which it controls, though particularly powerful Liches can extend their influence much farther. Still, all Ordeals, no matter how elaborate and vivid, exist only within the affected Zombie's mind.

Next, describe your Hounfar or augur in the space provided.

Note whether you are a Grande or Jackal as this will come into play in Steps Four and Five.

Step Two: Attributes

Add two points to your Attributes, spread as desired.

Step Three: Abilities

Add five points to your Abilities, spread as desired.

Step Four: Advantages

If your character is a Grande, choose Vivas. Spread five Viva points as desired. No Vivas can be of a higher rating than Whispers.

If your character is a Jackal, choose Mutations. Spread five Mutation points as desired. No Mutations can be of a higher rating than Whispers.

Spend 2 more Background points (the full range is available now). Often Zombies have a dot or two in Arcane, as a pile of cannibalized bodies tends to draw the ire of local law enforcement. Pick Merits and Flaws (if any).

Step Five: Final Touches



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Here is where your Rot comes into play. Rot determines a number of things including natural Viscera loss and appearance. Note that Rot needn't necessarily be synonymous with decomposition. Someone could have had a particularly gruesome death and though they may not have been dead longer than an hour, they would definitely not be considered a Pelé. There are certain limitations at character creation in place that are specific to each Rot.

Pelés cannot have intelligence over 3. They start with a Willpower of 2 and cannot have Willpower over 3, due to slavery or the recent freedom from mindlessness. They start with three dots in Meridians, and one dot in Whispers.

Carnes cannot have an appearance above two. They start with, three dots in Willpower, two dots in Meridians, and two dots in Whispers.

Knochen start with a zero appearance and cannot have a dexterity above 2, due to recent effects of rigor mortis. They start with four dots in Willpower, one dot in Meridians, and three dots in Whispers.

Jackals cannot ever have Meridians higher than three. Now, Jackals receive three additional points to spend in any physical trait. These additional dots are only activated during Beast Form. Once the three additional physical dots have been chosen, they cannot be transferred to another physical attribute.

Spend an additional 10 Freebie points.

New Additions

New Concepts

- A Zombie who finds that their death was the result of foul play and the culprits are still on the loose.
- A conniving criminal involved in the inner city flesh trade.
- A young teen found by "the system" and recently placed in a foster family who know nothing of the new family member's true nature.
- A bitter elderly person whose fulfilled their life's goal and doesn't know where to go from here.
- A child Zombie, whose Whispers consist mainly of comics, considers their Vivas superpowers.
- A Pelé in such denial that they go so far as to take dietary suppressants and attend "eaters anonymous" meetings.

Naming

Names among the Living Dead are a peculiar thing. Some are Born remembering at least their

name, others are fortunate enough to have their wallet in their pocket with a form of identification. Many choose to take on a completely different name to reflect that they're no longer the person they once were. Others are so shaken by Birth that they're quite incoherent for weeks and so others give them a name.

When Zombies name themselves, they often choose something that they first heard or read after Birth, like the name off of a sign or vehicle, Mickey Domino, for example. On the other hand, just as many choose names revolving around a death/mortality theme, like Johnny Muertos. When Zombies name other Zombies, the name is usually something very tongue-in-cheek, such as a nickname derived from a specific physical oddity, like One-eyed Jack or Chest Cavity Bill. Still others are given nicknames for particularly unusual acts, like Atrocity Jane.

Names say a lot about a Zombie, choose your character's name wisely.

Lich

Here are some sample archetypes for your Lich:

- Beggar- A Beggar Lich creates a surreal scenario where an endless line of distraught and desperate people ask more of the Zombie than they have to give. "Come on, please? Just a quarter."
- Big Brother- During an Ordeal, the Zombie will be in a blank white, featureless room with smoothed corners and a friendly, repeated message spoken right next to the Zombie's ear from an ever-present, invisible source. "The Coil is where you belong. Living Death is Painful. The Coil is comforting. The Coil is where you belong...."
- Nihilist- The most hellish Ordeals ever spoken of are the ones created by Nihilist. Actually, to say that the Ordeal is created is misleading. During an Ordeal, A Nihilist will gradually take away all of the Zombie's senses and ability to move. In the end the Zombie will find themselves in a sensory deprived void, alone.
- Self- Amid a tempest of hateful disturbing memories, an image of a Zombie's living form appears, completely tangible and emotional, pleading, "I'm dead...I'm dead... I'm dead... let me rest... return to the coil... please let me go..."

Or, if you wish, you can use some of these archetypes modified from the Shadow archetypes of Wraith: the Oblivion and Unseelie Legacies of Changeling: the Dreaming.



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- Abuser- One of the least subtle types of Lichs are the abusers who revel in dealing emotional and physical pain by revealing memories of heartbreak and torture.

"I SAID SCREAM FOR ME!!!"

- Director- A director will create an Ordeal of elaborate, and hopelessly futile, situations which will inevitably lead to suffering and eventually wear down a Zombie's mental state.

- Fatalist- The ultimate pessimists, Lichs with a Fatalist streak will take a sinister pleasure in showing the Zombie that there is no hope for anything but gloom in the future.

"What's the point? When will it end? C'mon, let go."

- Freak- Freaks will take a Zombie's deepest secret desires and construct false memories of public humiliation where those desires are brought out for all to see.

"You do what with children??"

- Grotesque- Grotesque Lichs will create images and situations of extreme revulsion that even a Zombie would find sickening.

- Knave- During an Ordeal, Knaves will actually take the form of someone to whom the Zombie is attracted and will give them hope of a relationship only to shred their heart, and sanity.

"I'm sorry you got the wrong impression, but I just want to be friends... well, maybe if you weren't a Zombie"

- Martyr- A martyr prays upon the guilt of cannibalism to convince the Zombie to sacrifice themselves for the sake of others.

"How many more people have to die so that you may live?"

- Parent- Parents act under the pretense of helping the Zombie and, through false memories, will alienate them from their Cadre, friends, anyone who would contribute to their continued existence.

"You don't need them, the only friend you need is the Coil."

- Riddler- Riddlers construct psychological puzzles, mazes and riddles which only lead to messages of the wondrousness of the Coil or more puzzles.

"I'm something beautiful yet no one can see. I'm in every thing living and dead. Everything within me is content and cared for. What am I?"

- Savage- Suddenly (in an Ordeal, obviously), the Zombie finds himself in an increasingly hostile wilderness with harsh elements and aggressive

animals, if the Zombie dies in the Ordeal, they simply return to where they started only to live out the experience again.

Lich archetypes will give your Storyteller a better idea of the kind of Ordeals you have faced, or will face in the future.

New Abilities

Anatomy

This isn't the anatomy you learned in high school biology. Zombies have a different take on the division and classification of human body parts. This Knowledge let's a Zombie know just which parts can be eaten while keeping the meal alive. This is probably of little use to Jackals, but Grandes find it highly valuable. A Grande can learn this knowledge from medical texts or from an old Knochen's diaries.

Roll Intelligence + Anatomy, difficulty 6.

Successes equal the number of extra Viscera points that can be consumed from a meal. Also, with Storyteller discretion, the Zombie can gain certain characteristics of the eaten body parts. Eating the hand of an ambidextrous person can make the Zombie ambidextrous and eating a runner's feet can increase speed. Storytellers must be cautious not to allow this knowledge to intrude on the realm of a power all its own.

1 "It actually does taste a lot like chicken"

1 1 "Maybe eating hair of the dog really does work, maybe if I eat the bartender...."

1 1 1 "Ever since I ate that lefty, I've been ambidextrous!"

1 1 1 1 "Did you know eating the kidney of a healthy human would help purify your body of taints?"

1 1 1 1 1 "Whoa, so that's why they eat brains!"

Possessed by: Connoisseurs, Picky eaters, anyone trained in medicine

Specialties: Glands, Organs, Keeping prey alive

New Backgrounds

Creeps

Zombies can create, for a variety of purposes, these living assemblages of flesh and bone. Perhaps your character feels the need for security and has created or purchased a pack of Creep guard "dogs." Maybe your character just wants a simple pet. Creeps are further explained in Chapter Eight: the Stage.

X No creeps

- 1 One minor Creep.
- 1 1 Two minor Creeps or one decent Creep.
- 1 1 1 Three minor Creeps or a respectable pack of Creeps.
- 1 1 1 1 Four minor Creeps or a formidable pack of Creeps.
- 1 1 1 1 1 Five minor Creeps or a powerful pack of Creeps. You're probably a Creep expert.

Epitaphs

Epitaphs are somewhat similar to Creeps in that they are also assembled from various body parts. However, the difference is that Epitaphs are not alive. Generally they are used as tools where conventional technological devices will not suffice. Epitaphs are further explained in Chapter Eight: the Stage.

- X** What's an Epitaph?
- 1 One minor Epitaph.
 - 1 1 A modest stash of Epitaphs.
 - 1 1 1 An intimidating collection of Epitaphs.
 - 1 1 1 1 Epitaphs of every shape and size for every purpose and use anyone can think of.
 - 1 1 1 1 1 "Epitaphs... Lots of Epitaphs." You're a near legendary dealer with high quality merchandise and more than a few enemies.

Pulse

The Pulse is what allows Zombies see despite a possible lack of eyes and to communicate despite differences in language, lack of ears or lack of vocal cords. This is also how Zombies can recognize each other even if they are nothing but a skeleton. At higher levels, this communication is heightened to extraordinary levels. It becomes a sort of telepathy, but only a very limited version.

- X** Only normal conversation and vision are available.
- 1 You can send one word messages to other Zombies a block a way
 - 1 1 You can send very basic messages. As in, rather than just sending a message to other Zombies such as "run!" you can send the message, "Don't run this way!"
 - 1 1 1 You can now hold full conversations with Zombies a several blocks away.
 - 1 1 1 1 You can almost give a telepathic filibuster to someone across a mile or two away.
 - 1 1 1 1 1 You can recognize and communicate with that Zombie you met briefly last month, in the middle of a crowded street, under heavy Erzulie disguise, all from across town.

New Merits

You are what you eat: 2 point merit

This is the same effect as the latent ability of Yuyas to absorb the memories of those they eat. For an hour after a meal, the player may gain up to two "phantom" dots in any knowledge.

Whispered Lessons: 3 point Merit

For every two dots in Whispers, a Zombie may have one phantom dot of any Skill or Knowledge that they had during their mortal life. These phantom dots only exist long enough to perform one action. This can only be done four times per story, not session.

Face of life: 4 point merit

Your face, for whatever reason, has been all but untouched by the effects of decomposition. You may have something of a deathly palor but it's nothing a little make-up can't fix. The difficulties of appearance based actions are lowered by minus 1 as long as the rest of the body cannot be seen. After all, no matter how good looking you are, a belly crawling with maggots is horrific.

New Flaws

Hangover: 2 point Flaw

If you eat someone under the influence of a chemical substance (alcohol, narcotics, prozac, etc.), you will feel the same effects for about a day afterwards.

Combustible Cadaver: 3pt Flaw

Before you died your body might have been dropped into a drum of oil, or during a hounfar where you have risen, your body was changed by some chemical or radioactive waste that was nearby, for whatever reason, you are highly flammable. You receive one additional damage from fire and the difficulty to extinguish a flaming limb is increased by 2. [Olrak]

Fixed Limb: 3 point flaw

One or more of your limbs his permanently stiff and unweildy. If it's your leg, you walk with a limp, your speed is quartered and running is impossible. If it's your arm, you constantly have it outstretched and possibly held out in front of you making attacking anything much more difficult. This flaw cannot be mended by replacing the limb.

No Flesh: 4 point Flaw

This Flaw is only available to Knochen. With this Flaw, at least ninety percent of your character's body has been left with nothing but animate skeleton. Without flesh to protect them, your bones are highly



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vulnerable to damage. All bashing damage done to your character is considered lethal.

No teeth: 4 point flaw

All flesh must be cut and eaten with some cutting instrument. The extra time it takes to do this reduces the amount of live flesh left available. You will take half of the normal amount of Viscera normally available.

Craving: 5 point Flaw

Only one part of the body or one type of organ will satiate your hunger. Since most organs are extremely vital to life, a mortal will die once they're eaten. You will take only a quarter of the normal Viscera possibly absorbed from a meal.

Ill Mutation: 5 point Flaw

This flaw is only for jackals. Your mutation is not only a boon but is also a bane. The meridians within your body may not be synchronized with you during your transformation. Each time you do change, you receive one Aggravated damage for every two points of mutation you use. You also receive one additional Aggravated damage each round you hold your mutation. This damage is only soakable through the appropriate expenditure of Viscera. [Olrak]

Spark of Life

Putting life in the Living Dead

What was your mortal life like?

Probably one of the most important things about your character is what they did in their mortal life. Their occupation, their family, and childhood will all come into play through your character's Whispers.

What was your upbringing like after Birth?

Did your Zombie immediately have Zombie friends? Did your character have a mentor? Did your Zombie have to figure things out on your own?

Who are your friends and family?

Who does your Zombie count among their friends? Are there friends close enough to consider family? Are there mortals who know of your Zombie's true nature? What do they think about it?

How did you join a Cell?

There are many factions who wouldn't mind adding a newly Born Zombie to their ranks - the Circle, the Echelons, Independents and more. What drew your character to any particular Cell? Did a mentor convince your Zombie into one or did they just hang around Zombies of a particular group? Here is an opportunity to describe to your characters motives and goals for membership in a particular faction.

How did you join your Cadre?

How did your character get introduced to other Zombies? If the characters are of different Cells, what drew them together? What is the bond shared between the Cadre Members? How did the Cadre meet each other? Why do they stay together? Where do they hang out? What beliefs, experiences, and interests do they share? Do the members of the cadre even like each other or do they stick together out of necessity?

How do you deal with the mundane world?

There's a world with six billion people out there that a Zombie must interact with. Unless your character is exceedingly special, they'll have to deal with all of the normal hassles of everyday life. Sure, a nine-to-five job is almost out of the question for anybody but Pelés or Zombies with Erzulie, how does you character make money? What steps does your character take to limit exposure to the more "curious" members of the Living?

Character Creation Process Stage One: Mortality

Step One: Character Concept

Choose concept, Nature and Demeanor of your character's previous life. Discuss these your storyteller if she wishes to choose these for you.

Step Two: Attributes

Prioritize three categories. (6/4/3) Decide whether you're going to distribute the points with or without the acknowledgement that some of the attributes may be lowered after Living Death.

Step Three: Abilities

Prioritize three categories. (11/7/4)

Step Four: Backgrounds

Distribute 3 Background points. The only Backgrounds available during this stage are Allies, Contacts, Fame, Influence, and Resources

Stage Two: Living Death

Step One: Character Concept

Choose concept, Nature and Demeanor of your character's current life. Choose Cell, if any.

Step Two: Attributes

Distribute 2 as desired.

Step Three: Abilities

Distribute 5 as desired.

Step Four: Rot

Choose Rot. Distribute and adjust traits accordingly.

Pelé - Whispers: 1, Meridians: 3. Starting Willpower: 2. No intelligence over 3 at creation. No Willpower over 3 at creation.

Carne - Whispers: 2, Meridians: 2. Starting Willpower: 3. No Appearance over 2

Knochen - Whispers: 3, Meridians: 1. Starting Willpower: 4. Zero appearance. No Dexterity over 2 at creation.

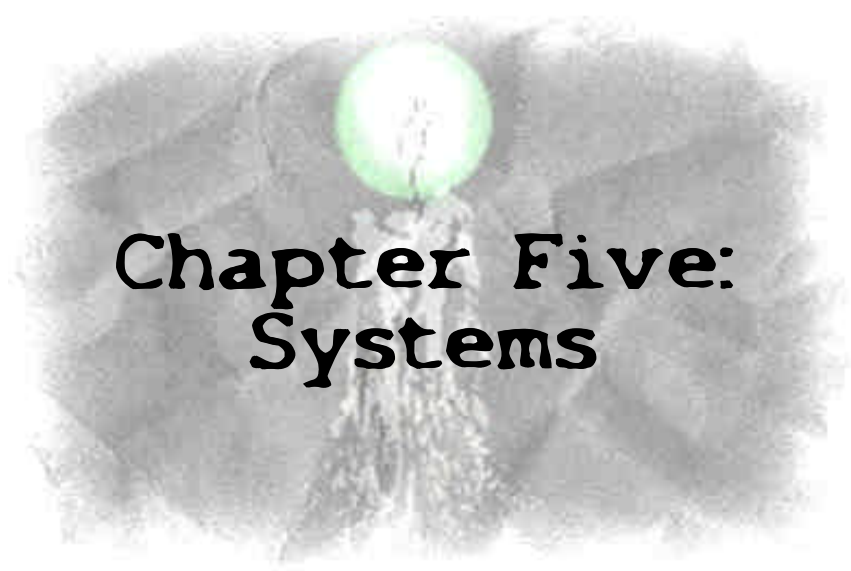
Step Five: Advantages

If your character is a Grande, distribute 5 points among his Vivas. If your character is a Jackal, distribute 5 points among his Mutations and distribute three extra physical dots that will be active while in Beast Form. Ratings in neither Vivas nor Mutations may ever exceed Whispers.

Freebie Points

Experience Points

Trait	Cost	Trait
Attributes	5 per dot	Attributes
Abilities	2 per dot	Abilities
Willpower	2 per dot	Willpower
Whispers	7 per dot	Whispers
Meridians	4 per dot	Meridians
Vivas / Mutations	7 per dot	New Viva / Mutation
Viscera	1 point per 4 dots	Viscera
Backgrounds	1 per dot	Backgrounds



Chapter Five: Systems

“Roll to see if I’m getting drunk!”

Yeah, yeah. There always has to be a set of rules in these sorts of games. Without rules, most game sessions would degenerate into twenty minute shouting matches over whether that last gunshot really did kill someone’s character. Hey, wait a minute...

Anyway, there are several unique traits and rules systems associated with *Zombie: the Coil*. This section assumes you’re already familiar with the basic mechanics of the Storyteller system as published by White Wolf Game Studio.

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Section 1: Body Combat

One of the few benefits of being one of the Living Dead is the durability of the dead body. Because they do not feel pain, Zombies can become fierce combatants. While other supernaturals and mortals receive negative wound modifiers on account of the pain of injury slowing them down, Zombies will continue fighting tooth-and-nail until they have been killed or rendered unconscious. That is, as long as they have Viscera.

Soaking Damage

As another benefit of the dead body, a Zombie may soak almost any type of damage. This does not come at an easy price, however, as this can quickly deplete a Zombie's store of Viscera. In game terms, Zombie's can automatically soak a certain amount of damage. On your character sheet, there are spaces for you to write down how much your character is able to soak.

All Zombies can automatically soak an amount of bashing damage equal to Stamina + Meridians. The Lethal auto-soak is half of the bashing soak, rounded up. Aggravated damage is anything that directly causes damage to a Zombie's Meridians like fire, supernatural claws, teeth and powers. The Aggravated auto-soak is half of the Lethal auto-soak, rounded up. Any leftover damage can be soaked by Viscera. A level of Bashing is soaked by one point of Viscera. A level of Lethal damage can be soaked by two points of Viscera. One level of aggravated can be soaked by three points of Viscera.

There is no limit to the amount of Viscera that can be spent to soak damage in a single round.

For Jackals who are using Beast Form Mutations, all lethal damage is considered soakable aggravated damage.

Salt Damage

The only type of aggravated damage that a Zombie may not soak in any way is from pure, uniodized salt. Table salt and saltwater may sting a bit, but will do no damage. When coming in contact with the surface of a Zombie's body, salt will cause the outer surface to bubble and singe like a chemical burn. Salt tends to stick to organic surfaces, but it may still be brushed off relatively quickly. The afflicted body part may also be dumped in water to neutralize further damage.

Optional Rule: Rolling Soak

Some storytellers may find auto-soaking to be too powerful for their game. In this case, players can roll soak dice (Stamina + Meridians) instead. Bashing damage may be soaked by a soak roll, difficulty 5. Lethal damage may be soaked by a soak roll, difficulty 6. This aggravated damage may be soaked by a Stamina + Meridians roll, difficulty 7. Each success soaks one level of damage. Any damage not soaked by this roll may be soaked by an expenditure of Viscera. You may also forego any rolling and spend Viscera immediately. There may only be one soak roll attempted per round.

Soak Chart

This damage...	Can be soaked by....
Bashing	One point of Viscera per level
Lethal	Two points of Viscera per level
Soakable Aggravated	Three points of Viscera per level

A note on game terms referring to damage:

Damage is divided into Bashing, Lethal, soakable Aggravated and unsoakable Aggravated. When the term soakable aggravated is used, it is used solely in the context of Zombie: the Coil. A Zombie may be able to soak certain types of aggravated damage that most Supernaturals can't and vice versa. Rather than fill pages with damage terms on Werewolves and Mages, I've chosen to keep the content of the rules focused on Zombies. If it is said that some damage is unsoakable Aggravated, then it means Zombies can soak it, not necessarily everyone else.

Salt Damage Chart

A pinch	3 dice of aggravated damage, unsoakable
A fist	6 dice of aggravated damage, unsoakable
A pile	9 dice of aggravated damage or more, unsoakable
NOTE:	Add one level of aggravated for every turn the salt is in contact with the body

You soaked HOW much damage?

So your character just "soaked" the damage from a point blank shotgun blast to the face. How the hell does that look? Certainly, the shooter didn't miss, or else you wouldn't have needed to soak any damage. Your storyteller ultimately decides what the scene looks like but what physically happens, using the shotgun example, is this:

The bullet leaves the chamber. It then enters your character's head causing all the normal amount of tissue disassociation attributed to this sort of injury. Chances are, the bullet then leaves your character's head from the opposite side with a blast of brains, bones and gore in its wake. At the end of that brutal punishment, your character's head looks completely normal, well as normal as is the standard for a Zombie.

The strength of your character's Meridians replaced the dislocated fleshy bits from the shotgun round almost instantaneously as it traveled through your character's poor little noggin. So, that's how you have all the traditional splatter yet come away without a scratch.

Unconsciousness Chart

Successes	Time Unconscious
Five or more	One turn
Four	One scene
Three	10 minutes
Two	One hour
One	Six hours
Zero	12 hours
Botch	A day or more

Death

Your character dies if all health levels have been filled in with lethal or aggravated damage. If your character is beheaded, she will die unless she has the "Ichabod's Bane" Beat. (More information on this and other Beats are listed in the Beats section.) If there is ever a situation where a Zombie loses all dots of Meridians, she immediately decomposes into a heap of bones and rotted meat. That means she's dead, by the way.

If all health levels have been filled in with bashing damage, and there is no Viscera in the Viscera pool, the Zombie immediately falls unconscious. An unconscious Zombie is basically a corpse and this can cause all sorts of problems once the Zombie wakes up. To determine how long your character will be unconscious, make a Whispers roll, difficulty equal to Fever. The number of successes determined how long your character will be out.

As has been stated before, Zombies feel no pain from mundane injuries, so while your character may only have one health level left, he will still be have all the abilities he had if they were uninjured. 'Tis only a flesh wound. Certain supernatural powers possessed by the Living Dead, like the Sakitarri Viva, may cause pain but the penalties for this discomfort are specific to those effects. Zombies' bodies are dead but supernaturally granted a bare trace of Living essence. This grants their rotting bodies the ability to heal themselves, though very slowly.

Once a Zombie has taken more than five health levels of lethal or aggravated damage, she must not engage in any strenuous activity in order for the healing process to take place. Once she has healed

Healing Rates

Bashing Damage

One to Four health levels	Two hours
Five health levels	Six hours
Six health levels	Twelve hours
Seven health levels	One day

Lethal and Aggravated Damage

One health level	Two Days
Two health levels	Six Days
Three health levels	Two Weeks
Four health levels	Four Months
Five health levels	Six Months
Six health levels	Ten Months



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back up to five health levels, she may do anything she wishes and the healing process will continue normally.

Unfortunately, "strenuous activity" also counts as chasing down your next meal. A lucky Zombie will simply have her cadre bring her meals while she is bedridden.

Complications

There are negative modifiers to the difficulties of certain actions that require certain limbs. For example, it is easier to drive a car with both arms than if one has suddenly been hacked off, it is easier to run with legs than with none, and so on. The negative modifiers are at Storyteller's discretion.

Viscera

The Viscera pool is what is used to measure how much Viscera is has been stored within your character's body. The only way to replenish Viscera is to feast on someone of your own species. Grandes can only absorb Viscera by feasting on live flesh, Jackals can only absorb Viscera by feasting on very decayed, or "ripened," flesh. The technical details of what defines "live" flesh and "dead" flesh can be tricky.

For example, if flesh ever comes away from the body of a living human, that flesh will have technically died within the few moments it takes to tear and swallow it. So how do Grandes get any Viscera? For game mechanics simplicity, just assume that flesh separated from the body of a living human is "alive" for an hour or as long as the human lives, whichever is shorter. After this, it will provide no sustenance to Grandes. But after a day, the flesh is sufficiently ripened for Jackal consumption. After about a week, the flesh is too decayed even for Jackals and is useless to anyone from that point onward. Storytellers wishing for accuracy may shorten or lengthen these times according to the humidity and temperature of the surrounding environment, but a twenty minute forensics argument can easily disrupt a gaming session.

In gameplay, feasting is counted as more of a condition than an action. So you'd say "I'm feasting on this bum over here." At that point you'd be eating that bum alive and be absorbing one viscera point per turn. (Yes, turn, not round.) The unfortunate homeless person would be getting one health level of aggravated damage per turn. So getting the maximum amount of Viscera from a healthy person would take seven turns. You stop feasting when the person has died (received

Optional Rule: Viscera Pool Limit

Normally, Zombies do not have a limit to the amount of Viscera their bodies can hold. Storytellers may find this too powerful.

In this case, the suggested maximum amount of Viscera available is 4 x Meridians. This reflects the Meridians' ability to handle a certain amount of Viscera. If the Zombie eats more Viscera than he can handle, he must immediately regurgitate the flesh. The only way to keep from upchucking the entire meal is to spend a temporary willpower every round. Even then, the extra flesh will not count as Viscera and he's going to have to puke sometime.

seven health levels of aggravated damage). A Jackal gets one dot of Viscera for every pound of ripened flesh he consumes. If a Jackal ever attempts to consume live flesh, he will immediately go into a Jackal's version of the Feast, called the Beast Form.

Unfortunately, once you've started feasting, it's hard to stop. You'll have to make a willpower roll, Diff 6, to break feasting prematurely. Viscera can also be used to soak damage, the rules for using Viscera in this way can be found above, under "Soaking Damage."

The amount of Viscera that can be eaten from a specific body part varies but here is a general guideline. For seniors and children in full health, arms grant two to three Viscera, legs grant four Viscera, and the belly grants five to seven points of Viscera depending on weight. For adults in full health, arms grant four to five points of Viscera, legs grant four points of Viscera, and the belly grants six to ten points of Viscera. Once the victim has had a total of seven Viscera points taken from his body, he dies.

The adult belly's exceeding the seven Viscera limit accounts for the fact that many adults are highly obese and most of the Viscera absorbed takes the form of fatty tissue that is not vital to life functions. Storytellers should take special note of whether they wish their players to exceed the seven Viscera limit.

There is a special situation where the Zombie may absorb a full seven health levels in one bite. That is when she eats someone's brain. To do this, she must first bite through the skull. This is a very awkward maneuver to perform in the middle of combat. As such, she must roll Dexterity + Brawl, difficulty 8. If successful, her teeth crush through the victim's skull and plunge into the brain causing the

immediate death of the victim and an immediate seven points of Viscera to be added to the player's Viscera pool. That's why they go for the brains in all the zombie movies.

Fever and Meridians

The Fever is a dual concept. Fever is the cannibalistic hunger of Zombies and is also the decomposition and pain that occurs when a Zombie hasn't had a meal in several days. In game terms, the Fever will require the player to erase dots in the Viscera pool on a regular basis as a way of showing the natural loss of Viscera. The rate of this loss is determined by the level of decomposition a Zombie was in when Born. A Pelé loses one point of Viscera every three days, a Carne loses one every two days, and a Knochen loses one point everyday. If the Fever ever reaches ten points, immediately remove one dot of Meridians and erase all points of Fever. If Fever ever exceeds permanent Willpower, the Zombie will have to make a Whispers roll, difficulty equal to Fever, to prevent immediately going into Feast.

The Viscera absorbed from live flesh is a sort of surplus energy. It is a cushion on which a Zombie can fall back so they don't have to worry about the Fever consuming Viscera from their own body, thus causing them to decompose or worse. In the case that the Viscera pool does run out, a Zombie can use some of the Viscera in their own body in its place. The Meridians determine the strength of the buffer zone of how much the Zombie can safely do this. In the situation where a Zombie has no Meridians, they instantly decompose because the Fever has complete dominance, immediately resumes the natural process of decomposition. In simplest terms, Meridians trait measures the strength and potency of a Zombie's Meridians.

Fever Backlash

Fever backlash occurs when Fever exceeds Meridians. For ease of language, the amount Fever exceeds Meridians will be called Fever difference. There are several possible outcomes of Fever Backlash, these are merely the three most common. Storytellers are encouraged to be creative in these situations. After the Storyteller has declared that these events have concluded, the player may erase all marks in Fever they have accumulated. Consuming Viscera will not remove Fever and consuming Viscera

at the last minute to prevent Backlash from occurring will prove a fruitless endeavor. While the character will gain Viscera as normal, it's too little too late as far as the Fever is concerned.

Pain and damage

This is the most common result of the Fever Backlash. At this point, the pain of a Zombie's body digesting itself takes hold and he will take an amount of unsoakable aggravated damage. If he is a Pelé, he will take one level of unsoakable aggravated damage every third day. If he is a Carne, he will take a level of unsoakable aggravated damage every other day. If he is a Knochen, the unfortunate Zombie will take one level of unsoakable aggravated damage every day. Furthermore, unlike many other forms of damage, this hurts. A lot. The length of this pain is one hour equal to the Fever difference. There is an increase to the difficulty of all actions equal to the Fever difference for a number of hours equal to the Fever difference. Once this pain has subsided, the damage will continue to be dealt, just without the modifiers. The pain will return when the next level of damage is dealt. Once damage has been dealt a number of times equal to the Fever difference, the player may then erase Fever

Feast

The Zombie's hunger has overridden any trace of good judgment or common sense. She has essentially become a Féo. While this condition is not in and of itself harmful to the Zombie, the situations the mindless search for food will create can be highly detrimental indeed. Many Zombies, feeling the Feast coming on, ask their Cadre to chain them up in cellars or restrain them to beds for their own safety. Sort of like getting a designated driver when you know you're a very violent drunk. The length of the Feast is one hour equal to the Fever difference.

While a Grande will revert into a Féo state upon the onset of the Feast, a Jackal's body will begin to mutate wildly and uncontrollably. The Storyteller determines the specific Mutations that the Jackal's body displays.

Loss of Meridians

A Storyteller may wish to forego anything that might interfere with the course of her story. In this case, the Storyteller may simply allow the players to build up Fever. Once Fever reaches ten, erase all the Fever and erase one dot of Meridians as a sign of the Fever progressively weakening the Zombie's Meridians.

Ordeal

The Lich, drawn by the sudden weakness of its Zombie, will arrive to take advantage of the situation. The primary goal of the Lich is to make some sort of physical contact with the Zombie. Once this is achieved, the Ordeal begins. It is much more rewarding if an encounter with one's Lich is a completely role-played experience. As an alternative, the player can roll her character's Whispers with the Fever Difference as a difficulty, while the Lich can roll the Fever Difference with the Whispers as a difficulty. In either circumstance, the three basic results of an Ordeal are:

- Lich is defeated: the Lich undergoes a rapid state of decomposition, Zombie gains a dot in Meridians (the Zombie has a higher resistance to the fever).
- Neither Lich nor Zombie is the victor: Lich goes through a rapid state of decomposition and Zombie is left shaken but unharmed.
- Lich wins Ordeal: Zombie loses a dot in Whispers and a dot in Meridians. Loss of health is determined by whatever fighting ensues in the attempted merging. The effects of suddenly being weaker to the Fever coupled with loss of memory are a highly traumatic experience and should be played out over a few game sessions.

Others can try to separate the Lich from the Zombie's body. Once separated, the Lich's body decomposes quite rapidly. But the Lich usually waits until a Zombie is alone before making a move in the first place.

Gameplay interactions of Fever, Meridians, Rot and Viscera pool

As has been stated above, a Zombie can use their own body as a back up source of Viscera. There are definite consequences doing so, however. Just think of the Viscera pool as a checking account from which you can overdraw but with penalties. When a Zombie "overdraws" on their Viscera pool, the player will fill the squares in the Fever. One point in Fever for every point of Viscera exceeding the Viscera pool.

Game play example: Rick's character Jim, a Zahn, has once again gotten in over his head. He's been dropped in the middle of the desert (don't ask) without a single person in sight to eat. He picks a direction and walks towards it. Jim is a Knochen so he loses on point of Viscera day as a natural process. Jim didn't bother to have a meal before going out on this unfortunate excursion and, on day one, has only two dots left in his Viscera pool, fig. 1.

Figure 1

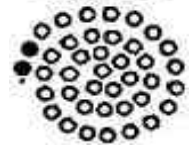
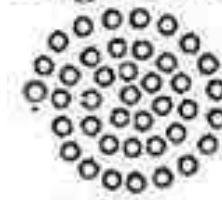


Figure 2



Jim has spent several days walking through the desert. On day three, the Viscera in Jim's pool has run out, fig.2. Unless Jim can get a meal, he's going to be in trouble soon. On the bright side, he won't suffer heat stroke or dehydration.

On day four, Rick has to begin filling in marks in Fever to show that the Fever has no more Viscera to consume and is now eating away at Jim's body. Another day, another point of Viscera. So now he's completely empty. Jim has a rating of one in Meridians, fig 3. It sucks to be a Knochen right now. Fortunately, that one dot of Meridians has saved Jim from facing an unsightly Backlash.

FIGURE 3
Viscera

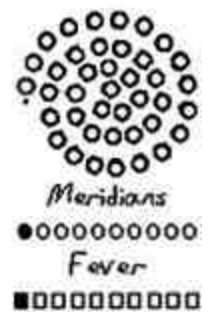
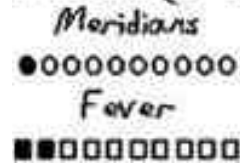


FIGURE 4
Meridians



Jim's in a dangerous situation on day five. Scavenger birds circle overhead. Rick has filled in more marks in Fever than Jim's Meridians can withstand, fig 5, and now must face Fever Backlash. If Rick's storyteller is generous (or sadistic), she can simply let the Fever build up until such time as Jim finds a way out of the desert. Information on Fever Backlash can be found above. In game terms, Jim has lost another Viscera point and it is reflected in Rick's filling in of one more space under Fever, fig 4.

Section 2: Soul

The Personality System

Apathy is very rare among the Living Dead. Indeed, an apathetic Zombie is usually a dead Zombie. The Living Dead are driven, emotional beings who are prone to very peculiar neuroses and patterns of behavior. To express this in game terms, the traits listed under Personality affect game mechanics in unique ways.

Aside from Compulsions, the advantage of personality traits is the lowering of difficulty actions related to those traits. If the action only relates to one of the traits, the difficulty is only lowered by one. However, it is possible for several personality traits to kick in for a single action. When all of these personality traits are activated, the advantages are combined as well, resulting in a maximum difficulty lowering of three.

This stuff is meant to reflect how much an obsessed personality can affect the success of any attempt related to those obsessions. In fact, during character creation, the player may decide to have all the personality traits focused on a single obsession. It only make sense that if you're obsessed with something, you're going to be damned good at doing things related to it. The Storyteller has the final word on whether the action really relates to some aspect of your character's warped personality. The Storyteller may simply decide to ignore the Personality system altogether for simplicity's sake. That's cool, it's his game.

Compulsions - These are abstract, often irrational, urges and personality quirks experienced by Grandes and Jackals. Some cases are mild, (a fascination with games of chance) while others are quite intense (A need to count the windows on every building before walking past it). Compulsions always have a major, is sometimes subtle, connection to a Zombie's previous life. There is only one game mechanic affected by Compulsions. By following the Compulsions, a new character will have a foothold with which to gain new Whispers through Regressions.

Desires (Fuck) - Everyone wants something. A Zombie's desires burn hard and hot in her soul. This desire can take the form of an activity, object or, at worst, a person. The object of desire should, ideally, be something that is not easily obtained or is perhaps ultimately unattainable. The desires of the Living

Is this really necessary?

Since the Storyteller system already has a flurry of Merits and Flaws related to all sorts of character aspects, including psychological well-being, it might seem redundant to implement this Fuck/Fight/Flight schtick. Well, yeah, it is. But technically, it only covers three psychological Flaws (Obsession, Vengeance and Phobia, respectively), though the mechanics are slightly different. When you think about it, there are two further psychological Flaws that just come with the package of being a Zombie already, Compulsion and Flashbacks. So why bother with adding three more personality quirks?

The three F's are just another attempt at providing a method for creating a memorable Zombie character. It's hard to make a one-dimensional killing machine when there's something you're deathly afraid of and it's just as hard to be an unmotivated couch-lump when there are things which you absolutely love and absolutely hate. Now, there's a point here somewhere, where is it? Oh, there it is.

The Fuck/Fight/Flight system is just something the delusional Zombie developer thought might be "cool." It is intended to provide a sense of realism to the game, as "real" as you can get in a game about amnesiac cannibals anyway. Unfortunately, it provides three-dimensionality at the expense of some simplicity. Don't like it? That's okay. It's designed to be pretty modular. So, you can just ignore that little section of the character sheet and play the game like you want it to be played.

Dead are monumentally more ambitious than "I want to make a prank phone call."

Advantage: Whenever performing any action that the Zombie believes will directly result in the desire being satisfied, lower the difficulty of the corresponding roll by one.

Disadvantage: When faced with an object of desire, the Zombie has trouble keeping self-control. Spend a temporary Willpower to keep from recklessly pursuing the object of desire.

Hates (Fight) - There is a seed of hatred in every Zombie. Every one of the Living Dead has a chip on his shoulder about something. This hatred can be a positive one (hating the oppression of the helpless), or it can be a very negative hatred (hating a particular race or gender).



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Advantage: Whenever performing an action that results in the physical or emotional harm of an object of hatred, lower the difficulty of the corresponding roll by one. If the object of hatred is an action, like child abuse, then the object of hatred becomes the person responsible for the hated action, like the abusive parent.

Disadvantage: When witnessing a hated action or coming face-to-face with a hated person, spend a temporary Willpower to keep from performing an act of aggression against the object of hatred. Note that aggression need not necessarily be violence. Aggression can be just as effective in the form of a stinging word as a pounding fist.

Fears (Flight)- Even monsters have their own fears. These fears usually manifest as phobias as well as well-founded apprehensions. However, the object of fear can be something as abstract as a fear of the dark to something as "real" as a fear of dogs. The single most common source of a Zombie's fear is something related to the death of her mortal life. When choosing the Fear trait, storytellers must be sure to have players avoid writing down "Caine" or "Werewolves that could kick my ass anyway." Those are what we call "bad" fears. "Good" fears are things that add dimension to the character like a drowning victim being afraid of water or a frequently beaten child being afraid of belts. Heck, the word "mommy" could have so many connotations that it could drive your character insane. In other words, don't choose cheap fears.

Advantage: The difficulty of all rolls related to escaping the object of fear lowered by one. This can be translated into social rolls (fast-talking a bully), mental rolls (out-thinking a pursuing adversary), or physical rolls (getting the hell out of there).

Disadvantage: When exposed to the fear, spend a temporary Willpower to keep from collapsing into a quivering ball or running away in a screaming panic.

Whispers

Whispers are a special trait in that one doesn't "spend." Whispers are the pure untainted memories of their previous life. When one loses a dot of whispers, it doesn't regenerate over time, the character will have to relearn everything they forgot from that portion of their memory. While this only applies to their memories concerning their previous life, it can still be

a wrenching experience to have a sudden onset of acute amnesia.

The only way a Zombie can lose Whispers is to lose an Ordeal and the only way to gain Whispers is through active introspection and investigation of her mortal past. These actions are collectively called Regressions. To go through a Regression, newly Born Zombies must follow their compulsions. Somehow, these acts will cause her to remember something about her mortal past. There is a difference between true memory and mere knowledge. Simply learning about their life is not enough, a Zombie must remember this information to gain a dot of Whispers.

Again, this must be a purely role-played experience. No amount of rolling can express whether this flood of information will stick. However, there is a special section of the character sheet called Memento Mori that is devoted to what the Zombie remembers about her previous life. Every so often, the character remembers something big about who she used to be. In game terms, these major memories are called Mementos. For every second dot of Whispers, the character remembers a new aspect of her previous personality. These Mementos are exceptionally helpful as they can be used in place of or in combination with Compulsions when going on a Regression for further dots in Whispers.

After gaining a dot of Whispers, the Zombie experiences post-Regressive stress. During this time, she is trying to sort out her own memories from the ones of her past life. While she is still able to function physically, the difficulties of her social and mental rolls are increased by three. Post-Regressive stress lasts for a number of weeks equal to the new rating in Whispers. This time can be reduced significantly with daily sessions of psychological counseling by an experienced Living Dead therapist.

Ultimately, it's at Storyteller discretion whether to grant a dot in Whispers to a player. A basic guideline of how Whispers determine how much one remembers can be found below. Do not take this layout as at all literal. Use it as a basic idea of how much Whispers affect a Zombie's personality and life. When a Pelé gains a dot in Whispers, they don't suddenly become a Carne. Likewise, a Carne doesn't become a Knochen. These titles are placed on a Zombie by her peers and refer to her level of decomposition when she was Born.



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- X A Féo, barely able to walk, with food and Fever being its only drive or a slightly more advanced Féo usually called by an augur, that can be given simple tasks and commands. It is fully apparent whether the shambler is a Grande or Jackal.
- 1 Pelés start off with one dot. This signifies Birth. The character can walk upright and has limited speech and language, if any. His previous personality has barely a trace of influence over his new one.
- 1 1 Carnes start with two dots in Whispers. Limited speech and language ability. The Zombie is literate up to a young adult level, that is if her previous life ever made it that far. Slightly more personality emerges. At this point, the character gains a memento, usually taking the form of an extremely traumatic event in her mortal life.
- 1 1 1 The Knochen start off with three dots in Whispers. She has average skills in reading, speech etc. She is all around normal except for her appearance. A flood of memories bombard the mind but with no context, this near constant recurring memory can be quite disturbing.
- 1 1 1 1 The Zombie gains another Memento, usually taking the form of a major regret in her mortal life.
- 1 1 1 1 1 Several still-image memories bubble to the surface and are now given some sense of sequence of order.
- 1 1 1 1 1 1 The Zombie gains another Memento, usually taking the form of a rough concept of her previous life. This includes occupation, home and possibly family and friends. She may rediscover how to reach a forgotten location or person; the consequences of doing so are left to role-playing.
- 1 1 1 1 1 1 Conflict grows between the established life and the newly remembered one. Are you now what you once were? Should you be held responsible for the actions of your previous incarnation? Was this previous personality even at all related to you?
- 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 The Zombie gains another Memento, usually taking the form of her previous personality's demeanor. Even more major events and people are remembered. The Zombie may realize what is the root of her Compulsions.
- 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 A nearly complete memory of who the Zombie was in the previous life is set. Though she probably still considers this life detached and far different from her own, she still realizes that this may have been who she once was. However, she may also go into denial of the very notion that she ever would have done the things she did in her past life.
- 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 Resolution. The last memento, usually the previous personality's nature, manifests. The previous personality has now completely formed. How a Zombie deals with this depends on what type of person he is; he can resolve some kind of balance between the two lives; one can overpower him and keep the other shackled in the subconscious; he can find a way to merge the two, in a way, being Born a third time, with a new personality created from the complete joining of two separate ones. Any of these outcomes and more is possible resolutions of their inner conflict.



Chapter Six: Powers

Every World of Darkness supernatural group has some “kewl powerz” at their disposal and Zombies are no exception. These abilities, like the Cells way back in the Flesh section can be considered modular. While some of them make sense for the Zombies in this mythos, others are very loosely based on the Loa of voodoo lore and allow rather bizarre feats like electricity manipulation and creating the illusion of renewed life.

However, this is only referring to the Vivas. The Mutations are another matter entirely. The Mutations are not based on any previously existing Zombie mythos, born entirely out of the concepts of this game. The difference between Mutations and Vivas is the point of versatility. Vivas, those voodoo powers I mentioned earlier, are used by Grandes and are extremely versatile. They grow in power and can be combined with each other to create conjunctural effects. Mutations, which are used by Jackals, do not grow, but they can be activated simultaneously. The main limitation of Mutations is that they solely affect the body and generally do not grant any control of more esoteric forces.

Another point of difference is simplicity. Vivas can be a bit complicated for a new player, especially if they’re entirely new to role-playing. The Mutation system is much simpler but with an equal power level to the Vivas thus making it easy to use for new players without handicapping them with “training wheel” powers.

Finally, players and Storytellers are encouraged to create their own powers. As the mortality rate of the Living Dead keeps a steadily recycling population, new abilities are being created as fast as Zombies can make them. While there are all of **fifteen** Vivas and about twenty Mutations described here, you may want something entirely different for your character. Hash it out with your Storyteller and see what would suit your desires without totally destroying a plot.

Oh yeah, Storytellers, don’t feel bad about banning certain powers and vetoing any new powers right off the bat. If you like, you can run a really intense, chronicle **without** any supernatural abilities whatsoever. Really, the Living Dead abilities to soak gobs of damage can easily be considered enough of an advantage in a supernatural context. Remember... modular.

Vivas

"Why are you asking me where Vivas came from? Aren't there people better qualified? Fine, but you'll think I'm crazy.

"Well I'll tell you right now that some of those things you see movie Zombies do aren't really too far off. Then again, we can do things the Living would never think of. But that's beside the point. You wanted to know how Vivas were discovered.

"The origins of most of the older Vivas have been forgotten be even the oldest of Zombies. Many from the 'old days' never question their origins, so as not to question one of the few positive aspects of being a Zombie. Many of the young, however, have devised their own ideas about exactly how and why Vivas work.

"These hypotheses and theorems are far too numerous to list but I meshed the majority of them together and they produce an odd notion. This semi-unified theory states that the reinfusion of Meridians into a corpse flushes life back into that shell and creates a Féo. Later on at true Birth, sentience follows suit and floods the entire body with awareness. Zombies then, as the theory says, are beings with consciousness dispersed throughout every last decomposing cell of their body. Is it any wonder, why we feel we're actually more alive than anything else in the world?

"These new theories also hold that the first Zombies realized this unified consciousness of their bodies and experimented with different ways to control it. A lot of times these powers were developed by necessity and desperation. Like ripping two ribs out of your chest, tying them together with tendon and making yourself a nice set of nunchucks.

Unfortunately it seemed that these Vivas, as they were later called, came at a high price and limitation and many of the more spectacular abilities were out of the fingertips of fledgling Zombies. It seems that the something out there has a twisted sense of humor.

"You see, for some reason we're incapable of doing any of these flashy things unless we know more about our mortal past. Tragic, eh? The more we remember about once being alive, the more inhuman we become. It's a fair price, you say? Well that's not all. Vivas cost life. You got it. Life. You know how among the Living, during extreme starvation, their bodies begin to digest themselves for energy? Well Vivas will do the same thing if you don't eat. Let me

tell you right now, you'll be very picky about who must pay their life just so you can cause a blackout or get that cool new arm you've been wanting. Sometimes I just get so pissed about the damned guilt complex and wonder 'what's the point?' Then I think of the alternative.

"I'll walk you through the Vivas that I know of, 'cause you know, there's a lot of different ones out there."

-Carlton, self-described Yuya visionary

Terms

"Cost" refers to the cost of Viscera to perform the effect. Some Vivas deal aggravated damage termed "soakable." This only refers to a Zombie's ability to soak that damage, not another supernatural's ability to soak it. "Suggested actions" are just that. Suggested. They're not really necessary but they can add a bit of flair to mundane dice-rolling. "Sensory details" are similar in that they're meant solely as a role-play tool to make the Vivas feel like more than abstract dots on a sheet of paper. Some of the Vivas are written with supplementary flavor fiction as an aide in storytelling and playing some of these unusual abilities.

Multiple Effects

Each ranking of a Viva has at least one effect associated with it. Sometimes there are multiple effects linked to one ranking of a Viva. If the character reaches a ranking of a Viva with several different effects, she is able to perform any of them without any special technicality.

Limitations

The ratings of Vivas may never exceed Whispers. For an unknown reason, the strength of a Zombie's Vivas are directly proportional to how well she remembers her previous life. The connection between two such different phenomenon is a point of debate best left to the philosophers and theologians of the Living Dead.

Flaws

Upon reaching three dots in a Viva, a Zombie takes a flaw specific to that Viva. The power of Vivas is channeled through Meridians. Over time, the supernatural forces running through this veinous

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matrix will leave an impression on her mannerisms, personality and physical appearance. The Flaws offered here are only suggestions, players and storytellers are encouraged to create their own.

Affecting others

The Vivas are an extension of a Zombie's body. So, for Vivas to affect another person, physical contact is required, unless otherwise noted. This contact makes the two bodies one as far as the Vivas are concerned. The length of time required for physical contact varies from effect-to-effect.

Time

Durations of effects are one round for each success, unless otherwise noted. Some effects may require other actions aside from the expenditure of Viscera. For example, a spirit contacted through Ghed may ask for a favor in return for its services. Botches are inevitable, the length of time for a botched effect is a number of rounds equal to the number of 1's rolled.

Procedure for performing Vivas

First, spend the amount of Viscera required for that effect. The cost is applied before everything else because it applies to the attempt of a Viva performance, not the success. Next, you may spend Willpower, if desired, to guarantee an automatic success. Now, roll the appropriate dice. Most Vivas will call for an Attribute + Viva roll, but some may differ. Finally, determine success.

There are some Viva effects that require Viscera but no rolling. In this case, simply spend the Viscera and perform the effect. There are also other effects that neither require Viscera or rolling. These are considered to be automatic successes and permanently activated.

Overspending

As has been stated earlier, a Zombie may spend more Viscera than is available to her in her Viscera pool. The remaining cost not paid through Viscera is counted as Fever. In effect, the Zombie has been channeling her own body for Vivas rather than the energy gained through feasting. The penalties for

Vivas using more Viscera than in the Viscera pool vary depending on the success of the effect.

For a successful effect, characters will receive one level of Fever for every three Viscera overspent, rounded down. If the effect failed, mark down two levels of Fever for every dot of Viscera overspent, rounded down. Don't botch. No, really. You don't want to botch. If the effect botched, sorry, kid. You're SOL. Take two levels of Fever for every dot of Viscera overspent plus one health level of aggravated damage. This damage cannot be prevented by spending more Viscera but it can be soaked with a normal soak roll. There are other effects that a botched Viva roll may have and these are discussed with each Viva individually.

And don't forget, there are always the pesky consequences of Fever Backlash.

Here we go....

Agweé



"I've got to tell you. You see a really good Agweé worker and you'll never need a towel more in your life. Of course there's other applications to the mastery of bodily fluids. Say, you've got a mortal you care about who's bleeding to death. Who needs to elevate his legs when you can just stop the flow of blood to that area? At least until the pros get in there."
-Carlton



Agweé is the command of bodily fluids. Anything from blood to bile can be manipulated and, with practice, altered to suit the needs of the user. Certain types of funeral practices may remove all fluid from a dead body so a Zombie might find himself dry. This is easily handled once he has feasted, however, considering all the blood consumed

along with the flesh. Still, even if there's no fluid in a Zombie's body per sé, there are always foul ichors building up in the rotting corpse.

Roleplaying Agweé

Flaw: The Zombie must submerge himself in water for an hour a day. If this is not done, then no Agweé abilities of 3 or higher may be used.



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Suggested Action: Your character may moisten their fingertips with saliva or water.

Sensory Details: When Agweé is used, mortals in the area may experience some queasiness or nausea. It's stoyteller's discretion as to whether any Zombies feel the same thing.

1 **Fluid Sense.**

A Zombie can sense the flow and properties of a bodily fluid. This can be useful as a method of "backalley diagnosis." For example, a resourceful character could sense the heart rate of an unconscious person or determine if the person had been poisoned. This can even be used to figure out if a living person is drunk, though the stumbling and muttering might be a bit of a giveaway.

System: This effect is free. No rolling is necessary.

1 1 **Fake Pulse.**

Zombies don't normally have a pulse so it comes in handy to fake one when in a medical area. This ability moves whatever fluid remains in a Zombie's body in a rhythmic fashion so as to mimic signs of life. If checked, the Zombie will have a normal pulse. A stethoscope will reveal a normal heartbeat, or at least what sounds like a normal heartbeat. Also, the Zombie can completely control the movement of all fluid within her body. If a curious doctor requests a blood sample, the Zombie can direct the flow of the fluid into the syringe. Unfortunately, this does not affect the nature of the fluid. So, if the doctor gets a syringe full of pus, there will be some awkward explanations required.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Agweé, difficulty 5.

A Botched attempt at faking a pulse will result in an erratic heartrate or something equally peculiar. In the case of the nosy doctor's blood test, the force of the fluid moving into the syringe might be so much that it explodes!

1 1 1 **Fluid Alteration.**

Now, the sticky situations involving a syringe full of ichors can be avoided. The properties of the Zombie's bodily fluids can be altered to mimic the properties of any other bodily fluid found in nature. Mostly, this is used by Zombies to transform their liquefied innards into something that passes for blood so as not to arouse suspicion when injured in public. A more combat oriented Zombie can change their inner fluids into stomach acid and spit them at opponents.

This ability can also be used on living beings to change the properties of their bodily fluids. Though this changes the properties of their fluids, it does not change their nature. A human body will still "read" blood as blood even if it has been changed into urine. However, this only applies to the target's body. So, if you were to change your living dog's saliva into pepper juice, the dog would not notice any ill effects.

However, the next person that canine gives a healthy face-licking welcome may end up going blind.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Agweé, difficulty 6.

A botch results in the Zombie's alterations to his inner fluids possibly having a detrimental effect to his body or may spontaneously start seeping from various parts of his body. A botched attempt to change the fluids of a living person can have very dire consequences. The effect may actually transform the fluid into a different fluid. Fun fact: Blood likes to remain blood.

1 1 1 1 **Snot Rocket.**

A volley of fist-sized mounds of thick mucus are propelled from the Zombie's nose or nasal cavity. These are not thick enough to cause damage but the force of impact is enough to knock down a distanced target. The mucus itself will become thick and rigid creating a useful, if nauseating, method of detainment. Many Zombies use this to pin a target to a wall or to immobilize their feet. These aren't high artillery bullets though, they can only go so far before they fall to the ground and splatter.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Dexterity + Agweé, difficulty 7. Successes determine the number of blobs created.

A botch results in the volley of mucus clumps veering wildly off course. Worse yet, they might burst from various parts of the Zombie's head, hitting unintended targets. Failure results in nothing.

One success lets the volley fly an armlength.
Two successes lets the volley fly two arm lengths.
Three successes lets the volley fly across a room.
Four successes lets the volley fly several blocks away.
Five or more successes results in a barrage that can fly anywhere within eyesight... with binoculars.
Each blob does four dice of bashing damage and after one round of exposure to air, results in a hard, heavy resin that can immobilize a target. A successful



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strength + athletics roll will break through the immobilizing crud.

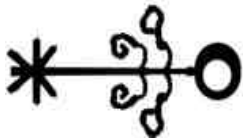
1 1 1 1 1 **Big Puke.**

With a mighty gastric thrust, the Zombie can unleash a volume of vomit impossible for a normal body to hold. Strangely, this effect creates vomit containing various bits that the Zombie may have never even consumed. The direction of the vomit may also be controlled by the Zombie to turn a corner. After this, there is little he can do to control where the vomit lands. The force of the effect is very similar to a firehose, explaining its semi-frequent use as a quick and messy way of knocking down a crowd. Resourceful, and very lucky, Zombies have even used the effect as a method of propulsion when no other alternative was available.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Dexterity + Agweé, difficulty 8. The force of the effect is such that anyone with a strength of 3 or under is immediately knocked down and takes 2 dice of bashing damage. The gallons of vomit produced are 5 times the number of successes.

Botch: More than likely, the force of the "recoil" from the effect will knock down the Zombie and toss them around uncontrollably. Either that, or the effect will leave the Zombie unaffected but cause everyone within eyesight to throw up immediately.

Azaka



This is taking too long, Donna thought, Come on... I need to make rent money this week.

The hum of the motor contrasted with the nervous tapping of her fingers against the steering wheel. Finally, her cadre walked out of the liquor store casually holding a couple large brown paper bags, until the sound of police sirens approached. Pete and Mike quickly tossed the bags into the back of the car and jumped in right along with them.

"What kept you?" Donna sped down a maze of alleyways, scowling each time she looked at the rear view mirror as it filled with blue and red lights.



Pete shuffled uncomfortably in his seat, "um... we kind of stopped for a bite to eat."

A look of definite non-amusement fell upon Donna's face. "Well now we're screwed, I can't shake 'em. Bloody hell. Any ideas back there?"

Mike was still busy bouncing in the back seat, he loved chases. "What? You want this to end? Why? Oh fine, let me try something here. When I say, 'go' you floor it ok, D?"

"No problem."

"...and I really hope you're as good a driver as you say you are."

Mike pressed his feet into the cheap carpeting, clutched the ceiling and grimaced with concentration that almost seemed painful.

"GO!"

Donna slammed the pedal to the floor. Instantaneously, the car erupted into a screaming velocity, making impossible turns without one wheel ever leaving the asphalt. The cops were left in a cloud of dust and street debris.

"Damn, I love chases!"

"Alright, I just love this Viva. Nothing's better than seeing the look on someone's face when you start off shambling and dragging your left foot then suddenly run at 50 miles per hour. I just adore breaking stereotypes like that. It's so odd that people are so surprised when they find out Zombies can indeed run. I like to think that this Viva was created just because we were sick of having to chase down Olympic runners and such."

-Carlton

While the speed of the physical body is limited by mundane concerns of mass and weight, the Meridians are not. Through Azaka, a Zombie can channel Viscera into her Meridians to grant her quickness impossible for the body alone.

Roleplaying Azaka

Flaw: The Zombie tends to be brash, quick tempered and impatient. Also, the character's eyes may dart about quickly and they could have a tendency to tap their foot while waiting for someone.

Suggested Action: The character may take a single deep breath and hold it in while performing any Azaka action.

Sensory Details: Azaka has limited side effects as far as sensory details go. The rush of wind and debris following a Zombie using Azaka is commonplace.

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1 Through ? Initiative Boost.

It's not technically the body of a Zombie that is accelerated to superhuman speed, but her Meridians. The Meridians, now freed by the power of Viscera, can move at blindingly fast speeds. The Meridians merely pull the body along for the ride. Chances are, however, that the Zombie is not as fast as a Vampire or Werewolf who can both have extra actions per round. Make no mistake, even if the Zombie doesn't get twenty actions per round, you can sleep soundly knowing that she'll at least get to act first.

System: Add the Azaka rating to the Initiative rating so that it is now Dexterity + Wits + Azaka. No rolling or spending is necessary, the effect is constantly active.

1 1 1 Weighted Feet.

Now that the Zombie has mastered the art of speeding themselves up, they're now gaining the ability to slow others down. Effectively, they're manipulating the speed of the target's Meridians so that they move at half the speed they normally would. **System:** Spend four Viscera. Roll Wits + Azaka, difficulty being the target's Strength + 5. A successful roll results in the target's normal movement speed being halved, thus causing doubling the number of rounds necessary to perform any action.

Usually, a botch results in the Zombie being slowed down rather than the target. However, it's not unheard of to see the target's speed actually increased as the result of a botched roll.

1 1 1 1 Dampen Inertia

By extending her Meridians outside her body and into other objects, a Zombie can grant that object the freedom from inertia that she enjoys. A Zombie can drive a car at 200 miles an hour, make a 30 degree turn, and stop on a dime without ever feeling any g-forces.

System: Spend two Viscera. No roll is necessary. When concentrated upon, the inertia of one object within a two bodylength radius is dampened to nil.

1 1 1 1 1 Shackle

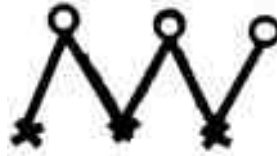
The jump from the slowing down of a target to immobilization is pretty short. Just because your character has freed themselves of the constraints of mundane velocity doesn't mean that everyone should have that privilege.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Wits + Azaka, difficulty being the target's Strength + 6. A successful roll completely immobilizes the target, allowing for

only basic life functions like blinking, heartbeat and breathing.

A botch is pretty obvious: the Zombie accidentally immobilizes herself.

Batida



The tavern was mostly deserted just the bartender watching the game and three regulars spread out on stools. Two dart players stood facing the far wall, their backs to the door.

"Watch this." Barry said as he closed his eyes and threw a dart over his shoulder.

The Dart nearly missed the board when it suddenly straightened its path and struck the bullseye.

"Hey what are you doing? Be careful," Deborah hissed. "You don't know who is watching." She nervously

turned to see if any of the tavern patrons had taken notice of the darts odd deviation. All the drunks were intent on poisoning their livers and hadn't looked up from the mugs and glasses in front of them.

"Get over yourself, the very fact that I'm standing here talking to you is a manifestation of my powers. Can't you just enjoy yourself for once without getting all paranoid?"

Deborah didn't answer and instead walked up to the board and pulled the darts free, sinking the point of each into her arm as she did so.

"Now who's being obvious?" Barry smiled. "It's not as if any of these guys will remember anything tomorrow anyway."

"Yeah, yeah. Do you know which one you want yet?"

Barry glanced over his shoulder appearing to the casual observer to be checking the score on the television. He blinked once quickly and gave a slight shiver.

"The one on the far right. He has the most to give us. The other two are far down the path of self-destruction. The one we want still has a good deal of





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energy in his lines, I would make an uneducated guess and say he's only suffered a recent loss and is trying to forget about it in his drink."

"Well we can help him with that, can't we?"
Deborah smiled revealing rows of gleaming teeth.
"Lets finish the game and then find a good spot to wait him out."

"You want an esoteric power? Here it is. This baby lets you control Meridians. Yep, you heard me. Those wispy lines of life energy coursing through your body that you have no proof exist? They're real, and here's the proof. Of course, life expresses itself in a lot of ways, including auras. You get good enough and you can make that body alteration you just got permanent. If you get **really** good you can actually start moving the Meridians **outside** your body to do all sorts of things, not the least of which is psychokinesis. Of course it's not much more controllable than simple pushing and pulling like the Force. Still, it helps when you need a lamp to fall on someone's head or something."

-Carlton

Meridians are sort of a metaphysical template. The shape and pattern of this template dictates the natural state of a living thing. The universe likes to keep these shapes relatively stable but these sorts of things usually don't go according to plan. Batida grants the user control over the pattern of the Meridians within her own body and, later on, the bodies of others.

Roleplaying Batida

Flaw: A habit of blinking at a steady rate and tapping fingers in a rhythmic fashion. Also, a character's eyes may have a tendency to glow in the dark, this does not give them the ability to see in the dark however.

Suggested Action: Anything that implies rhythm, from whistling a creepy lullaby to snapping fingers.

Sensory Details: So, what do Meridians actually look like? It depends on whether you can even see them. Some characters will only hear or even smell Meridians... in these cases, they will sound something like wind chimes through a dense forest and smell like citrus and honey. Meridians look like shimmering ephemeral lines of energy coursing across and through a person's body, linking, moving, crossing and reforming constantly. These descriptions are entirely up to you and your storyteller to accept or not.

1 See Meridians

This is a very basic ability granted by Batida. It allows the user to distinguish Meridians between the Living. This can allow them to see any aggravated damage, if any, to the person. The difference between seeing Meridians and a Vampire's ability to see auras is that while auras tell you how a person feels, Meridians tell you the basic health of a person and how they **are**. Both could be used in different ways to tell the same thing, however. A Vampire may tell if someone's lying by figuring out that they're nervous. A Zombie could tell if someone's lying by seeing the Meridians around a that person's heart start to fluctuate wildly.

System: This ability costs no Viscera. No roll is necessary. This ability only works on non-supernatural, living things. Any supernaturals are registered as empty spots; bodies without accompanying Meridians. Effectively, it tells the player how much Viscera can be obtained from the living person. For the sake of keeping the mood, Storytellers should refrain from simply saying how many points are within the person. Rather, they should use adjectives describing how "full" and "vibrant" or "dull" and "unhealthy" the target's Meridians are.

1 1 See the Supernatural

Supernaturals of the World of Darkness have Meridians of a different sort from the living. A Mage's Meridians flow quickly and brightly. A Werewolf's Meridians run hot and fierce. A Vampire's Meridians are pale, sanguine and sit restlessly swirling about in the Vampire's abdomen. Changeling's Meridians waft softly in shimmering strands. Wraiths cannot be seen except through Ghed. Players should know that their characters would not automatically know the distinctive Meridian patterns of all the supernaturals of the entire World of Darkness.

If any of these Supernaturals are in shapes which have been activated by supernatural abilities, the Meridians a Zombie will see are the same as if the Supernatural were in their "natural" state. So a Werewolf who is naturally human but in a wolvern form would appear to be a wolf with a faint outline of a humanoid shape walking with it. If the supernatural is using an ability that makes them invisible, the Zombie can still see the bodiless Meridians walking about. The exception to this is Mages who apparently have the ability to alter their Meridians along with their shape.



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System: Spend one Viscera. Roll Perception + Batida, difficulty 5. A botch results in the Zombie mistaking one sort of supernatural for another, or something equally detrimental. The Zombie should have some reason to suspect supernatural involvement before using this ability. The inability to see the target's Meridians through normal means would be the most likely cause of suspicion. With this ability, one can tell how much Viscera is in the target. If the supernatural is not alive, like in the case of Vampires, the Zombie can still tell how many health levels the bloodsucker still holds. Again, Storytellers should avoid game terms and opt for descriptive language.

1 1 1 Iron Mind

The Meridians that constitute the Zombie's mind become tightened and dense, repelling all psychic abilities. The precise method for this "tightening" varies from user to user. Some repeat nursery rhymes to themselves, others calculate complicated math problems, the method doesn't matter, but the result is the same.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Wits + Batida, difficulty 6. The successes add dice to rolls countering a psychic or mental attack. Botch: For each "1" rolled, add one success to a psychic attacker's successes. This ability can be put in place as a protection at any time, but the effect fades after its use and must be re-activated after that.

1 1 1 Permify

Where humanoid Meridians would not normally consider four arms, wings, horns or any other bodily alterations "natural," this ability molds the Meridians to accept alterations as such. This permifies a body alteration and removes the time limit in effect for all alterations created by the use of Dembellah. Recently, it has been found that this ability can be used on living beings as a method of preventing organ transplant rejection.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Stamina + Batida, difficulty 7. A botch results in the Meridians rejecting the augmentation and its immediate decomposition. To use this on a living being, the Zombie must spend four Viscera and roll Intelligence + Batida, difficulty being the target's Stamina x 2 to show a living being's Meridian's resistance to alteration. A botch results in the immediate rejection of the organ.

1 1 1 1 Psyche's Hands

This ability extends the Meridians outside the body to affect physical objects. Precise control of objects is impossible but just assume that anything that can be held with hands whose fingers and thumb are fused together can be manipulated by this ability. So, while the ability cannot be used to tie knots or fire a gun, it can hold a baseball bat or drive a car. Psyche's hands need not necessarily extend from the physical hands themselves, they can be extended from any part of the body. Most often Psyche's hands are used to trip fleeing prey. Occasionally, a mischievous Zombie will use it to levitate herself, simply to scare the shit out of someone.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Wits + Batida, difficulty 8. Successes determine the effectiveness of the attempt.

Botch - A target other than the one desired is affected and spins around wildly.

Failure - The target is unaffected.

One success - The Zombie can move the target 5 + Wits yards per round

Two successes - She can move it 7 + Wits yards/round.

Three successes - She can move it 9 + Wits yards/round.

Four successes - She can move it 11 + Wits yards/round.

Five or more successes - She can move it at 12 + Wits yards/round... or more.

Mental "strength" is Intelligence minus one. A character with five Intelligence could levitate herself, regardless of weight. Due to the concentration required, the Zombie may only move at walking speed (7 yards/round).

1 1 1 1 1 My mind to your mind

A Zombie, fascinated by a science fiction character's ability to meld minds, decided to try the ability out himself. The result links the Meridians of one character's mind to the Meridians of another character's mind. This allows a Zombie to share knowledge and memories quickly, but only for a very short amount of time. More often, Living Dead therapists wishing to help a patient cope with a recent Ordeal use this effect.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Batida, difficulty being the target's Wits + 5 to show the mind's Meridians resistance to alteration. A botch results in three rounds of incapacitation for each "1"

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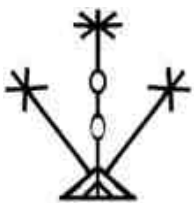
rolled for all involved parties. For each success, one dot of a Knowledge and/or Whispers can be "learned" by the target. This effect is subject to the same time limits as all other Viva effects. Also, this can be used to determine the nature of a target's Whispers. While this will not grant the target or user any dots in Whispers, it will allow the "therapist" to see the target's Whispers more clearly than the target can.

1 1 1 1 1 **Unravel Meridians**

A brutal and cruel ability, unraveling Meridians rips apart the delicate lattice of life energy within the body. When unravelling Meridians, the closest corresponding body part of the target begins to necrotize, or decompose, due to lack of life energy flowing into it. This effect is the same even if the target is not a Zombie. If Meridians are unravelled at a specific juncture of limbs, like a shoulder, the rest of the limb not connected to the main body will fall off. Needless to say, this effect is mind-bogglingly painful and is only used by the most sadistic of Zombies in the most extreme of circumstances. When Meridians are unravelled, it could take a very long time.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Batida, difficulty is the target's Stamina + 5. Do not botch this roll. Very bad things will happen to you if you botch this roll. Every success deals one die of unsoakable aggravated damage. The Zombie must maintain physical contact with the target at least one round before activating this effect. This necrotizing isn't necessarily immediate. With one success, it takes ten minutes for the affected target to rot. With two successes, it takes 8 minutes, and so on until five or more successes where the effect is almost instantaneous.

Dembellah



Markus flexed the arm and then stretched it out.

"You feel the power, M?" Jenkins sat cross-legged on the throw rug in the mostly bare apartment. Incense curled around

his head. His sightless eyes glittering in the candle light.

"Yeah where did you get it?" Markus grinned at the little fiend covered in robes and furs.

"It used to belong to a boxer, I would have gotten you a full set but I was hungry that day."

"It's OK I still have the other arm I woke with.

You know it's the little things that make you wonder what you were Before. How the hell does a man lose something like an arm? Was I a soldier?"

"I know what you mean, it's damn tempting to listen to the Whispers sometimes. What I wouldn't give to know what happened to my original pair." Jenkins probed a bony finger at the milky orbs above his nose.

"Not that appearing blind doesn't have its advantages. I kind of like the ones I've got here." At this, he brushed back his silver hair revealing a mismatched pair of eyes set high on his forehead. One was smaller and had a golden iris, the other... the other seemed to draw blackness into its core.

"Yeah, you told me about the eagle eye," Markus said, his brow furrowed for a moment. "You ever gonna tell me what the other one is?"

"Well let's just say that there are other spectrums of lights unavailable to some animals."

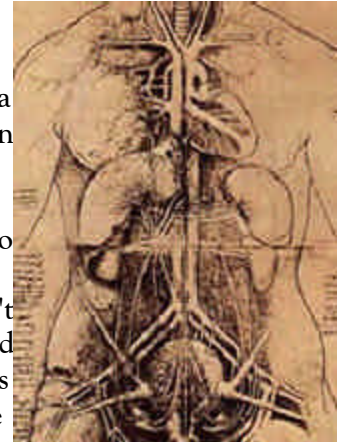
"Ooh baby, this is probably the most (in)famous of our powers. Y'say you're arms fallen off? You've lost a thumb? Well then, just stick it back on! Ah, now you're wondering if you can stick anything else on your body? Well yes, but of course you'll have to have some practice before you can stick eyes in the back of your head or venom sacks in your throat. You'll have to be really talented if you want to attach bear arms or something. Not only that, but as a general rule of thumb, you can count on the attachments to only get more gruesome the less subtle they are."

-Carlton

One of the oldest Vivas, this allows a Zombie to attach and reattach body parts of varying size and complexity. This ability is more often used to reattach a lost limb or body part for appearances sake. More progressive experimentalists like the Pulse Wave and the Seraphim, however, pursue Dembellah to its limit. Often resulting in mismatched assemblages that leave no question why Dembellah masters are often called Frankensteins.

Roleplaying Dembellah:

Flaw: All alterations made by Dembellah may be





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functional but that doesn't mean they're very attractive. In fact, a frequent Dembellah user may end up looking more like a biological patchwork than a Zombie.

Suggested Action: The act of attachment is cinematic enough but for more dramatic players, you can toss up the severed limb, leap up towards

it and attach it mid-air, a la Army of Darkness.

Sensory Details: Any new attachments will decay and fall off without the use of Batida. So, the smell of these augmentations can become quite pungent very quickly.

Miscellaneous: All attachments and reattachments created through the use of Dembellah are functional but are usually pretty damned nasty. If the Dembellah user wishes to make the alteration at least somewhat non-gruesome, the player must roll Intelligence + Body Crafts, difficulty 6. The successes determine how good the attachment looks.

Botch - "I think I'm going to puke."

Failure - "Geez, did you stick that on with glue?"

One success - "Eh... I've seen worse."

Two successes - "Eh... I've seen better."

Three successes - "Whoa, cool mod, man."

Four successes - "That's one of the best mods I've ever seen. And I used to work with Jim Rose."

Five successes or more - "You mean you didn't always have wings, a forked tongue, and a third eye?"

1 **Minor Reattachment**

The first step on the road to body mods. Though easily performed, this effect has only limited usefulness as the body part reattached must have originally belonged to the Zombie and be no bigger than a fist. On the plus side, this reattachment is permanent.

System: Spend one Viscera. No roll is necessary.

1 1 **Major Reattachment**

At this level, a Zombie can reattach any part of her body. This can be any size must have originally belonged to the Zombie before it was separated.

Again, these sorts of re-attachments are permanent. The only body part that cannot be reattached in this fashion is the head.

System: Spend three Viscera. No roll is necessary. To reattach the head, a Zombie must use the "Ichabod's

Bane" Beat. More information on Beats can be found in the Beats section.

1 1 1 **Minor Attachment**

Now that the Zombie has accomplished reattachment of his own limbs, he can begin attaching completely new body parts from any non-supernatural, living thing. However, at this level of talent, only small, fist-sized attachments are possible.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Stamina + Dembellah, difficulty 6 to attach the new body part. A botch results in either two dice of lethal damage from a very badly performed alteration or the disintegration of the nearest similarly-sized limb along with the alteration itself.

1 1 1 1 **Major Attachment**

A world of possibilities have now opened up to the Zombie as he can now attach new body parts of any size from any non-supernatural, living thing. All sorts of combinations have been devised over the years from the subtle to the bizarre to the devious.

What sorts of modifications will your Zombie create?

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Stamina + Dembellah, difficulty 7 to attach the new limb. A Botch at this level of skill has many detrimental effects including the same botch results described above. Sometimes, the new attachment is absorbed into the body at the attempt of augmentation but sprouts in an unintended location. Other times, the new body part will be successfully attached but will act as if it has a mind of its own, often being very uncooperative.

1 1 1 1 1 **Supernatural Attachment**

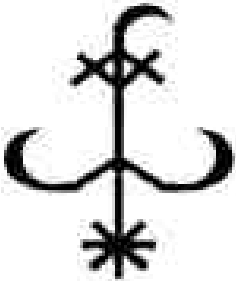
The possible modifications available to a Zombie are now almost limitless. With the ability to add a supernatural's limbs to one's own body, a Zombie could easily become quite powerful. Unfortunately, most Zombies who attempt to capture a supernatural's limbs are in for quite a dangerous fight. Such endeavors require lots of planning and seamless teamwork.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Stamina + Dembellah, difficulty 8. A botch on this roll can have highly dangerous backlashes. A Werewolf's arm might start slashing at the Zombie's body uncontrollably. Vampire eyes might cause a Zombie to hallucinate. If successful, only the abilities **physically** available to that limb can be used now. Any powers at all ethereal, magical, metaphysical or in any other way non-physical cannot be used. Furthermore, those physical

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abilities are only available to **that** limb. So a Werewolf arm will can be changed from a normal human arm to a large furry, clawed arm and back, but the rest of the Zombie's body would be unaffected. Note: Storytellers can call for an expenditure of Viscera to change the forms of Werewolf attachments. One viscera for each form that needs to be passed through to get to the desired form.

Erzulie



"I don't like it, Judge." Larry T. stood next to his burly companion, carefully to avoid touching any of the thronging crowd in line for the monorail. "I don't like it one bit."

"Be quiet you look fine. If I didn't know better myself I'd say you were a meatbag. Better watch out that some Pelé doesn't try to get a piece of you."

"Ah, you're just saying that. But seriously I'm getting hungry from keeping my face in place, how about that family?"

"Now you know what I said. The management doesn't care what we do as long as we stay away from the paying customers. When we get to the other side, look for a door that says employees only. Remember the reason we got those free tickets was because they want to cut down on the payroll, and the unions aren't playing ball."

"Come on, man, you know I haven't had any veal for a long time." Larry glanced hungrily at the children being pulled by the sleeves. "They look cute enough to eat wearing those rodent ears."

"Well," Judge sighed. "When we leave, if you are still hungry we can follow one of the cars to whatever hotel they are staying at. Kids disappear in Orlando all the time."

"Sure, some of our abilities are spectacular and such, but those things tend to draw attention. The wrong kind of attention, especially from the Living, is a dangerous thing. So when you get in a situation where you need to make a clean break or fade out into a crowded street, Erzulie can be extremely helpful. Many Knochen and Carnes wouldn't ever be able to go out in public if it weren't for their talent for illusions. Trust me kid, if you're face has an odd habit of falling to pieces in a stiff breeze, learn this."

-Carlton

Erzulie is the ability to use the powers of illusion to disguise how one looks, smells, speaks, everything. Erzulie isn't an actual physical change, merely a change in people's perceptions. The Meridians surrounding a Zombie's body and face are altered in a fashion that most non-supernaturals are unable to notice. It should be noted that while the effects of Erzulie will fool non-supernaturals, many supernaturals have heightened perceptions which can easily discern an attempted deception if given cause for suspicion. Also, the effects of Erzulie will not affect electronic recording devices or electronic viewing equipment. In a crowded mall, a tourist might be recording his family in the crowd with a camcorder and see a decayed corpse playing in an arcade in the viewfinder. If the confused tourist were to look again without the camcorder, he'd see a normal looking person minding their own business and kicking ass at the zombie-shoot-em-up game. Furthermore, a Zombie with an Erzulie disguise will be seen as normal if looked at by the reflection of a mirror.

Roleplaying Erzulie:

Flaw: Mistrust of people because of the "masks" that everyone wears.

Suggested Action: A simple passing of a hand over the area that is to be disguised is sufficient for dramatic effect.

Sensory Detail: Understandably, since Erzulie is intended to be as subtle and deceptive as possible, there are no characteristic sensory details of this Viva.

1 See Deception

While she won't be able to tell what the target really looks like, a Zombie will be able to tell that someone is using supernatural abilities to mask their appearance. It's as easy as spotting a bad toupé.

System: This costs no Viscera. No roll is necessary. This effect only works for supernatural disguises, not supernatural invisibility.

1 1 **Mimicry**

Through manipulation of Meridians, a Zombie can now mimic odor or sound. The odors and sounds must be ones with which the Zombie is familiar. Most often, this is used to mask the smell of decayed flesh surrounding the Zombie's body.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Erzulie, difficulty 5. A botch results in a highly nauseating odor to be smelled by the entire room or a sound like a speaking reanimated corpse.

1 1 1 **Illusion of Living flesh**

Finally, a Zombie may appear as they would if they were still alive, or at least how they remember appearing. This single effect is what makes Erzulie such a popular Viva.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Whispers, difficulty 6. A botch results in an appearance entirely unlike what the character had intended.

1 1 1 1 **Doppelganger**

Now, a Zombie can mimic a completely different appearance. Many Zombies have used this effect to pose as people they remember in their Whispers to investigate the circumstances that lead to their deaths.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Erzulie, difficulty 7. A botch results in a completely unintended appearance. The limit to this effect is that the illusion must be relatively the same size and shape as the Zombie in question and it must be an appearance with which the Zombie is familiar. This illusion will not affect clothing.

1 1 1 1 1 **Erzulie's Veils**

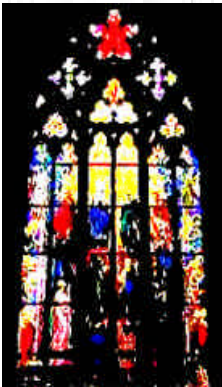
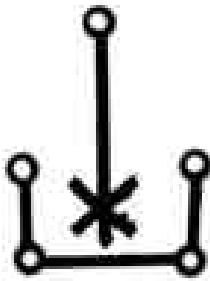
With this effect, a Zombie can become completely imperceptible even in an open area. Zombies with this level of talent in Erzulie often make dramatic exits leaving others wondering, "Where'd he go?"

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Erzulie, difficulty 8. This does not make you invisible, simply very difficult to notice. If a passerby attempts to look at something behind the Zombie, they will not be able to see it, arousing a lot of suspicion if the Zombie doesn't make a run for it very soon. This effect is not idiot-proof. Though a Zombie could rob a bank without notice, if she gives the guard the finger and starts dancing around in a mocking fashion, she's going to get noticed. Don't be stupid.

A botch to this roll will make it easier for someone to notice your character, resulting in a -2 to the

difficulties of tracking, shadowing and in any way following your character.

Ghed



Sebastion and Donna burst into the basement. The light from the suddenly opened doorway releases a column of illuminated dust and shadows. They run down into the middle of the floor and hastily unfurl a blanket across the cold cement.

"Are you sure this is going to work?" Donna yells while barricading the door.

"Oh yes, it's here." Sebastion steadily empties the contents of his backpack onto the blanket. He lights some candles and forms a circle of flour and graveyard dust. "I just hope it'll listen."

"Goddammit, it better. That's the biggest fucking Lich I ever saw. Hell, it could be both of our Lichs combined!"

"Can they do that?"

"How the fuck should I know? Just summon or invoke or call or whatever it is you do! Just do it!"

"Shhh... I need quiet."

The sudden bashing against the outside of the door startles the pair.

"Oh shit, I'm gonna die."

"Quiet." Sebastion takes a bit of his flesh and separates it into four pieces and places them at the four corners of the blanket where they immediately dissolve. The candles brighten, casting unnatural shadows across the room. Whispers float across the room. Locked in a trance, Sebastion swings a necklace of chicken bones in a tight circle and waits for a response to his chanting. The Lich, an enormous canine, rakes against the door. Finally it breaks through the barricades at the same time a pool of blood flows freely from the outer edge of the dust circle.

Sebastion, still locked in a trance, cannot see what the Lich is doing to Donna. He cannot see the anguish on her face.

The Lich, focused on the Ordeal, doesn't notice the trickle of curdled blood approaching. Indeed, it's quite surprised to find itself suddenly decomposing



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into the blood. The scream of the creature echo across the basement and it is slowly sucked into the pool. It's done.

The blood recedes back into the circle and Sebastion is released from his trance only to find Donna dead in front of him. In panic, he rushes to her. He holds her in her arms and cries nonexistent tears. He screams into the shadowy void of the room, asking why this had to happen, why "it" couldn't have acted sooner.

I require recompense. Leave her here. An empty voice speaks in a thousand whispers.

"No, I won't leave her." Sebastion says, stricken with fright and still dazed from the summoning.

You wish to suffer as she did? She gave herself up so you would have time to save yourself. Respect her wishes. Leave.

Sebastion walks slowly towards the door. He looks behind him, into the basement, the light from the doorway casts his shadow down across Donna's limp body as it is drawn into the nothingness of the blood. Hesitating for a moment, he receives a message from the voice.

Sebastion, there are fingers in the honeybone

With a chill in his exposed spine, Sebastion leaves the basement and enters the daylight.

"I've got enough problems with my Whispers acting up without having to deal with those ghosts and spirits. Other people, a lot of people actually, seem to disagree. I can't tell ya much about the worlds beyond our perceptions except what I've heard. They say there's a membrane between this world and the others. Something about the condition of the Living Dead stops us from ever passing through this membrane and checking it out for ourselves.

However, we can still communicate with whatever it is that flies around behind the membrane. Seems like the Spirits always want something in return though, usually access to this world, which many of the old hands at Ghed can provide. I don't see how anyone can trust something so alien as a ghost or spirit. And they say I'm crazy."

-Carlton

The Meridians are what bind a Zombie's soul to her body. Meridians are also what bind her to the meatworld. Though cut off from the spirit lands, Zombies can still have a steady communication with it. This Viva allows one to talk to ghosts, spirits, and other less than tangible beings. The only hindrance is

the Gauntlet that separates the world of meat from the world of spirit. For charts determining the strength of the Gauntlet in a specific place, look in **Mag: the Ascension Revised Edition** or **Werewolf: the Apocalypse Revised Edition**.

Roleplaying Ghed

Flaw: A Zombie begins to respond to stimuli in the spirit worlds that are not perceived by others, leading to any number of misunderstandings.

Suggested Actions: Actions performed to use this Viva vary between individuals. Some adopt a traditional spirit summoning, while others use nothing more than an ouija board. Either way, the Zombie should do something that requires concentration and focus to use Ghed.

Sensory Details: Spirits are wild, unusual and wholly alien beings. Likewise, any sensory details of spirit interaction can be left up to the Storyteller. Some frequent and often reported experiences include sudden drops of room temperature, bleeding walls/furniture/trees/statues/etc., unexpected gusts of wind, and ethereal voices/screams/laughter.

1 Ghost Eyes

Communication is impossible at this level, but the Zombie can still see and "feel" the presence of spirits in the room at all times but no other senses are affected. It can be a bit distracting. Of late, Zombies experienced with Ghed have told of a horrible, screaming storm plaguing ghosts.

System: Spend one Viscera. No roll is necessary. The concentration required to peer into the spirit worlds superimposing the meat world takes a full round. This act of concentration is a prerequisite to all other Ghed abilities.

1 1 Eyes from Beyond

Now a Zombie can at least speak into the spirit world, however, directing a specific message to a specific spirit is impossible. All spirits within earshot can hear what you're saying, but at least you can have some semblance of communication. It's more like using a speakerphone.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Charisma + Ghed, difficulty being the Gauntlet. This message may only be one breath (or equivalent) long and cannot be directed to one particular Spirit. The message will be heard across the spirit world within a short distance. A Botched roll results in your message being entirely misconstrued. Don't ever talk about a Spectre's momma.

1 1 1 **Commune with the Beyond**

This finally allows full communication with an individual spirit, without other spirits hearing your end of the conversation. Many risk-taking Zombies use this ability to get favors from spirits claiming to be the Loa. Whether these are truly the fabled Loa is up to debate.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Charisma + Ghed, difficulty being the Gauntlet. The communication link lasts for twice the number of successes to the roll. A botch results in several spirits noticing a verbal connection to the meatlands and wishing to speak with it. This isn't very conducive to sanity.

1 1 1 **Grab the Ghost**

This will make many Zombies highly unpopular among spirits. Nevertheless, many Zombies consider themselves superior to the noncorporeal and express this superiority by binding spirits to objects or living things. When the spirit gets out, it is going to be very pissed. On the other hand, many ghosts have strangely requested that Zombies protect specific objects to which they are bound. Some of the Living Dead speculate that this has something to do with the terrible storm raging across the deadside.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Charisma + Ghed, difficulty being the Gauntlet. The resulting object does not have any special powers aside from the Zombie being able to full communicate with the spirit inside when the Zombie wishes. A botch may result in an object bound with the wrong spirit. It may also cause the object to suddenly become animated. It might bind the right spirit but it could be bound to the wrong object. It might also be bound to the right object but the Zombie has no control of the conversation. The spirit will speak whenever it damn well pleases, thank you very much.

1 1 1 1 **Dominate Ether**

A Zombie's control over the stuff of spirits has been greatly magnified at this level. She can now create or destroy Ephemera, the matter of Spirit. The most basic use of this ability is to create a sort of fort to protect against hazards of the spirit world. Meanwhile, a more offense oriented Zombie could protect this fort from spirits by rending the crap out of them with an ephemeral battle suit. Rawr.
System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Charisma + Ghed, difficulty being the Gauntlet. The ephemeron created by the Zombie is only solid to spirits and other noncorporeals. Noncorporeals cannot see through it,

hear through it or pass through it until it fades away. The maximum amount of ephemera that can be produced is about twice the Zombie's mass. A botch results in the ephemera taking the form of something highly unintended. An attempt to create a protective hiding place could create a giant, flashing, "Kill me!" sign.



1 1 1 1 **Ghost Flesh.**

One of the more bizarre abilities of any Viva is the ability to transform ephemera into organic matter. Some ghosts, desperate for any sort of physical sensation to save them from the sensory deprivation of the deadside, will ask a Zombie to perform this effect on them. Though the organic matter which the ghost becomes is rarely very mobile, he still seems satisfied with the experience.

System: Spend six Viscera. Roll Charisma + Ghed, difficulty being the Gauntlet. The resulting transformation must be entirely of one type of organic matter like bone, wood, blood, skin, fat, urine, or even slime. The shape of the organic matter is the same as the natural shape of the spirit in question. If the organic matter is a solid, it is not mobile unless several hours are spent in preparation of a schematic for the temporary body. If the organic matter is a fluid, it will maintain the general shape of whatever form the spirit naturally takes but will be very mobile and very, very messy. A botched attempt results in lots of pain for the spirit and several rounds of unconsciousness for the Zombie.

1 1 1 1 1 **Remove the Ghost Membrane**

The culmination of this Viva's power is the ability to completely dissolve the barriers between the meat side and spirit side. Zombies who attempt this effect do so at their own risk. Unleashing the contents of the unearthly worlds can have ramifications that are inconceivable.

System: Spend seven Viscera. Roll Charisma + Ghed, difficulty being the Gauntlet. This effectively reduces

the Gauntlet to one within that local area, meaning about the size of the room or equivalent. A Zombie must spend several days preparing for this effect and as such, Storytellers are advised to only allow this effect once per chronicle. The Zombie must declare the spirit world to which she wishes to open a portal. The portal will only open to that world. Any spirits on the other side may enter into the meat world freely. Zombies may not enter the spirit worlds. If a spirit doesn't leave through the portal before it closes and it doesn't have any ability to go back on its own, it's out of luck. More than likely, the stranded spirit will begin to fade away into death. A botch to this roll can be pretty much summed up as, "Get the hell out of there!" A botched attempt at this effect will open a portal to a world so unbelievably horrible that the responsible Zombie will have many, many spirits out for his head.

will turn on their brethren. Féos that will become Grandes will go for the nearest source of live flesh. With Impuestos, however, a Zombie exerts control on Féos and their actions.

Roleplaying Impuestos

Flaws: If there are any Living near the Zombie, a Féo will try to go after that person first. An alternate flaw may be to have any use of Impuestos abilities of three or over cause one round of dizziness or faintness.

Suggested Actions: Suggested actions are given for each ability. If you wish to further dramatize the use of Impuestos, your character can use a trademark gesture, phrase, or even "lucky charm" every time Impuestos is used.

Sensory Details: Occasionally, a Féo under the sway of Impuestos will groan in mild protest to being controlled.

1 Divert

With a simple command ("Go that way"), a Zombie can make several Féos turn in a different direction. Generally this effect is used to make Féos repeatedly bump into a wall.

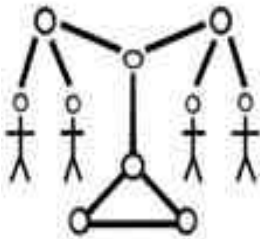
System: Spend one Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Impuestos, difficulty 5. This effect cannot make a Féo stop, so a specific direction must be given for a Féo to walk towards. The Féo will continue walking in that direction indefinitely. This ability can affect any Féos within a ten bodylength radius and can affect a number of Féos equal to double the Impuestos rating. A botch results in the Féo trying to eat your character, even if there is no Viscera to be absorbed. Actually, most botches for Impuestos attempts result in Féos trying to eat your character.

1 1 Train

A Zombie may train Féos to do one simple task ("Plow fields," "Guard this box,"). To do this, a Zombie must find a way to make a Féo pay attention long enough to learn this task. Féos make somewhat competent hard laborers. They don't complain, as long as their fed. Jackal Féos are generally more valuable to a slaver because of their less-restrictive diet. Decayed human flesh can be found anywhere, live human flesh is a bit harder to come by. When a Féo shows signs of rebellion, it is often cast to the Jackal Féos for their meal.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Impuestos, difficulty 8 minus any dots in Instruction the user may have. It takes about an hour to train a Féo but an entire group may be trained at once, with

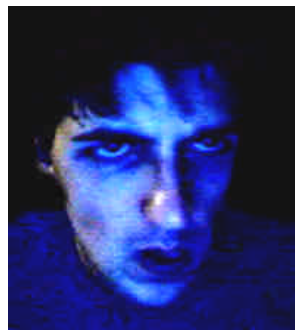
Impuestos



"Ever study ethics? Do you remember if you studied ethics while you were alive? Well in simple terms, it's the study of what's right and what's wrong. Theoretically everyone has their own individual code of ethics and that's the moral dilemma this Viva presents. Sure not all augurs are "eeeeevil" but generally they don't treat us very well, so we call them evil. You better not tell anyone I said that, kid. Anyway, now is it wrong to control a Féos' actions? Is that in itself no worse than keeping it in bondage like some slaver? What if you could control a Féo or a bunch of Féos and thereby buy some time for your Living friends to escape a gruesome death? Would you do it even though you know you used to be exactly like that helpless shambling corpse? The tough questions don't end there. It's pretty heady stuff."

-Carlton

Normally, Féos will go for the nearest source of Viscera they can find. Féos that will become Jackals



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an increased difficulty. The Féos must be fed flesh appropriate to their diet everyday or else they'll wander off in search of food. This ability can affect a number of Féos equal to double the Impuestos rating and can only be performed three times per Chronicle. A botch results in the Féo trying to eat your character. Told ya.

1 1 1 **Emulate**

This ability causes Féos to mimic the actions of the Zombie. Everything the Zombie does will be imitated by the Féo as best it can. Occasionally, the Féo will miss an action it was supposed to do but continue copying the Zombie anyway. Once, during a hounfar, a particularly playful Pulse Waver used this effect to re-enact a dance sequence from a famous music video.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Impuestos, difficulty 7. This ability can affect any Féos within a ten bodylength radius and can affect a number of Féos equal to double the Impuestos rating. A botch results in the Féos trying to eat your character.

1 1 1 1 **Control**

At this level of talent, a number Féos can now be controlled completely by the Zombie. This can be a very useful ability when the shit is about to hit the fan during a hounfar.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Impuestos, difficulty 8. The Zombie must not perform any actions for a round before this affect is started. After this time, the Zombie will vaguely see what the Féos see overlapped over her own vision. The Féos can perform one action each but may only do so once **every other round**. In combat, the Zombie rolls initiative as normal. She chooses which Féo will act first and each Féo after that acts with one initiative below the Féo before it.

This ability may only be used twice per story, can affect any Féos within a ten bodylength radius, and can affect a number of Féos equal to double the Impuestos rating. While the effect is activated, the Zombie may not perform any actions. A botch results in the Féos trying to eat your character. Hey, slavery is bad. Don't do it.

1 1 1 1 1 **Birth**

This effect polarizes the Living Dead community into distinct parties. Some think as many Zombies should be given sentience as often as possible while others feel it would only lead to more death. Since

this ability is so difficult, the argument tends to be moot.

System: Spend seven Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Impuestos, difficulty 9. A Zombie must press both their palms against a Féo's forehead for three rounds. After this time, if successful, the Féo will begin to convulse slightly and then become sentient. This newly Born Grande or Jackal will be very disoriented for at least a few hours after Birth. Players and Storytellers should control the outcome of this Birth. A botched attempt will result in the Féo never, ever being able to be Born. The attempt might even leave the Zombie without a dot of Whispers.

Kirichi



Pelés and Carnes tend to find more use for this Viva than Knochen, who are usually missing large portions of skin... and muscle... everything else. Nevertheless, Kirichi is the manipulation and control of skin.

Roleplaying Kirichi

Flaws: Occasionally the skin twitches and tightens involuntarily.

Suggested Actions: The Zombie rub the skin vigorously to perform Kirichi.

Sensory Details: Any Mortals in the area while Kirichi is in use may experience skin-twitches or mild itchiness.



1 **Skindancer**

A Zombie can change the pigmentation of their skin to any color naturally found in the human condition.

System: Spend no Viscera. Roll Stamina + Kirichi, difficulty determined by the degree of pigmentation change. Going from pale, stark white to dark ebony or vice versa would be difficulty 8. A light tan would only be difficulty 5. A botch results in splotches of different colors appearing all over your character's body, possibly drawing a lot of attention. Storytellers should note that this power is actually pretty powerful. A white person going into a bathroom and coming out black can almost exceed the abilities of the

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Arcane background. For balance, storytellers can call for increased difficulties and/or viscera expenditures if this effect is being performed during high-stress situations.

1 1 **Caress the flesh**

A Zombie can stimulate and accelerate the regrowth of skin across a wound. Highly useful if you've got a living friend who needs some quick triage. **System:** Spend three Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Kirichi, difficulty being 1 plus the number of health levels lost by the target. The target of the effect must be alive. The time necessary to complete this effect depends upon the intensity of the injury. If interrupted, effect is nullified and the wound remains unaffected. This effect will not restore health levels but it can prevent further damage due to external bleeding. It will not help with internal bleeding, however. A botch results in the skin "healing" where it's not supposed to, creating fused lips, eyelids or worse.

1 1 1 **Corpse Skin**

Calluses thicken over every part of the body that has skin. The effect doesn't really look very pretty but by the time you're in a situation where you need it, appearance doesn't matter much.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Kirichi, difficulty being ten minus Stamina. Parts that are calloused gain two rating boost the soaking of bashing, lethal and soakable aggravated damage. This effect cannot be "stacked" with several activations. A botch results in the calloused skin restricting movement. Add a +2 to the difficulties of dexterity related actions and subtract two from initiative rolls.

1 1 1 1 **Molting**

All skin may be sloughed off of the body in one piece. The shed skin may be used to suffocate, ensnare or anything else the Zombie can think of. This is usually used in extreme situations.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Stamina + Kirichi, difficulty 7. The molted skin has a number of "health levels" equal to the Zombie's Stamina or Strength, whichever is higher. The skin has a Stamina equal the Zombie's Stamina. The Zombie may not replace the skin even with the use of Dembellah. The body will remain without skin until an extra Viscera point is spent to re-grow it. No more skin may be replaced than was left at the moment of death. While in a skinless condition all lethal damage is considered

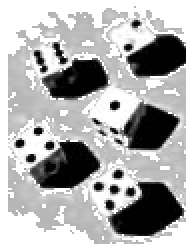
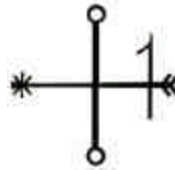
soakable aggravated. A botch results in the skin dissolving into useless sludge.

1 1 1 1 1 **Tendrils**

This is a near mastery of skin manipulation. When being ambushed, the initial effect of this ability can be quite useful.

System: Spend six Viscera. Roll Stamina + Kirichi, difficulty 8. Tendrils and tentacles of skin whip about wildly for one turn dealing Strength + 2 dice of lethal damage to everyone in the area. This also knocks down anyone with a strength of two or below. For each turn afterwards equal to the number of successes, the skin is under control of the Zombie. It takes on an elastic quality and may be extended or stretched up to two armlengths. With increased concentration, a skin tendril may be used as a prehensile limb. A botch results in the skin tendrils becoming a tangled knot as a result of the initial effect. The Zombie may not perform any actions until the effect has faded.

Legbé



"Remember how I mentioned that some of those Zombie movie clichés have a seed of truth? This is one of those cases. To continue with the movie analogy, did you ever wonder why the person being chased by a horde of Féos always seemed to make the wrong turn in an alley?

There are all sorts of other unlucky things that can occur in a zombie B-movie that I won't get into, but you get my point. In actuality, we do have some influence over probability. We even have outright control for short periods. I guess we could win the lottery if we wanted to but I'm not exactly sure why I haven't seen it happen yet. Maybe fate doesn't like to be messed with and it just smacks anyone who tries to control her."

-Carlton

As Carlton stated above, Zombie movies often have unfortunate coincidences that work in favor of the ravenous horde of walking dead. Inspired by this humorous cinematic technique, several Zombies worked long and hard to have the winds of fate slide across their Meridians in just the right way. The result was the control of fate and chance. It helps, when



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chasing a potential meal, to have them luckily or unluckily trip over a branch that just happens to be there. Less hunting-oriented Zombies have taken this Viva in an entirely different direction. The resolution of Whispers. These brave few have left their search for self-discovery up to chance, literally. They wander around following their Compulsions, occasionally activating a Legbé effect to help them be in the right place at the right time.

Roleplaying Legbé

Flaws: Highly improbable events, both beneficial and not, tend to befall those around a Zombie.

Suggested Actions: The character may have use some sort of symbol of randomness and chance every time they perform a Legbé effect such as flipping a coin or throwing dice.

Sensory Details: The closest thing to a "sensory" detail of Legbé is confusion. A sudden string of commonplace events set into motion in an unlikely sequence is sure to turn a few heads.

1 Sense Danger

Probability's plans for the endangerment of life make themselves aware to the Zombie at this level. Hints of destiny jump out at the Zombie with no explanation or warning. She may be walking past a crane, knowing it will topple, killing dozens, but she wouldn't know when or why.

System: Spend no Viscera. Roll Perception + Legbé, difficulty 6.

Botch - The anvil hanging above that old woman's head looks pretty safe.

Failure - Nothing happens. Duh.

One success - Someone might accidentally fall into that open manhole.

Two successes - You tend to duck and cover at just the right time.

Three successes - Someone's about to hit you from behind with a baseball bat.

Four successes - A sniper rifle is being aimed at the back of your neck from across the street.

Five or more successes - You can sense the trajectories of each bullet in a hail of automatic gunfire.

1 1 Freaky Causality

This effect can also be used to create "hanging" Viva effects. Basically, this effect is used in conjunction with other Viva effects to create contingency Beats to be activated if the contingency is met. Contingencies include but are not limited to firing a gun, avoiding

combat, or being surprised by an unexpected visit by a specific person.

System: Spend one Viscera. Roll Charisma + Legbé, difficulty 5. A botched attempt at straight manipulation of probability will usually result in something equally as likely working against the favor of the Zombie. To create a hanging Viva effect, the Zombie must first spend one Viscera and roll Charisma + Legbé, difficulty 5. Then she must activate the desired "hanged" effect with appropriate Viscera expenditure and Viva roll.

If the first and second rolls were successful, the effect will hang for a number of days equal to Meridians.

If the first roll succeeded but the second failed, the Zombie won't know it until it's too late.

If the first roll succeeded but the second botched, then the botch itself is "hanged" and the Zombie won't know it until it's too late.

If the first and second roll failed, nothing happens and the Zombie won't know it until it's too late.

If the first roll failed but the second succeeded, the effect activates immediately.

If the first roll failed and the second one botched, the botch activates immediately.

If the first roll botched but the second succeeded, failed, or botched, the results will occur at a very untimely moment.

1 1 1 Synchronicity Freeway

Surprisingly good luck befalls the Zombie for a brief instant. A bucket might fall on a pursuer's head causing him to trip. The Zombie could get a very, very good hand in poker. Zombies should be careful not to anger the wrong people with their good luck, however. Other non-gambler types use this as an aid to their rediscovery of their previous life.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Charisma + Legbé, difficulty 6. A botch could result in a very bad hand at poker, or a really good hand. Too good. Card-counting good. No one likes to be cheated.

If using this during a search for the Zombie's previous life, a successful roll might make a former friend, co-worker or neighbor walk past her. A botch could result in one of her old enemies spotting her walking around when she's supposed to be dead and buried. This effect may only be successfully used three times per Chronicle.

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1 1 1 1 **Murphy's Blessing / Murphy's Wrath**

More mystically inclined Living Dead use this as a way of helping their friends or bringing bad luck to their enemies. The effect causes fate to work entirely for or against the owner of a specific object to which the effect is assigned. Everything from lucky silver dollars to cursed monkey's paws can all be created with this effect. Rarely is this effect performed without an accompanying prayer, enchantment or some other mystic ritual. Most adopt the methods of voodoo priests and priestesses.

System: If blessing or cursing an object, spend three Viscera. Roll Charisma + Legbé, difficulty 7. The resulting good luck or bad luck that befalls the owner of the object is at storyteller's discretion. The effect usually lasts only a few weeks, but the Zombie can sacrifice a permanent Willpower to make the effect on the object permanent. These permanently enchanted objects have become virtual urban legends for the good or bad fortune they grant their owner. The owner of the blessed item may spend one temporary willpower to reroll any attempt, or make someone else reroll any attempt, that would result in extreme harm to himself or a loved one. Storyteller's discretion as to what constitutes "extreme harm."

The Zombie may spend an extra two Viscera to assign the object to a single person. The object will then "haunt" the owner wherever they go through a series of bizarre coincidences, no matter how many times he thinks he's seen the object for the last time. If the owner wishes to finally be rid of the damned thing, he must make a willpower roll, difficulty 7 resisted by a Charisma + Legbé, difficulty 7. If the owner wins, he may finally free himself of the object's presence.

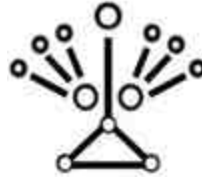
1 1 1 1 1 **Fate Storm**

At this point, fate is pissed off and flaky presence in the Zombie's life. Sometimes probability will be helpful, other times it will most certainly not. In all cases, the improbable becomes commonplace. This is a constant state of convoluted destiny and chance that the Zombie carries with them at all times. While living inside a giant Rube Goldberg device may seem helpful, it also carries many risks when the winds of fate go against the Zombie.

System: Spend no Viscera. No roll is necessary. At this point, fate effectively becomes an NPC with its own goals and whims. The Storyteller controls when the effect occurs and its severity. The only goal which

fate has is to be completely unpredictable. Storytellers should be careful not to let the coincidences get too silly. Being struck by lightning every third thursday of a month ending in "R" is going to really break any mood you're trying to establish.

Mehtuo



"What are you afraid of?
Hmm? Ok, now look behind you.
See it? No? Damn, I was trying out
this new Viva I just heard about.
These three Pulse Wavers I know
hear about all the rumors and stuff.

They said, '...you won't believe it Carl! It's the next big thing. It's all about fear! It'll make Erzulie seem like kid stuff!' So far I'm having some trouble with it though. Theoretically it feeds off of the natural fear of mortality that everyone has, and thus their fear of us. Manipulate that fear into their personal phobias and you've got Mehtuo. With a little practice, they say you can create a panicked mob straight out of Night of the Living Dead. I hate that movie. I'm going to tweak it so it works more like paranoia than fear. I prefer subtlety like that. It's definitely more stylish than going up to someone and screaming, 'BOO!'"
-Carlton

There's a chill in your exposed bones. A tingling on your dried, cracked skin. Your sludgy inerds have a sinking feeling. Something's out there. Why won't the damned flashlight work? There's no one who can help you. This can't be happening. You're supposed to be the monster. The monster doesn't get scared. Well, not unless someone nearby is using this Viva.

Roleplaying Mehtuo

Flaw: The character occasionally loses all fear and recklessly endangers his life and the lives of others.





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Suggested Actions: Aside from necessary physical contact, there aren't really any dramatic actions to perform for Mehtuo effects that wouldn't immediately ruin the effect in the process.

Sensory Details: Sensory details of Mehtuo are barely distinguishable from normal fear/paranoia reactions. Hair standing on end, clammy skin, sweaty palms and so on, it's storyteller's discretion as to whether any Zombies in the area experience this.

1 **Startle**

At this level of talent, it becomes easier to sneak up on one person. Most find no use for this ability beyond this level. The truly sadistic, or bored, pursue this Viva any further.

System: Spend no Viscera. No roll is necessary. The Zombie can have -1 difficulty to stealth rolls once a day.

1 1 **Phantoms**

What was that? It was nothing. Wait, what the hell is that? Oh, okay. Just a lamp-post. What the hell is that?!

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Mehtuo, difficulty 6, resisted by the target's Willpower. If successful, about ten minutes after the Zombie touches the target of this effect, hallucinatory images appear in the target's peripheral vision. Storyteller's have discretion to determine how this affects a story.

1 1 1 **Paranoia**

A step up from phantoms is full blown paranoia. The target will begin to suspect everyone of a conspiracy of some kind. There is a chance that the subject will confide in one or two trusted individuals about the conspiracy. More than likely, the paranoia will become so intense that the target hides out in the woods and turns into a recluse.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Mehtuo, difficulty 7, resisted by the target's Willpower. If successful, a day after the Zombie touches the target, the target will become very paranoid. The target will glance suspiciously at all people around them and his behavior will become increasingly erratic.

1 1 1 1 **Faint**

This is a common occurrence in Zombie movies, but a more difficult effect to perform in real life. The target of this effect will immediately fall into a deep slumber. What happens from there is up to the Zombie.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Mehtuo, difficulty 8, resisted by the target's willpower. The Zombie must scare, surprise or in any other way catch the subject off-guard and touch them. If the roll is successful, the target immediately faints for a one round per success exceeding the successes from the target's roll.

1 1 1 1 1 **Panic**

Another common occurrence in Zombie movies is the Living becoming as much of a mob as the Féo hordes. The Living are an easily swayed flock. In this age of terrorism and rage, everyone is already on edge. All it takes is a little nudge to send them into a screaming riot.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Mehtuo, difficulty is relative to the size of the crowd. Strangely, it is easier to get a large group of people to run for their lives than a small group. However, this phenomenon has its limits. There is a distinct curve to the difficulties of causing a crowd of any size to panic. This curve is also affected by the mood of the crowd and the reputation the environment has for danger.

- Bedroom of a small child - Difficulty 9
- Large black tie restaurant - Difficulty 8
- Movie theater featuring The Exorcist - Difficulty 7
- Bank lobby - Difficulty 6
- Airliner with a good safety record - Difficulty 7
- Department store - Difficulty 8
- Softball field during a little league game - Difficulty 9

To activate the effect, the Zombie must yell out a single word extremely loudly, i.e. "fire!" "bomb!" or "Immigre!" This panic will technically only affect the targets within the five bodylength radius but others may see the frightened crowd and run as well. Living beings with a Willpower of 7 or over can resist with a willpower roll, difficulty 6. Supernaturals are unaffected.

Meno



"Patterns of decay permeate everything. The universe runs on a railroad track straight into nothingness. There's no escaping our ultimate fate. No matter of will or struggle will ever alter the course of the world's final demise. Depressed yet? Yeah, well I don't believe a word of it. Something about this Viva changes a



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person. Makes them talk like that. Frankly, I'd avoid anything that speeds up decay but others are a bit more daring."

-Carlton

Several Zombies have come and gone who tempted fate by harnessing seeds of decay in all things. Those who succeeded became bitter, cynical and generally misanthropic. Those who failed... well, they didn't last long enough to become very jaded. Meno grants the ability to speed up the process of decay and decomposition.

Roleplaying Meno

Flaw: Fatigue and illness tends to follow in a Zombie's wake. Also, the Zombie may become very detached to the mortality of those around her. She may simply assume that anyone she meets will die at any moment and so refuse to build any emotional connections.

Suggested Action: The Zombie may rip off a piece of their flesh and eat it as a symbol of decay, this also ties into the viscera expenditure for the abilities.

Sensory Details: Any living in the area while Meno is in use will feel a definite sinking feeling, others may become depressed or even start weeping.

1 Eyes of the Coil

The natural cycle of decay reveals itself to the eyes of the Zombie. This ability gives her a sense decay and weak spots. For example, a very precise time of death can be determined by inspecting a corpse and a relatively accurate determination of how long it will take for something to decay can be made. This could also be used as a tool for destruction. A good whack with a hammer in just the right spot can knock down that unstable pillar. A strong martial arts kick in the ribs can incapacitate someone. This is a very useful effect but sensing the weak spots and decay in all things can take a toll on the mind. Often the Zombie will become jaded to the deaths of others.

System: This costs one Viscera. No roll is necessary.

1 1 Quicken the Coil

Those Grandes who have become close friends with Jackals have used this effect to hasten the "ripening" of a fresh corpse so that their scavenging companion may take Viscera from it. Essentially, this effect quickens the decay of dead organic material. A few enterprising Zombies have decided to start a business in fossil fuels, with them providing the fossils.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Meno, difficulty 5. This effect will only work on non-

living organic matter. It can reduce a mighty fallen redwood to organic sludge but wouldn't harm a small sapling. A botch results in an extra two Viscera being lost by the Zombie.

1 1 1 Decay

Now a Zombie's control of decay is not limited to organic matter. Often this is used as a quick way to rust locks and make a quick get away.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Meno, difficulty 6. As always, this effect requires contact with the target. A botched attempt results in a loss of an extra three Viscera.

1 1 1 1 Reverse the Coil

Where most would only look at this Viva and see a tool of destruction, others have seen the horrors revealed to them by the Eyes of the Coil and decided to reverse its course. This effect reverses the decay of organic matter to the state it was in upon death. The uses of this effect, the practitioners admit, are limited. But it can certainly help out forensically inclined Living Dead. With as little as a vertebrae, the Zombie can recreate an entire corpse and determine cause of death.

This effect can also be used on inorganic matter to reverse tarnishing, rust and other wear-and-tear damage.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Meno, difficulty 7. The corpse will decompose into the state in which the Zombie found it once the effect has faded. A corpse recreated with this effect is not natural, may not become a Zombie, and may not be used for purposes of Dembellah. A botched attempt will cause a loss of an extra four Viscera.

For inorganic matter, spend four Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Meno, difficulty 6. The matter will be restored to a state of relative newness. "New" is a subjective term, obviously. Storytellers determine how "new" the target becomes. The target returns to normal after the effect has faded. A botch results in a loss of an extra four Viscera.

1 1 1 1 1 Aura of Pestilence

By the time a Zombie becomes this proficient in the entropic arts, she has likely become a very angry person. Often, she will manifest her distaste for this dying world by lashing out at everything around her. Hence, this effect which creates a sphere of decay all around her affecting everything. Things, people,



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supernaturals. The Coil, the Zombie decides, doesn't discriminate among its victims, so why should she?

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Meno, difficulty 8. The aura permeates any armor and affects organic and inorganic material, including living beings, within a bodylength radius sphere. This deals one dice of aggravated damage to everyone other than the user per turn spent within the aura, this damage is cumulative and soakable. A botched attempt will result in a loss of five more Viscera and two marks of Fever.

Obatallah



quick blunt relatively a toothpick? things, you've army knife skeleton if and talent." -Carlton



Probably holding the record of oldest Viva is Obatallah. As you well know, bones are what hold your body together. Their usefulness goes way beyond that. Need a weapon? Need a sharp instrument? Need Bones! They're great got a whole bloody swiss just waiting inside your you've got the creativity

The Pulse Wave calls this Viva Osteokinesis. Despite what this name implies, this Viva governs the growth and formation of bones, not movement. Being the one of the oldest recorded Vivas, the uses of its abilities are many. However, where once a Zombie would have to use most of her Vivas for hand-to-hand combat, the modern Zombie has little need for a bony exoskeleton or bone swords. Thus resulting with this Vivas falling out of favor with all but the most "old school" of the Living Dead.

Roleplaying Obatallah

Flaw: Even slight movements are accented by the sounds of cracking joints. Storytellers may wish to increase the difficulties of actions requiring stealth.

Suggested Action: The character may crack their knuckles or loosen up the joints in their neck before performing an Obatallah effect.

Sensory Details: People in the area may have an urge to crack their knuckles or may experience a peculiar "hollow bone" feeling.

1 Harden Bone

The first effect a Zombie must learn is the ability to strengthen the durability of her bones so they can withstand the reshaping and knitting involved with further Obattallah effects.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Stamina + Obattallah, difficulty 6. Gain 1 temporary dot in Stamina. Also, the difficulty of any effect targeted at the Zombie's bones is increased by one. A botch results in a loss of one dot in Stamina and the difficulty of any effect targeting the Zombie's bones is decreased by one.

1 Knit Bone

This is more useful for the living than the Living Dead.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Obattallah, difficulty 5. The Zombie must be given time to set the bone. Without adequate medical knowledge, this could be quite difficult. However, if the bone is already set and in a cast, the effect will immediately mend the severed parts of the bone like new. A botch could result in the bone fusing in the wrong position, meaning it will have to be re-broken and set again.

1 1 Harden Skeleton

This is an enhanced version of the Harden Bone effect. The entire skeleton will become denser yet its weight will be unaffected.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Stamina + Obattallah, difficulty 6. If successful, the Zombie gains two temporary dots in Stamina. A botch results in a temporary loss of two dots of Stamina.

1 1 Bone Gauntlet

A clawed gauntlet made entirely of dense bone bursts from beneath the skin of the hand and forearm of the Zombie. This is usually as far as most will go in their pursuit of Obattallah abilities.

System: Spend three Viscera. No rolling is necessary, the effect is always successful. The claws deal soakable aggravated damage equal to strength + 1.

1 1 1 Spike

A Spike or several needles of bone rise from one part of the Zombie's body. This is most effective if grappling an opponent. Nothing surprises an attacker more than a spine through their gut. As hand weapons, however, they can prove unwieldy and ineffectual.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Stamina + Obattallah, difficulty 7. Spikes or several needles deal

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3 dice of soakable aggravated damage. Needles can break off and cause discomfort in the target as long as the needles are stuck in the target's body. An extra point of Viscera can be spent to create a spike with backturned needles that deals an extra die of soakable aggravated damage when it is removed from the target's body. A botch results in the spike or needles bursting from an inconvenient location. It might even be possible that the spike or needles grow in the wrong direction, **into** the Zombie's body, dealing the appropriate amount of damage.

1 1 1 **Bone Rending**

The control of bones has now extended fully into the command of another individual's bones. Since the healing of bones has already been achieved earlier, there is little left to do but damage.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Strength + Obattallah, difficulty being the target's Stamina x 2. Rending of bones in this fashion deals 3 + successes dice of soakable aggravated damage. Living beings will most likely require medical attention if a major bone is damaged with this effect.

1 1 1 1 **Bone Glaive**

The height of elegance or the heights of poserdom, take your pick. A long, wide blade of dense bone protrudes from a Zombie's arm. A Zombie who goes through the trouble of making it this far is either focused on historical combat technique or has watched a bit too much Highlander.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Stamina + Obattallah, difficulty 8. Unlike most Viva effects, the blade will not dissolve after a certain amount of time. Actually, the only way to get rid of the blade is to physically snap it off. The blade is about three feet long and has a sharpened, serrated edge which deals Strength + 3 soakable aggravated damage. A botch will result in an entire bone being extended through the skin without an edge. Just a bone. A botch might also result in the glaive coming out of an inconvenient location like the knees.

1 1 1 1 1 **Create Skeleton**

The Zombie takes a small bit of bone from their body then stretches, bends, moliates and solidifies it into normal articulated skeleton. This skeleton is not animated. While the skeleton won't "dissolve" like other Vivas effects after a specific period of time, the creation takes time and research.

System: Spend an amount of Viscera determined by the complexity of the skeleton (rat = 1 Viscera,

human = 7 viscera, Werewolf = 15 Viscera). Roll Intelligence + Obattallah, difficulty is determined by the complexity of the skeleton. The type of skeleton is determined by the player. With further experience, the character can create elaborate fantastical skeletons. A botched attempt will create a skeleton with gnarled joints and weak extremities.

1 1 1 1 1 **Bone Armor**

Many of the more... overzealous members of the Mortuum Templum create an exoskeletal battle suit of superdense bone. The actual appearance of the armor depends on the tastes of the Zombie. Some go for a classical knight style while others prefer futuristic "mecha" construction.

System: Spend seven Viscera. Roll Stamina + Obattallah, difficulty 8. The armor will remain active until the Zombie spends one more Viscera to "power down." At that time, the armor dissolves into an inert, gray slime. A pair of bone Gauntlets, one on each hand, are automatically created by the effect. The exoskeleton has an armor rating of 5, equal to full riot gear, but only has a penalty of 2. Botches at this level have been known to leave a Zombie with a sludgy, useless skeleton or worse.

Ogoon

"I've got another little unexplained movie cliché for you. How does a Zombie manage to crawl through six feet of well-settled earth in less than a few minutes? I always wondered that too and until I saw someone swim through a park one night, I

thought it was just fantasy. I asked her how she did it and she taught me the arts of soil. Legend says earth is the origin of all life. That's not stretching it all that much. I haven't had as much joy as I have careening through the cool comfort of terra firma. Does great things for your skin too."

-Carlton



Large amounts of unobstructed soil are hard to come by in the modern world. Nevertheless, the safety provided by a quick plunge into solid earth is enough for many Zombies to learn Ogoon. This Viva allows

one to manipulate and control earth, dirt, mud and soil.

Roleplaying Ogoon

Flaw: A few fistfuls of earth must be eaten everyday. If they don't, they will be unable to use any Ogoon abilities above 2 dots.

Suggested Action: The Zombie may eat a piece of earth or suck on a small pebble while performing an Ogoon action.

Sensory Details: The smell of freshly dug earth wafts through the entire area.

1 **Earth Sense**

The first step of Ogoon is to extend awareness into the soil. In effect, sensing what the soil senses. **System:** Spend no Viscera. No roll is necessary. At any time, a Zombie can touch a patch of soil and sense anything walking, standing or in anyway touching the soil within a fifteen bodylength radius, even if target is invisible to the naked eye. This can also be used to sense anything underground.

1 **Earth Sink**

Along with sharing awareness with soil, the Zombie may also sink into its cold embrace. While the Zombie cannot see, hear or smell anything during this time, she can still use her Earth Sense to feel if anyone's around.

System: Spend no Viscera. No roll is necessary. At any time a Zombie can sink into the earth. This earth must be deep enough to accomodate the Zombie's body and must be unobstructed by concrete, plumbing, tree roots or anything else. Grass, small plants and rocks do not count as obstructions.

1 1 **Earth Swim**

A Zombie can "swim" through earth as easily as if it were water. No trace of tunnels, entry or exit is left after the swim. When you're lost in the woods, being chased by who-knows-what, a quick subterranean getaway is highly useful.

System: Spend one Viscera. No roll is necessary. The Zombie can swim for as long as she remains in the soil. If she leaves the soil, she must re-activate the effect.

1 1 1 **Raise Earth**

A Zombie can raise a mass of earth as big as his own body. Zombies who are fond of brute force often create giant earthen fists to pound on opponents.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Ogoon, difficulty 6. If used offensively, the mound does Intelligence + 2 Bashing damage. The earth can



also be focused into a dull, thick tendril that can suffocate targets. A botch results in a wobbly earthen construct that will likely collapse upon the Zombie.

1 1 1 1 **Earth Maw**

A large crater forms around a specific area and collapses on itself, swallowing anything that happens to be there. This is a very quick and easy way to bury valuables, opponents or evidence.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Ogoon, difficulty determined by the depth and width of the crater (swallow a squirrel = Difficulty 1, bury a human body = difficulty 5, bury a tank = Difficulty 9). The depth and width of this crater are left to the player's decision and storyteller approval. Keep in mind that all that earth has to move somewhere when it's pushed away, usually building up along the edge. A botch results in barely a pothole... or a giant chasm.

1 1 1 1 **Form Earth**

A few fist-sized masses of rock manifest in mid air within arm's reach. These are convenient if you need something to throw at an opponent's head.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Ogoon, difficulty 8. The number of rocks formed is equal to the number of successes times three. The rocks are normal rocks and will do Strength + 2 bashing damage when thrown. If aimed well, however, they can do lethal damage. A botch results in piles of muddy rocks appearing above the Zombie's head, gravity takes care of the rest.

1 1 1 1 1 **Tremor**

The Zombie can now focus her Meridians on the movement of earth to create small tremors. This effect is only used in the most dire of emergencies.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Strength + Ogoon, difficulty 8. The Zombie must be immersed in earth to

perform this effect. Tremors shake the earth within a two bodylength radius per success. A botch results in violent seizures, incapacitating the Zombie for the duration of the effect. The number of successes determine the strength of the tremors.

One success - Everyone standing in the area of effect must roll Dexterity, difficulty 6 to stay on their feet...

Two successes - ...and Dexterity based actions get a +2 difficulty...

Three successes - ...and anything buried will burst from the ground violently...

Four successes - ...and most unstable structures will be toppled...

Five successes or more - ...and almost every other structure in the area of effect will also collapse.

Sakitarrri



"There's some real sickos out there, kid. Like those Dalinari, they're the ones who invented this Viva. Back during the Inquisition days, the Dalinari would hide

among the church folks. They'd whisper rumors to the higher-ups about certain people. The Inquisition would come bashing down that person's door bellowing crap about retribution. What the church folks didn't know was that the people the Dalinari directed them towards were criminals. Eventually the suspect would be put into interrogation where a Dalinari could freely torture the "heretic." The problem was that most of the people would die before the Dalinari felt the criminals recieved proper and full punishment, (and before the Dalinar could get the most amount of Viscera he could get.) The Dalinari created this Viva, Sakitarri, to cause all kinds of pain in a person but never do actual harm. Like I said, there's some sickos out there."

-Carlton

Pain is relatively unknown to Zombies as anything more than an abstract concept. With Sakitarri, however, pain will make itself well remembered. The pain of everything from a minor pin prick to arduous vivisection can be created through Sakitarri. This deals no effects other than pain. The subject of Sakitarri cannot die as a direct result of Sakitarri.

Roleplaying Sakitarri

Flaw: The Zombie occasionally suffers severe spasms or painful cramps.

Suggested Action: The only actions really required for this Viva is the physical contact described below.

Sensory Details: The sensory details for each individual effect are described below.

1 Pinch

This causes a minor twinge, more likely to distract than hurt. About the equivalent of an insect bite.

System: Spend no Viscera. No roll is necessary. The Zombie must tap a finger on a target's body. The pain is focused on any location the Zombie wishes for one round.

1 1 Pang

This makes the target feel like they're have a muscle cramp or severe stomach pains. The effect might be so successful that they'll have a bowel movement right there.

System: Spend one Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Sakitarri, difficulty 5. The Zombie must tap a finger on the target's body. The pain is focused on any general muscle grouping for one round. A botch results in the effect backfiring on the Zombie.

1 1 Anesthesia

Some have learned to suppress pain in others rather than amplify it. The Zombie can use Sakitarri as a mild protection from the its own effects.

System: To affect others, spend two Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Sakitarri, difficulty being the wound levels of the target. The Zombie must tap a finger on the target's body. The target will no longer feel any pain for the normal duration of a Viva effect. All wound penalties during this time do not exist but the damage still does.

To affect your character, spend two Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Sakitarri, difficulty 6. The difficulty of activating a Sakitarri effect on the Zombie is increased by two. The Zombie must have reason to expect Sakitarri will be used upon her.

1 1 1 Stroke

Not even the strongest headache medicine will relieve this headache. This effect creates the equivalent of an extremely severe migraine.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Sakitarri, difficulty 7. The Zombie must tap a finger

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on the target's body. The pain results in a +3 penalty to the difficulties of all mental rolls and a +2 penalty to the difficulties of social and physical rolls. A botch results in the effect backfiring on the Zombie.



1 1 1 1 Cripple

The pain of the affected location becomes so unbearable that general area (leg, arm, chest, head) is effectively crippled.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Sakitarri, difficulty 8. The Zombie must tap a finger on the subject's body. If a limb is tapped, it is useless for the normal duration of a Viva effect. If the chest is tapped, the target will collapse into the fetal position for three rounds. If the the head is tapped, the target will go unconscious for one round. A botch results in the effect backfiring on the Zombie.

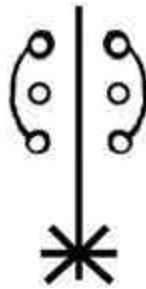
1 1 1 1 1 Agonize

This is the most brutal technique for interrogation available via Sakitarri.

System: Spend five Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Sakitarri, difficulty being the target's Willpower. The Zombie must press both palms against the target's forehead. The target's entire body will be saturated with assorted varieties of pain for as long as the Zombie maintains contact. Neither the subject nor the Zombie may perform any other actions during this time. The target may withstand the pain without

passing out with a Willpower roll, difficulty 6. A botch results in the Zombie immediately collapsing into a world of hurt.

Shango



"Proof that new Vivas can still be created in the modern times. A while back, when the science types discovered that the brain sends thought between neurons on bioelectrical impulses, some creative Zombie out there had an idea. Could you actually control electricity? Well he got to work and several weeks later he actually managed transmute the

energy in Meridians into real electricity. Even managed to affect electronics and cause a few blockwide blackouts, but not without developing a hell of a static charge around his body 24/7."

---Carlton

Named after the Loa of lightning and storms, this Viva quite simply allows the user to create electricity. The Viscera energy of Meridians is transmuted into electrical energy. Shango (the power, not the Loa) grants Zombies a control of this electricity and, by extension, has a rudimentary control of electronics.

Role-playing Shango:

Flaw: A constant static charge surrounds the Zombie. this causes a minor but noticable "joy buzzer" effect whenever they touch people or metal. This only last an instant and deals no actual damage. Other flaws could manifest, such as electronic devices operating strangely in the character's presence.

Suggested Action: The character slowly and carefully brings their two hands together until a spark or an arc of electricity forms between their fingertips.

Sensory Details: The visual details may not be as obvious as they seem. Depending on your storyteller, this ability may create a number of different "weird things" to occur. Sometimes a full electric lightshow could erupt around the Zombie or a more dramatic minor short circuit of nearby electric devices may happen. A common experience is a sharp metallic taste in one's mouth and a metallic smell in the air after the use of Shango.

1

Sparks

A small visible charge can be released from any part of the body. This deals no damage but can be noticeable. At this point, the Zombie carries enough latent bioelectric energy to power a digital watch or equivalent.

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System: Spend no Viscera. No roll is necessary. The sparks may be used to startle someone by rolling Dexterity + Athletics, difficulty 6. The target must be within hand-to-hand combat range. The effect can be dodged by a Dexterity + Dodge roll, difficulty 6. If the user hits the target, the target's player rolls Willpower, difficulty 6 or else the victim loses his next action because of the surprise.

1 1 **Interference**

The ability to disrupt wireless telecommunications is especially convenient when being pursued by police.

System: Spend one Viscera. Roll Charisma + Shango, difficulty 5. The result is the inability to use walkie talkies, cell phones, camcorders or anything that transmits data without wires. The effect has a blockwide radius and will follow the Zombie wherever she goes. A botch results in a widespread telecommunications blackout that, with some light paperwork, can somehow be traced back to the Zombie.

1 1 **Short Circuit**

This completely ceases the flow of electricity in an electronic device.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Charisma + Shango, difficulty 5. With the lightest touch, a spark of electricity jumps from the Zombie's fingertips to the targeted device, frying the circuits and making it nearly unfixable. A botch could result in the device exploding.

1 1 1 **Charge.**

A large amount of electricity is at the hands of the Zombie. It's about enough to restart a heart or recharge a car battery.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Charisma + Shango, difficulty 6. As long as the Zombie touches the target, the effect is active. If used on a healthy person or Zombie, this effect deals 3 dice of lethal damage per round and one round of unconsciousness

per success. A botch results in an inanimate target exploding or damaging burns being dealt to the Zombie's hands.

1 1 1 1 **Shango's Gifts**

Beautiful and deadly, this effect creates several spheres of pure electricity that orbit the Zombie's body.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Charisma + Shango, difficulty 7. The number of spheres created is equal to the number of successes times three. Each sphere, if touched, deals one die of soakable aggravated damage and immediately dissolves. The spheres can be directed towards a single target with a Dexterity + Firearms roll, difficulty 7. They can also be split to attack different targets with a split dice pool. A botch results in the spheres flying about unpredictably harming everyone in their path, including the Zombie.

1 1 1 1 1 **Shango's Rage**

Full-blown lightning can be called from storm clouds or from the nearest electrical outlet. This is easily the most spectacular effect available to any Viva. The noise created by the lightning bolt will probably break nearby glass objects and set off car alarms.

System: Spend seven Viscera. Roll Charisma + Shango, difficulty 8. This deals 6 + successes dice of soakable aggravated damage. This is an instantaneous effect. A botch results in the lightning bolt hitting an unintended target. After invoking Shango's Rage, successful or not, the Zombie must rest for an hour afterwards. If the player does not rest, roll Stamina + Athletics, difficulty 8, every round to maintain consciousness.



Beats

"We got the beat
We got the beat, yeah
we got the beat."

"Hey, it's Johnny again. So now you know all about the Vivas. Thing is, sometimes you wanna do something that one Viva just can't handle. Mix 'em up on the fly, you get what we call Beats. Handy little buggers too. Work up a good Beat and you can teach it to someone in exchange for shelter n' shit."
-Johnny Muertos

Daedalus' Blessings

[Cornelius]

Shango 2, Dembellah 3 or 4

The fusion of flesh and machine is now within the Zombie's grasp. Storyteller's must enforce in-character explanations to prevent massive amounts of twinkery. It is no fun for the rest of the group if one player is an unstoppable Living Dead robocop.

System: Spend 5 Viscera. Roll Intelligence + Technology, difficulty 7. If the augmentation is a small one (digital watch fused to the wrist, small devices with moving parts, etc), it falls under the territory of Dembellah 3. If it is large (Hydraulics, hand guns, phone jacks, etc), it falls under the territory of Dembellah 4. Batida is necessary to make this augmentation permanent. A botch results in a defective piece of equipment with sparks and smoke aplenty.

Electric Fluid

Agweé 3, Shango(any rating)

The Zombie transforms body fluid into a saline solution and conducts a charge throughout the fluid. This Beat is very, very weird.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Stamina + Occult, difficulty 6. The strength of the charge depends on the rating of Shango used. Shango 1 is enough to power a digital watch while Shango 5 is enough to mimic lightning. A botch results in an amount of dice of lethal damage appropriate to the rating of Shango used.

Ether's Flesh

Ghed 4, Dembellah 2

A Zombie can solidify a part of spirit matter and make it into a "real" limb with bones, muscle, and sinew, then attach it to their body.

System: Spend 5 Viscera. Roll Charisma + Occult, difficulty being the Gauntlet rating of the local area. This effect can solidify a Changeling's Fae Mien. Batida is necessary to make this alteration permanent. As usual, Body Crafts is necessary to make the alteration aesthetically pleasing. A botch results in a horribly mutilated target.

Féo, minor

Batida 3, Impuestos 1, Dembellah 3

This creates what is referred to as a "minor Féo," or an animal Féo which can never truly be Born.

Beats are tried and true conjunctional effects of different Vivas. These can be useful in situations where performing each individual Viva would be too time consuming.

How to get Beats

Beats must be bought with experience points to show express the time it takes to perfect these effects. The Experience point cost is the sum of the dots that are being combined. So, for instance, Ether's Flesh (Ghed 4 / Dembellah 2) would cost 6 Exp. Players are encouraged to create their own Beats with Storyteller approval.

Time

The duration of Beats is the same as Viva effects. One round + one round per success. If botched, the effect lasts one round for every "1" rolled. Some Beats may have specific durations of their own.

Procedure for performing Beats

First, spend the appropriate amount of Viscera, just like a regular Viva effect. Second, roll the appropriate dice. Spend Willpower, if you wish. Die rolls for Beats usually call for an Attribute + Ability roll, but there may be exceptions. Third, determine success. The results of botches are unique to each Beat and are discussed individually.

Casting Stones

Azaka 1, Ogoon 4

This psychokinetically lifts several stones and hurls them at a target. If there are no stones in the area, then they are created in mid-air.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Charisma + Occult, difficulty 6. The stones will fly in random directions if they are not controlled either manually with Batida or by probability with Legbé. The volley as a whole deals three dice of Bashing damage. The number of successes determine how far the volley will travel. Botch - The volley veers wildly off course. Failure results in nothing.

One success lets the volley fly an armlength.
Two successes let the volley fly two arm lengths.
Three successes let the volley fly across a room.
Four successes let the volley fly several blocks away.
Five or more successes results in a barrage that can fly anywhere within eyesight... with binoculars.



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These pets are generally vile looking creatures. They are often quite ill-tempered to everyone but their master and whoever their master calls a friend.

System: Spend six Viscera. Roll Charisma + Occult, difficulty 7. Though the styles of re-animation differ among individuals, a common element is the removal of the Zombie's own flesh and the placement of it into the mouth of the target. This transfer reflects the Viscera cost. The Zombie must declare whether she wishes to create a Jackal Féo or Grande Féo before activating the Beat. The targetted animal cannot be larger than a housecat. This animal is a Féo and is completely under the command of the Zombie, though it still requires Viscera to survive. If it doesn't receive a steady supply of one point of Viscera every day, it will immediately decompose. A botched reanimation attempt will probably result in the Féo attempting to eat your character.

Féo, major

Batida 4, Impuestos 2, Dembellah 4

"It's alive!!"

Now the Zombie can create a Féo of any size with the potential to be Born. When a Féo is Born, it retains the level of sentience it had when it was still alive. Despite several Pulse Waver's attempts to create a superintelligent, Living Dead chimp, the result has always been a normal chimp with a slight difference in diet. The risk in summoning any Féos is great indeed. If a Zombie is caught summoning or linked to the summoning of a Féo, they'll immediately be branded an augur.

System: Spend seven Viscera. Roll Charisma + Occult, difficulty 8. Though the styles of re-animation differ among individuals, a common element is the removal of the Zombie's own flesh and the placement of it into the mouth of the target. This transfer reflects the Viscera cost. The Zombie must declare whether she wishes to create a Jackal Féo or Grande Féo before activating the Beat. There is no longer any size limit to the corpse which may be reanimated. However, for the sake of game balance, Storytellers should think twice about letting their players have a menagerie of ferocious animal Féos at their command. Humans may now also be reanimated. If a Major Féo doesn't receive two points of Viscera everyday, it will immediately decompose. Again, a botched reanimation attempt will most likely result in the Féo attempting to eat your character.

Golem

Batida 4, Ogoon 3

Several Lanmora have turned their attentions away from reanimation to simple animation. The result is inspired by the legends of Golems, protector beings made of clay, stone and earth.

System: Spend 5 Viscera. Roll Charisma + Occult, difficulty 6. Except for the nature of its existence, a golem is identical to a Féo. It cannot be Born. If a golem doesn't receive a steady supply of one point of Viscera every day, it will immediately collapse into a pile of gravel or mud. Zombies may wish to create golems out of something other than earth. If this is the case, replace Ogoon with an appropriate Viva, though the rating required remains 3. A botched attempt will result in an out of control goliath causing a rampage until it can be stopped.

Hail of Bone

Azaka 3, Obatallah 4

A hail of bony needles bursts from the body. Often this is used to clear out an ambush, often leaving the Zombie very weak but leaving her attacker's much weaker.

System: Spend four Viscera. Roll Dexterity + Athletics, difficulty 6. Keep in mind that these projectiles will fly in random directions if they are not controlled either manually with Batida or by probability with Legbé. The volley as a whole deals three dice of soakable aggravated damage. This effect also deals the Zombie one die of Lethal damage as these pieces of bone erupt from their body. Refer to the distance chart in Casting Stones to determine how far the volley flies.

Ichabod's Bane

Batida 2, Dembellah 3

This Beat allows a Zombie to survive a decapitation for a short while. It is believed a Zombie used this during America's colonial days, thus playing some part in the legend of the headless horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

System: Spend 5 Viscera. No roll is necessary. The head may be separated from the body for a number of rounds equal to stamina. After this time, the player must roll Stamina, difficulty 6, to prevent immediate decomposition. If a round has passed and the player succeeds but still hasn't reattached the head, they must roll stamina again, this time the difficulty is



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increased by one to difficulty 7. The next round they roll against difficulty 8 and so on until they die or the head is re-attached. A botch to any of these rolls results in immediate decomposition, though Storytellers may grant their players enough time to say their last words. The body is effectively blind unless it is in the head's line of sight.

Limbs of Aldys

Dembellah 2, Batida 1

A Zombie may rip off, cut off or in any other way detach a body part and control it independently of the rest of the body. It may not use any Vivas. Most often, this Beat is used for surveillance and recon.

System: Spend three Viscera. No roll is necessary. The severed limb is effectively blind unless it is in the Zombie's line of sight. This hinderance can easily be dealt with by detaching an eye along with the limb. The limb will be "alive" for a number of rounds equal to the Zombie's stamina. After this time, the body part will become limp and inactive. It may be reattached using Dembellah. This ability cannot be used on the head, that is covered by Ichabod's Bane.

Odin's Tears

Azaka 2, Shango 4

This is an alteration to Shango's Gifts that allows waves of the electric spheres fly outward in all directions.

System: Spend three Viscera. Roll Charisma + Occult, difficulty 6. These projectiles will fly in random directions if they are not controlled either manually with Batida or by probability with Legbé. The volley as a whole deals three dice of Lethal damage. Refer to the distance chart in Casting Stones to determine how far the volley flies.

Punishment of the fates

Legbé 2, Meno 2

This Beat is a common punishment for crimes or transgressions against other Zombies. It's more of a curse than some sort of court-mandated punishment. For example, if a Grande took another Grande's kill at the last minute. The wronged Grande could curse the other to take damage whenever he ate anything.

System: Spend two Viscera. Roll Manipulation + Occult, difficulty 6. The player must declare the punishable action when performing this effect. If the punished does this action, he will receive three dice of soakable aggravated, Meno-based damage. A botched punishment results in the player's character taking damage whenever the punished does the action declared at activation.

An additional contingency to the effect is if the punished performs an action, i.e. a good deed, the effect will be lifted. The effect may also be lifted if the punished rolls his willpower against the punisher's willpower. If the punished botches, he takes a die of soakable aggravated damage. If the punished wins, the effect is lifted.

Mutations

"So I guess Carlton talked you through the Vivas. I'm gonna talk to you about what the Jackals can do. See, they don't use Vivas.

"Jackals are a totally different story, my friend. Those freaky dead-eaters will damn near explode if you get on their wrong side. They're like things out of well, The Thing.

"Hey, no, wait. I'm not prejudiced or anything. Some of my best friends are Jackals, honest! Anyway, I'll tell you what I know about their powers. Y'see, they don't use Vivas like you and me. There's something about the dead flesh they eat that fills their Meridians with polluted, toxic Viscera. Totally weakens their Meridians pretty badly, prevents them from using Vivas too. Instead they've managed to shape their bodies into a variety of uses. Jackals refer to these, kinda progressively, as Mutations. Most of them are pretty gross. The Mutations aren't pretty either.

"So, some of these Mutations are actually kinda subtle, if you can call a spontaneous sex change subtlety. But the more bizarre Mutations so drastically change the Jackal's body that the use of those powers makes their body easily injured. Jackals also have a nice sterile name for this physical state, "Beast Form."

"I'll take you through some of the Mutations I've heard about."

-Johnny Muertos



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Mutations are different from Vivas in that when one possesses a Mutation, it doesn't grow in power and strength like Vivas. Instead, Jackals continually learn new Mutations of varying levels of complexity. If a Jackal dies while any mutations are activated, the Jackal will immediately return to his natural state. Grandes cannot use Mutations. Jackals cannot use Vivas. Good, now that that's settled...

Aside from the technicalities noted here, the systems for Vivas and Mutations are identical.

Terms

"Beast Form" refers the physical condition of having any dramatic Mutations activated at any time. "Level" refers to the rating of the Mutation.

Beast Form

While some Mutations can easily pass off as normal, others are so outlandish that they leave the Jackal's body barely resembling anything even remotely humanoid. These abilities are collectively referred to as the Beast Form. No matter how many mutations are activated, if just one of them is listed as Beast Form, then the Beast form is activated. While a bunch of mutations can leave the Jackal looking like an unrecognizable pile of organs and limbs, there is usually one stable feature: a mouth. Even the mouth itself may end up being altered by the Beast Form, depending on which Mutations are activated.

There is a physical boost associated with the Beast Form, which is explained during character creation. This physical boost is only activated while in Beast Form. Also, while in Beast Form, all social attributes are reduced to zero. To return to her "normal" state, the Jackal must spend one Viscera per Mutation and wait a full turn to transform. All damage Lethal damage is considered soakable aggravated while in Beast Form.

Cost

The cost of activating a Mutation is equal to the level. If a Jackal wishes to activate multiple Mutations as part of a single transformation, she must pay the sum of combined levels of all requested Mutations.

Procedure for Activating Mutations

First, the player must declare all Mutations she wishes activate. If the Mutations are **not** referred to as "Beast Form," then no roll is necessary. The Jackal may simply pay the Viscera cost. If any of Mutations are referred to as "Beast Form," then the player must pay the Viscera cost, then roll Stamina + Wits, difficulty 6, to determine the success of the

transformation. A success means the Mutations appear exactly where and how the Jackal intended. A failure means the Jackal simply failed to transform and lost the Viscera in the process. A botch means the Mutations may appear in unintended locations, become malformed and useless, or any combination thereof. Regardless of Beast Form or not, all transformation sequences takes a full turn to complete.

One dot Mutations

Chromatophores

"A particularly pissed Jackal used this ability to fake a tattoo and frame his killer for a number of robberies, murders and assaults. The police wouldn't have been able to track down the culprit if it hadn't been for his t-shirt showing off the biotech dragon tats across his arms."

--Johnny Muertos

Markings can appear on the Jackal's skin in any pattern she wishes, like a suped up chameleon. If she stays very still without making a sound, the difficulty of finding the Jackal is raised by two. This does not count as Beast Form.

Extra Stature

"I hate it when you're having a nice polite conversation with a Jackal, they just decide to make themselves really friggin big so you don't fuck with them anymore. No sense of humor, really."

--Johnny Muertos

Quite simply, this makes the Jackal proportionally much larger and heavier. They will put on an extra 75 pounds or so and grow about 2 feet. This increased size makes a Jackal much sturdier, granting him an extra two health levels. The disadvantage is that the increased size increases the difficulty of dexterity rolls by one and any tight, non-elastic clothing will probably tear. This does not count as Beast Form.

Extra Limbs

"These young Jackals back in the mid-90's were obsessed with some fighting video game and tried to get extra arms just like their favorite character. Too bad they were successful, yuck..."

--Johnny Muertos

The Jackal may sprout extra arms or legs, though extra legs have proven a bit less than useful. It should be noted that most clothes are designed for



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Two dot Mutations

humanoids and don't really accommodate extra legs and arms. For each extra limb beyond the first, spend an extra viscera point. In total, only four extra limbs may exist at once on the body. The body will contort itself automatically to create room for the new arms or legs. For example, a second set of pectoral muscles will be created underneath the current ones to allow for the existence (and movement) of extra arms. These extra limbs can be used simultaneously with no penalty for multiple actions. This counts as Beast Form.

Leaping Legs

"One Jackal tried to copy his favorite cartoon character, grew a tail on which he could bounce across a room. He was promptly bitch-slapped for his efforts. I'd say it was a good call."

--Johnny Muertos

The Leaping Legs mutation may not always take the form of legs at all, though such experimentation is usually left to gambler-types. Whichever form this Mutation takes, it triples normal horizontal jumping ability and doubles vertical jumping ability. They also add an extra die of bashing damage to all kicks. This counts as Beast Form.

Pockets

"Kind of a continuation of the cartoon motif 'cept these are much more useful. No more hiding baggies in your ass anymore, my friend."

--Johnny Muertos

Small pockets form on the outer surface of the Jackal's body. The pockets are deep enough for a fist to fit comfortably. If there is anything in the pockets when the Jackal turns off this Mutation, those objects will remain in her body until such time as she can retrieve them. This does not count as Beast Form.

Vocal modulation

"I'll give this to the Jackals, they can do one hell of a Christopher Walken impression."

--Johnny Muertos

The Jackal can force whatever remains of her larynx and vocal cords to mimic any voice or sound that can be created by a living being. This Mutation is ineffective in a combat sense, as it does no damage. This does not count as Beast Form.

Armor

"See, Jackals are pretty vulnerable, despite the crazy things they can do with their bodies. So one of the first things a new Jackal has gotta learn is how to protect himself."

--Johnny Muertos

A full body of thick armor forms around the Jackal, giving him four extra soak dice. The actual appearance and nature of the armor is up to the character, but it is always very noticeable usually somehow biological. This counts as Beast Form.

Flippers

"The Living Dead generally don't need to go out on the water too much, that damned saltwater stings the skin. But I guess some Jackals just like to play it safe."

--Johnny Muertos

This Mutation may take the form of flippers, webbed hands and feet, or possibly even bizarre organic "turbines." Whichever form, they double the normal swimming ability. These count as Beast Form.

Multiple Eyes

"It's really goddamn hard to surprise a Jackal. They're bloody paranoid too, which probably lead to the creation of this Mutation."

--Johnny Muertos

Several eyes of various shapes and sizes appear. Difficulty of surprise attacks on the Jackal is increased by two. The number of eyes that appear is equal to the number of successes on the Transformation roll times 3. This counts as Beast form.

Re-enforced Skeleton

"It's damn near impossible to break a Jackal's bones."

--Johnny Muertos

The Jackal's bones become dense and strong, giving her a +3 bonus to Bashing soak. This does not count as Beast Form

Scream

"Never let a Jackal into a Karaoke bar. Consider yourself warned."

--Johnny Muertos

The Jackal can mimic any sound, natural or not. He can also release a wail that does three dice of bashing damage at close range, i.e. within earshot. The farther



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away from the Jackal during the screaming, the less damage a person will take. Three dice of bashing for anyone within armslength, two dice of bashing for anyone in the same room, and one dice of bashing for someone in the distance but still very visible. This does not count as Beast Form.

Two dot Mutations

Collapsible Skeleton

"Don't try detaining a Jackal, man. They've got a tendency to go all crunchy and squirm out of handcuffs, ropes and jail cell bars."

--Johnny Muertos

The entire skeleton can be dislocated, bent, or collapsed. For example, elbows and knees can bend in all directions or the rib cage can be collapsed to pass in narrow passageways. The Jackal may pass through passageways wide enough for her fist. This does not count as Beast Form.

Horns/Spines/Tusks

"Heh. I heard about this time a blood sucker tried to attack a Jackal. Hahaha! So the Lugosi comes up behind him in an alley, Jackal totally knows he's there. Right when the vamp was about to tackle him, the Jackal just skewers the friggin poser through the heart with rib spikes! Hee hee! Of course, the Jackal had every vamp in the city looking for him after that."

--Johnny Muertos

Various protrusions erupt from the Jackal's body. These are usually heavy and unweildy. The number of protrusions that appear is equal to the successes on the Transformation roll. To use these in combat, the Jackal must roll Dexterity + Melee, difficulty 7. The spines/horns/tusks can take two health levels of damage before breaking off and can gore for two dice of soakable aggravated damage. This counts as Beast Form.

Sex Change

"I suppose since we're not technically human anymore, we're not limited to the constraints of human physical parameters like shape, color, or even gender. Personally, I think it's pretty cool, but I'm inclined to keep little Johnny around for the time being."

--Johnny Muertos

The Jackal can change her... his... uh... their gender into the opposite, become a hemaphrodite, or become completely neuter and genderless. The mutation affects bone structure, posture, size, genitalia and even hair, if the Jackal wishes. This does not count as Beast Form if the Jackal is simply switching gender, however if the Jackal is transforming into something between genders or without gender, it counts as Beast Form.

Slime

"Jackal's are just messy sometimes. The almost rival a really good Agweé user sometimes."

--Johnny Muertos

Every part of the body now has the capability of secreting a slick, greasy slime. When spread across a surface, the slime will form a thick, rigid, and smooth residue that can take the equivalent of two health levels of damage before it shatters. This does not count as Beast Form

Three dot Mutations

Stretch Body

"Ugh... You see comic book characters and lame cartoons stretching their bodies and it doesn't look that gross. When you see someone's real, live neck stretch about nine feet though... Geez... and I don't even wanna talk about how it sounds."

--Johnny Muertos

The Jackal can lengthen or retract any part of his body as if it were tough, elastic rubber. The body part can be stretched up to twelve feet. This mutation may only be activated on one body part at a time. This counts as Beast Form.

Claws

"A favorite among the more fight-happy Jackals."

--Johnny Muertos

The declaration of claws as part of a transformation counts as a single set of claws on one hand. They can take the form of lengthened nails, long, sharp finger bones or something similar to the Bone Gauntlet ability of the Obattallah Viva. Slash for four dice of soakable aggravated damage. This counts as Beast Form.

Prehensilization

"Hair for tongues, tongues for arms, arms for hair... is there a part of the body a Jackal can't use?"

--Johnny Muertos

Any part of the Jackal's body can be stretched and moliated into a crude prehensile limb. If necessary, all prehensilized limbs can be stretched up to the length of an arm and act with a +1 difficulty to their dexterity rolls. This counts as beast form.

Four dot Mutations

Venom

"As if they needed one more advantage in a fight. Now some of the punk Jackals have taken to poisoning people. They say it adds a special flavor to the flesh after it's ripened. Ugh. Gimme fresh Viscera any day, thank you."

--Johnny Muertos

The administration of the venom can be from any body part but that body part must be declared at the beginning of transformation. This venom paralyzes a victim who fails a Stamina roll, difficulty seven. The the number of rounds the victim is paralyzed is equal to the number of successes on the transformation roll. The venom is only effective against those who have a pulse, so Zombies are immune. This counts as Beast Form.

Wings

"I damn near shit my pants first time I saw a Jackal sprout wings from his face and fly off into the night. Well, I would have if I still had to shit."

--Johnny Muertos

Wings of varying types burst from the Jackal's body. While the types of wing may vary (feather, skin, even gossamer), the size doesn't. It takes a lot of force and a very large wingspan to lift a humanoid body. If the Jackal doesn't have enough room to stretch out her wings, she's out of luck until she can retract them. The wings are fully capable of flight and gliding. They count as Beast Form.

Five Dot Mutations

Giant mouth

"Just what we need, a Jackal that can swallow the average person whole."

--Johnny Muertos

A huge gaping maw lined with sharp teeth forms somewhere on the Jackal's body. She can bite with this mouth for five dice of soakable aggravated. With a successful dexterity roll, difficulty seven, it is also possible to swallow half of an average persons body. The victim has only a few moments of air, use the Storyteller rules for suffocation to determine how long someone can last inside a Jackal's body. The unfortunate victim can fight her way out with a Strength + Brawl roll, difficulty seven, resisted by a Stamina roll, difficulty six, by the Jackal.

When combined with the Scream Mutation, the damage normally dealt by the wail attack is increased by two and turned into lethal.

The Giant Mouth Mutation counts as Beast Form.

Tentacles

"Probably the max of the freaky-ass shit a Jackal can do. It's like a cross between Akira and Lovecraft."

--Johnny Muertos

Several tentacles sprout from the Jackal's body. The number of tentacles is equal to the number of successes on the transformation roll times five. The length of the tentacles is armlengths equal to the number of successes on the transformation roll times two. Each tentacle has suction cups lined on one side. They can squeeze for four dice of bashing. They can also mass grab with a Dexterity + Brawl roll, difficulty 7, each success after the first adds one more die the squeeze damage Dice Pool as the Jackal wraps one more tentacle around its prey. This is most definitely Beast Form.





Chapter Seven: Storytelling

If players are the body of the game, a storyteller is the head. Without heads we'd all be ghoulish walking fountains of blood. There are some things unique to *Zombie: the Coil* that deserve special attention as far as storytelling is concerned. Again, this section will go under the assumption that you've read other *World of Darkness* game books and already have an idea of Storytelling in the role-playing game context.

Where to begin

The greatest stories of all time revolve around people. People are the movers, the shakers and the life of any tale. When conceptualizing a story, think of a few characters, NPCs, flesh them out. Create a past, a present, and especially goals for the future. Now lump these people together and brainstorm about the results. Do their goals conflict with each other? Are two of them in love? Are two of them in love with the same person? Are there things that the characters find unjust? Do they hate each other?

All this is meant to create a dynamic plot with believable characters and lots of room for player interaction.

Themes

Every story needs a basic mood for the story to revolve around. As was stated way back in the Introduction, *Zombie: the Coil* can have as many themes as you'd like. Listen to your players and ask them what kind of game they want to play. This will greatly help in the enjoyment of the game on the part of the players and the storyteller.

For quick reference, here are some ideas for themes in a *Zombie* game.

Nihilistic Horror

There is no meaning for anything. Abandon all hope.

Inspiration: H.P. Lovecraft

Mood: Keep a stoic exterior. Adjust the lighting to the minimum comfort level, adjust the coldness in the room to be a little chilly and just for some good old fashioned campfire fun, hold a flashlight beneath your perpetually solemn face pointing upwards.

Discussion: A game of nihilistic horror could easily turn the strongest willed hero into a sniveling child when shown the mind-numbing levels of apathy in the world. Sometimes it's fun to enter a world of relentless depression, especially when your characters have been combat monsters up 'til now. Nihilistic horror is different from other types of horror in that it's usually something less than tangible.

Something ominous and invisible, not big, tentacled and full of teeth. Imagine a world where the universe was born but then left on autopilot for the rest of eternity.

Summary: Abandon all hope. Everything ends. So will you. The World of Darkness is a menacing neverland,

second grave from the right and straight on 'til death. Look at it all, there's thousands of years of inertia to fight against, the efforts of a single Cadre can't possibly sway the massive indifference of the universe... or can it? Immediately launch your players into a situation where they're nearly neck deep in a situation they limited control over. Give them a reason to want to keep moving forward despite the difficulty, an ethical quandry, a loved one in jeopardy, etc. Don't straitjacket them in hopelessness, you'll easily lose your players if you don't wave that carrot in their face once in a while. Give them a few small victories to remind them just why they even bother.

Zombie-punk

Fuck off and die, meatbag!

Inspiration: the film, SLC punk, rebel youth culture in general

Mood: Fast and furious. Keep dice rolling minimal and decisive. Create a warp speed mentality by using black lights and strobe lights during raves or chase scenes. Play some hardcore rap or punk rock occasionally to set the mood.

Discussion: Ideally, a "punk" will forsake all attachments to any establishment by severing all income and comfort in their lives. Of course, many fall far short of this. Nevertheless, the World of Darkness is prime territory for following the lives of a cadre of rebellious, anarchistic Living Dead. The line is clearly drawn between corrupt establishments and clenched-fist counterculture.

Summary: Mortality is just another example of the establishment trying to bring us down! In a *Zombie-punk* game, your players are or will encounter Zombies who are rebelling against nothing less than mortality itself. This can take the form of "civil disobedience" by fasting until food is absolutely necessary, and even then only the bare minimum. The rebellion can also be acted out by vandalizing property of known augurs, desecrating gravesites, the frightening of meatbags and the general annoyance of the Pork, the police. Your players will be in a very street-level environment and will face the hazards inherent therein. Antagonists will come in assorted varieties: Cops, pimps, cops, drug dealers, cops, organized crime, and did I mention the cops? From beat cops to bouncers to hustlers, emphasize how powerful and psychopathic even the loliest authority figures can be. Go with the flow and keep the story



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moving, never let the Cadre get more than a second to take a deep breath before they're face to face with group of enforcers from the mob. Also the antagonist can be a friend, an acquaintance of the cadre has angered the wrong kind of people or has found themselves running from the law and in need of a hideout. Sure, this may seem like low-end petty kid stuff but the thrills are just the same.

Survival Horror

"I looked back at the diner to see... to see if there was anyone there who could help me. That's when I noticed that... the entire place had been encircled. There wasn't a sign of life left except... by now there were no more screams... I realized that I was alone... with fifty or sixty of those things just... standing there." –Night of the Living Dead

Inspiration: the Resident Evil video games, the films Night of the Living Dead, Dawn of the Dead and Day of the Dead

Mood: Keep very quiet. In the dead quiet, even a rustle of leaves or a howl of wind can put your players on edge. This mood relies heavily on the "BOO!" factor. Create long stretches of tense quiet that are suddenly released with a scare.

Discussion: Survival horror is a genre of video games that has its roots in the dungeon crawling fantasy role playing games of yesteryear. A simple premise, survive, can lead to a number of story possibilities. There's ample opportunity for your players to get a moment's rest and to let their characters run their psycho-emotional gamut before a pair of arms burst through boarded up windows of their makeshift bunker. Like the Zombie-punk theme, you should keep them tensed and focused with threat after threat with little time to rest.

Summary: You're alone with nothing but your wits and a few friends to count on in a city full of Féos. Something's wrong though, the Féos have eaten up all the Living in the city and they're turning to the next best thing... you. Your Cadre must find a way out of the city while managing not to get killed in the process. The key to breaking the monotony of constant Féos, introduce recurring predators. Liches attracted to the massive disruption of the Coil, Slavers looking for more laborers for their employers, crazed zombie hunters. All these can provide great threats, scaring the wits out of your characters and heightening the players' enjoyment. Spend a session

allowing members of the Cadre find one another in the city and let the story run from there. What the heck is going on? When did all this suddenly happen? What caused this massive Hounfar? For a Greek tragedy twist, have the Cadre find out that **they** inadvertently caused all this to happen. Oh yeah, for even **more** survival fun, make the lack of live flesh begin to take its toll on the Cadre.

Tragic Romance

"OF COURSE ZOMBIES CAN LOVE!" --Zeke, Zombie College

Inspiration: Any tales of unrequited love, one of the best being Cyrano de Bergerac

Mood: Romance can be one of the most difficult things to run in a game so it's probably best to let the players actually take the initiative to start a plot involving it.

Discussion: Tragedy and romance seem to go hand in hand. An old theme of mariachi love songs is that there can never be true love unless there is true suffering. Love that transcends death doesn't hurt any less than the more mundane kind. Unrequited love that transcends death is even more painful. Zombies can and do love. It's hard for most to think of a Zombie head-over-heels for someone without getting a snicker. So to tone down the humor and up the tragedy, have an unrequited love become an obsession, have the shared love decay into a state of co-dependency, a weakness.

Summary: Perhaps a member of the Cadre has fallen in love with a member of the Living or even a member of one of the other supernatural groups. This love drags the entire Cadre into a sticky situation. For a soap opera effect, another member of the cadre may have strong feelings for the same person. And for an even more surreal plot turn, perhaps a Mortal suspects that their soul mate has faked their own death. This delusion is only strengthened when they discover that the body has gone missing. Eventually they track down the whereabouts of said soul mate, what happens is up to you. Does the lover faint when he/she discovers what's happened to their true love? What of the Zombie? Do they even remember this person who's been stalking them for the past few months?

Freedom

I think, therefore I exist!

Inspiration: Any underdog-fighting-for-freedom movie, I personally like Braveheart because the main protagonist dies. Lots of tragedy.

Mood: Play some sweeping orchestral music in the background. The sort of "Charge of the Light Brigade" symphonies that make your players want to roar.

Discussion: Freedom in Zombie: the Coil can mean many things. Freedom from the Fever. Freedom from the Coil. Freedom from augurs and slavers. Even just plain free will is worth fighting for. Summary: All living beings, even the Living Dead, have the inalienable right to freedom and your cadre will make damn sure that it stays that way. Augurs and slavers are the main antagonists in this kind of tale. Get your players around the tv one night and have them watch Braveheart or any other good "FREEDOM!!!" movie to get them in the mood for your story. Perhaps your cadre is competing with slavers for a group of Féos released from a small Hounfar. The Slavers, of course, want slaves for their employers, while your cadre wants them in the hopes that they'll be Born and aid them in future efforts against augurs. Perhaps your group has a taste for espionage and stealth, a midnight raid of an augur's mansion or hidden compound would be the ideal setting for this. In combat situations, emphasize gritty, dirty, sticky guerilla warfare. No one said a revolution would be very clean.

Humor

"Oooh... I'm afraid of Zombies!... ooh noo! I don't wanna be dead! HAHAAAA!"--[Zombie College](#)
Inspiration: Zombie College, a net-based series of cartoons involving a fraternity of Zombie college students

Mood: Humor is actually pretty easy to run, if you know what your group's sense of humor. There have been volumes written on the subject of humor and what exactly people find funny. Spare yourself the trouble of reading all of them and just listen to your players to find out what **they** think is funny.

Discussion: Zombie games should never be unrelentingly dark. If your group is the kind to giggle

at a funeral or who'd get their jollies from playing keep-away with someone's head, then a humorous Zombie game would be ideal. Examples of Zombie humor can be found in a few films, namely the pothead Zombies from the film "Idle Hands" and the werewolf's victims from the film "American Werewolf in London." Tell your players to not worry about grappling with Whispers and conscience for a little while and just have fun.

'Some thoughts for Storytellers'

by Stewart White

Listen closely to the ramblings of a deranged Storyteller.

1. Heroes - Despite what WW says, a group of gothic punk anti-heroes running around offing mortals quickly becomes, well, boring. Even when the characters start with goals they tend to end up in inter-group confrontations. A group divided is a Storyteller's nightmare and ends up with 1-2 new characters a session. After much experimenting, I've found that the best way is to use an enemy, like the Coil, augurs, or slavers who step on **everyone's** toes and create a motley crew with similar goals to go after them.

2. NPCs - Rule one, NPCs are people. They are not just targets or one-shot stereotypes there to be killed or indulge your player's urges. Slavers have families and will probably not fight to the death. In fact I bet they'll beg for their lives, or try explaining to the characters that they're trying to put three kids through college. Allies and contacts have personalities and lives and are not the mindless slaves of the characters. Rule two, have **definitive** stats for all NPCs. Players never get more frustrated then when the opposition pulls something out of their ass.

4. Consequences - Characters love to act impulsively. Traffic cop giving you flak? Blow him away. Villain's right hand man escape? We'll never see him again. The best way to keep the game rolling and to have a constantly exciting adventure is to be really harsh about the consequences to these impulsive actions. Killing a cop will bring ALL the heat in a city crashing down on a character's head. That right hand man is probably annoyed that you cost him his job OR has taken over his employers operation Plus players love recurring villains and NPCs.



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5. Backgrounds - That paranoid Zahn or the flighty Pulse Waver. You've met them. Ever notice that if asked about their past, the player starts to look all pale and sweaty? No one, even the baddest ass Templar or Dalinari, began existence at the beginning of your chronicle. So if you want to have a comprehensive story be sure that you and the player have as much info as possible on the character's past. This makes a more rounded roleplaying experience for the player and gives you, the Storyteller, ammo for later. I especially like married or dating characters. It's always funny to watch a player react when their wife doesn't do exactly what she's told.

6. Realism and consistency - that about sums it up. Follow your own rules, try and reflect real society and real people as much as possible and just generally avoid the CFUS (Crazy F***** Up S***) or you'll lose your player's interest and respect.

7. Humour - If there is one mistake WoD players make, it's taking themselves far too seriously. Not everything has to be about the never-ending torment of your characters. Funny stuff happens and including

it in your game will make things a lot more bearable. Best way to do this and remain credible is to create a character that breaks stereotypes. A raver Seraph, a high school cheerleader turned Dalinari, a homeless person turned 'Crat. There are a million possibilities.

8. The Golden Rule - Take it to heart. It allows you flexibility and it makes dealing with rules-lawyers way easy. Always remember, don't let the books limit you... do what you want. Keep what you like from their publications and disregard what you don't like. and Finally...

9. HAVE FUN and remember it's fantasy. If your players aren't enjoying themselves, change things so they are. If they begin blurring that line between real and fake, talk to them IMMEDIATELY.

Now I know there are those of you who think I've missed the point of WoD or that I'm flat out wrong. Oh Well. I think I can cope with the derision. For the rest of you, I hope you got something out of this. Nothing is carved in stone. These are just my opinions. But try some of it... it works.



Chapter Eight: The Stage

Here, you'll get a grab bag full of information and details on the World of Darkness specifically designed for a *Zombie: the Coil* game. This is probably more useful to storytellers than it is to players, especially if those players don't want to know some of the creepy secrets of some of the more sinister antagonists. However, there is also some stuff on the other inhabitants of the World of Darkness and how they relate to *Zombies*.

Antagonists

Antagonists are the tools with which you'll create conflict in your story. There is an abundance of antagonists to choose from in *Zombie*, not to mention the rest of the *World of Darkness*. I've found that in almost any *World of Darkness* Chronicle, Mortals are the best characters to use as antagonists, plot hooks, supporting casts and identifying characters for the players. Remember, Mortals aren't just food here. They're families, rivals, friends, neighbors, the cashier at the gas station and the janitor working the graveyard shift.

It's a tried and true technique to use normal folks to contrast the day-to-day lives of supernatural beings. Entire sessions can be spent dealing with mundane and supernatural lives that seem hell-bent on colliding with each other. If you're unsure what to use in your Chronicle for NPCs, it's helpful to keep this rule of thumb: when in doubt, use Mortals.

Another note on antagonists: Antagonist is not synonymous with villain. "Bad Guys" rarely view themselves as such. Indeed, anyone who calls themselves "eeeevil" is more often a complete joke. Antagonists needn't be overtly working against a Cadre. They can simply be obstacles towards a Cadre's goals or a hindrance to them. Make the Antagonists understandable, even trustworthy and downright sympathetic. Moral dilemmas make for great role-playing.

Lichs

Lichs are the personal nemesis of every sentient *Zombie*. The Living dead know almost nothing about Lichs, their true goals and whom they serve are a complete mystery, except to you, the storyteller. You can come up with far more theories of the origin of Lichs than this simple document can provide, but here are some of the more common theories tossed around by the Living Dead.

The Servitor Theory - Lichs serve none other than the Coil, the mortal coil, mortality; an invisible, universal gravity that is present in the living and the dead alike. The Living are just as mortal as the dead and that's how the Coil likes it. Without change, the universe would stagnate and eventually lead to decay. Lichs know this and serve the Coil's goals happily, for they know it's for the general health of the universe to put those aberrations, the Living Dead, to their final rest. They know they must do this in the most painful way

imaginable as a lesson to other *Zombies*. "Give up and save yourself the agony."

The Suicide Theory - When a person commits suicide, their souls are prevented the final oblivion and death that they had wished. Instead, the Coil warps their souls and heightens their desire for self-destruction. However, the soul is told (told by whom, no one precisely knows) that it cannot be destroyed until such time as one particular *Zombie* is also destroyed. This provides the Lich's motivation. It doesn't so much want to kill the *Zombie* as it wants to simply end its existence, killing the *Zombie* is just a means to an end.

The Stillborn Theory - The souls of still born babies make their way through the disindividualization process of post-mortem mortality, but are stopped by the Coil and offered another chance at a life that was denied to them. The souls are stripped of most of their cognitive reasoning and so are unable to realize that the brief moments of corporeal existence given to them will be taken away permanently once their *Zombie* has died. Convenient, eh? This theory falls apart under the assumption that there are a fixed number of Lichs in existence and they are merely re-assigned to other *Zombies* every so often, which is entirely possible.

The Previous Occupant Theory - This is the most widely accepted theory, and by far, the most horrific. This theory states that when a person dies, sometimes the body the soul leaves behind has a trace of a soul left even after the true soul has left. The body, using this last bit of sentience, suddenly "wakes up" and becomes a *Zombie*. However, there are few, if any, memories saved in the rotting husk. Eventually, those memories resurface but at the price of the original soul's memories. That is the source of Whispers. The original soul is now considered to be a Lich. In game terms, this would mean that whenever a *Zombie* remembers the nature of their previous life, the *Zombie* is actually stealing the Lich's nature. As long as the *Zombie* lives, the original occupant of the body gradually loses its own identity. That soul finds some way to enter dead bodies on its own and uses any method possible to force their old body to die once more and thus release themselves from their unending torment.

Notes

Storytellers should use Lichs for the most extreme of dramatic purposes. If a Lich appears every day then it



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loses its mystique. The nature of the body in which the Lich appears should reflect their nature. If a Lich is subtle and deceptive, then they will usually come in the form of something unassuming and even cute. If a Lich is very aggressive and malicious, then they will choose a body more suiting to their tastes like a very large animal corpse.

Ordeals

An Ordeal is ideally run between one player and their Storyteller. Ordeals vary wildly from Zombie to Zombie but the message of "give up and return to the Coil" always maintains itself throughout. A Storyteller should use every mind game technique in their arsenal against the character, **not the player**. In this way, a Zombie truly earns that extra dot in Meridians and such.

Though each ordeal is unique, a general pattern runs throughout. First, is the act of the Lich making physical contact with the Zombie. Second, is the Ordeal itself where the Lich has complete control of what the Zombie sees. The Zombie will be lost in their own mind and to others, they'll simply appear to be collapsed on the ground with the Lich (in whatever form it's taken) attached to their body. Third, is the release from the Ordeal. If the Zombie has successfully broken free of the Lich under their own volition, then they will have a feeling of great confidence and pride. If they've only been released because they conceded defeat to the lich, then they'll be dejected, depressed and almost suicidal.

Slits

Lichs have a few unique abilities all their own, called Slits. Zombie characters will most likely not know this term but it helps to have an out-of-game word to describe powers solely available to Lichs. When preparing to inhabit a new body, the Lich gets a pool of points equal to the Zombie's Willpower plus Fever.

When activating a Slit, first "spend" the points from the Fever. As these points spend, the Zombie will erase some marks in Fever accordingly. After the Lich has spent all the Fever, then the powers begin to drain the Lich's willpower. When Willpower has been spent, the Lich loses its grip on its current body and disappears. The leftover body will resume its natural decomposition as if it had never been possessed, thus resulting in an almost immediate puddle of sludge and bones.

Slits need not necessarily require contact with the Zombie to perform their effect. Slits can affect the

Zombie anywhere no matter where the Lich is. This means that the Zombie has to confront the Lich as much as the Lich must confront the Zombie. The activation of any Slit effect aside from the initial act of inhabiting a body, will result in the Zombie's instinctive knowledge (read: the Pulse) that the Lich is somewhere out there. Slits only effect the one Zombie to whom the Lich is assigned. All Slit effects are removed once the Lich as "died." Zombies cannot resist the effects of Slits. Abandon all hope.

Attribute Dynamism

A powerful, and possibly deadly, Slit, this can cause a Zombie's attribute ratings to effectively switch around with one another. For example, if the Lich wished the Zombie's dexterity of 4 to be switched with its intelligence of 2, it could happen. The effect is highly confusing the Zombie and immediately tips her off to the presence of the Lich. To perform this effect, the Lich must pay a number of points equal to the ratings of the two attributes being switched.

Amnesia

This Slit is a bit of a misnomer, but the effect can easily lead a Zombie to believe that they have been struck with amnesia. The Lich can temporarily reduce the ratings of any talent, skill or knowledge. The Lich must spend one point for each ability dot being removed. This Slit can potentially reduce abilities to zero.

Mortality

With this simple Slit, the Lich can cause all points of Viscera in the Zombie's Meridians to become inert. They cannot be used for sustenance nor can they be used for soaking. Any new Viscera absorbed will have the same effect. Furthermore, this Slit effectively nulls the Zombie's natural auto-soaking abilities. Can't soak those shotgun blasts to the face now, can ya?

Neutralization

This Slit is particularly potent as it can completely remove one of Zombie's Vivas or Mutations in a single crippling effect. The Lich spends three points for each Viva or Mutation that is neutralized. The Zombie acts as if they had a zero rating in the power.

Personality Blender

Probably the least "expensive" but most effective of Slits, Personality Blender switches a Zombie's Nature and Demeanor archetypes. If using the Memento Mori system, the Lich can also switch



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around the Nature and Demeanor with those of the Zombie's previous life. Obviously, the words "Nature" and "Demeanor" in this context are strictly out-of-character terms. In game, the characters would probably just notice a sudden and long-lasting mood shift. Each switch costs only one point.

Possession

This is the first power necessary for a Lich to interact with the meat world. The possessed body must have been dead for at least an hour since its final breath. While small cats, dogs and other similarly sized animals can be possessed without the expenditure of points, to possess a larger body would cost points relative to the size of the body. A human sized body would cost four points. A werewolf would cost seven points. Anything larger would go into double digits.

Become Verloren

The urban legends of Verloren are indeed real. Verloren are those Zombies who have become so weak-willed that an Ordeal has become an even longer-lasting torment. The Lich has taken possession of the Zombie's body so as to further its own goals of the destruction of the Living Dead. During an Ordeal, the Lich must spend triple the points that the Zombie has dots of permanent Willpower. After this time, the player can choose to keep up the good fight and spend all remaining Willpower to commit suicide. This is the only way a Zombie can voluntarily cease existence as a dreaded Verloren. Verloren have no access to Mutations or Vivas, any Viscera points they consume are inert, and they cannot soak any damage through rolling or through auto-soaking. All Slits Verloren use can affect all Zombies, making them extremely dangerous, if short-lived opponents. Again, after the Lich spends all its points, it dies and the Zombie gains its body back with no knowledge of the events that took place while she was a Verloren.

Lich Bodies

The dynamic physical nature of Lichs can be a hassle for Storytellers, for simplicity, simply assume that Lichs have the same mental and social traits as the Zombie but have a Willpower somewhere between 7 and 9. These traits probably won't come into play except in the case of some sort of conversation or aggression against the Lich. Lichs do not receive wound penalties due to pain, even if caused by Sakitarri. All damage dealt to them is lethal or

bashing. The sight of a Lich will always induce the Haze in humans; after all, they're Mortality manifest. Physical damage dealt by Lichs is normal except for venoms or Viva effects which are otherwise noted.

Note that these stats are intended for convenience in the situation where combat is necessary. Storytellers should use common sense when choosing which body a Lich should inhabit. Giant Squids aren't likely to appear, let alone die, in a Nebraska farm town. Likewise, a bear won't have any reason to be anywhere near a Pacific Ocean oil rig. (Animal stats adapted from Book of Mirrors, Pages 109-112)

Alligator/Crocodile

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Health Levels: 8

Attack: Bite for six dice; tail for four dice; swims faster than most nonaquatics

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Intimidation 4, Stealth 3

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 5/26/10

Antelope/Deer/Impala/Stag

Attributes: Strength 2/3/2/3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3/2/2/3

Health Levels: 7

Attack: gore for three to five dice (none for deer); antelope and impala run faster than deer

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Stealth 2

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 7/20 (40)

Ape/Gorilla

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Health Levels: 8

Attack: Bite or rend for seven dice

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Intimidation 3, Stealth 3

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 7/20/10

Bear

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5

Health Levels: 9

Attack: Claw for seven dice; bite for five dice

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Intimidation 2, Stealth 1

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 5/20

Bison/Cape Buffalo

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 1, Stamina 6

Health Levels: 6

Attack: Gore for seven dice; trample for eight dice (no attack needed to trample-roll Dexterity+Dodge,



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difficulty 6, to avoid.

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, intimidation 4

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 10/22

Boar (wild)

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Health Levels: 7

Attack: Bite for four dice; Gore for five dice

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2,

Intimidation 2

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 7/20

Cat (domestic)

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Health Levels: 5

Attack: Claw or bite for one die (can rake for two dice when cornered)

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Climbing 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Stealth 4

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 5/20

Cheetah

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3

Health Levels: 7

Attack: Claw for four dice; bite for five dice; runs faster than anything on earth (except a Swara werecheetah)

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Climbing 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 2, Stealth 2

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 10/50

Cobra

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Health Levels: 7

Attack: Bite for three dice, venom for six dice (aggravated); Can spit venom 20 feet with Dexterity+Brawl roll, difficulty 8

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Climbing 2, Intimidation 4, Stealth 3

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 2/10

Cougar/Leopard/Panther

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Health Levels: 8

Attack: Claw for six dice; bite for five dice

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Climbing 4, Intimidation 3, Stealth 3

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 10/30

Cow/Bull

Attributes: Strength 3/5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3/5

Health Levels: 7

Attack: Bite for three dice (bulls gore for four dice or six dice)

Abilities: Alertness 2, (bull: brawl 2, Intimidation 3)

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 10/25

Crow/Hawk/Owl/Raven

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Health Levels: 6

Attack: Claw for two dice, Peck for one die

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 2

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 1/2/20

Dog (large or guard)

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Health Levels: 7

Attack: Bite for five dice; Claw for four dice

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Intimidation 2, Stealth 2

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 7/25

Dolphin

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Health Levels: 7

Attack: Bite for three dice; ram for five dice

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2,

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 0/0/30

Elephant

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 2, Stamina 10

Health Levels: 14

Attack: Trunk for eight dice; bite for three dice; gore for 13 dice (difficulty 8); trample for 18 dice (no attack roll needed-roll Dexterity+Dodge, difficulty 6, to avoid)

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Empathy 3, Intimidation 5, Stealth 1

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 15/30

Frog

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 1

Health Levels: 3

Attack: None (some have poison that can paralyze a person who fails a Stamina roll, difficulty 7. The victim must either eat the frog or suffer a wound treated with the frog's poison to be affected)

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Dodge 3, Stealth 3

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 1/1/2

hyena/jackal (jackal... not Jackal)

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Health Levels: 7

Attack: Bite for six dice

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Intimidation 3, Stealth 3

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 7/28



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Hippopotamus

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 1, Stamina 8
Health Levels: 12
Attack: Bite for 10 dice; trample for nine dice (no attack roll needed-Dexterity+Dodge roll, difficulty 5, to avoid)
Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Intimidation 3, Stealth 1
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 5/20

Horse/Zebra

Attributes: Strength 5/4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4
Health Levels: 10
Attack: Trample or kick for five to six dice; bit for three dice
Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 1
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 10/35

Lion

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Health Levels: 9
Attack: Claw for five dice, bite for six dice
Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Climbing 4, Didge 3, Stealth 2
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 10/30

Bobcat/Lynx/Wildcat

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Health Levels: 5
Attack: Claw for the three dice; bite for four dice
Abilities: Alertness 3, athletics 2, Brawl 3, Climbing 4, Dodge 3, Stealth 2
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 5/26

Monkey

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3
Health Levels: 7
Attack: Claw for four dice; bite for fve dice
Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Climbing 5, Dodge 3, Stealth 1
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 5/10/10

Octopus/Squid (normal: five to 10 feet long)

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6
Health Levels: 7
Attack: Squeeze for four dice; bite for five dice (difficulty 8); mass grab (difficulty 7; each success after the first adds one die to squeeze damage Dice Pools as the creature wraps one more tentacle around its prey)
Abilities: Alertness 4, Brawl 3, Camouflage 3, Dodge 4; Intimidation 3; Stealth 3
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 0/0/20

Otopus/Squid (huge: 30 to 80 feet long)

Attributes: Strength 8-10, Dexterity 3, Stamina 10
Health Levels: 13
Attack: Squeeze for eight to 10 dice; bite for nine to 11 dice (difficulty 7); mass grab (difficulty 6; each success after the first adds one die to the squeeze damage dice pool as the creature wraps one more tentacle around its prey)
Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Camouflage 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 10, Stealth 2
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 0/0/25

Python

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Health Levels: 7
Attack: Constrict for four dice per turn; bite for two dice
Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3 Camouflage 2, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Stealth 3
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 5/10

Rat

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2-3
Health Levels: 4
Attack: bite for one die
Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Stealth 3
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 5/10

Rhino

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 2, Stamina 8
Health Levels: 12
Attack: Gore for 10 dice; trample for 11 dice (no attack roll required-Dexterity+Dodge roll, difficulty 7, to avoid)
Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Intimidation 2
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 10/20

Shark (tiger, blue)

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5
Health Levels: 10
Attack: Bite for seven dice
Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, dodge 3, Intimidation 3, Stealth 2
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 0/0/26

Shark (great white, hammerhead)

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 3, Stamina 7
Health Levels: 11
Attack: Bite for nine dice
Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 6, Stealth 2
Move: Walk/Run/Other: 0/0/28

Spider (large)

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1



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Health Levels: 3

Attack: Bite for two dice plus venom for three to six additional dice (at one die per turn over three to six turns) if the target does not soak the bite. Damage from venom can also be soaked

Abilities: Alertness 1, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Stealth 3

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 2/5

Tiger

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Health Levels: 9

Attack: Claw for six dice; bite for seven dice

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 5, Stealth 3

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 10/35

Wolf

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Health Levels: 6

Attack: Bite for four dice; claw for two dice

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Dodge 1, Stealth 2

Move: Walk/Run/Other: 7/28

Féos

The Walking Dead are one of the few plot devices that can be a source of fear or pity. Sure, we all know how they can be used as fear, but the Living Dead have a unique perspective on the matter. Since the Walking Dead will under normal circumstances pay no heed to a Grande or Jackal, the only thing Living Dead have to fear from shambling corpses is that they'll harm those they love. It takes a significantly hardened person to sit back and let a loved one be devoured.

Pity is a definite departure from the usual manner which Féos are portrayed but there is at least one famous precedent for it. Dr. Frankenstein's Creation. He didn't ask to be created, he was just an experiment. He was misunderstood. He was angry but can you blame him? Build up an empathy between your characters and Féos by playing up the helplessness of the Féos' situation. They're thrust screaming from the womb of the grave. They've got something akin to a primate mind, enough to know that they need flesh to survive. Are they animals? Are they children? Are they sentient? Are your characters really that different from them?

So the dilemma presents itself, a Féo approaches a helpless loved one and you have the opportunity to save them. Do you save the person in danger? Do you place yourself between the Féo and the endangered? Do you just kill the Féo even if they might one day be Born and be able to repay for their sins? Or... do you kill the endangered so they'll only have to deal with a quick and painless death rather than an end the hungry Féo has in store for them? The choice is your players' characters to decide, all you have to do is present them with a situation where they'll be making some tough decisions.

Notes

Hounfars

Steam escaping from freshly re-opened graves and hordes of slow-moving, dim-witted walking corpses marching through the twilight fog beneath a full moon. This is probably the image that most will think of when you, as a storyteller, talk about a Hounfar. This is a decent and tested image to conjure up and you should feel free to use it, but don't feel that it's the only way to describe a mass rising. Perhaps the coffins themselves burst from the ground and dump their freshly risen corpses onto the ground. Maybe a large pile of body parts slowly crawl together and form a group of Féos. A tale told near a shore could have the bloated, sea-weed tangled casualties of a forgotten shipwreck come shambling from the depths. It's your call.

As stated in the Phenomenon section, there are certain experiences common among the Living when they're in the presence of a Hounfar. Those include the wild mood swings, violent behavior and heart-stopping fear already described but you can go ahead and add in truly bizarre phenomenon to your Hounfar. Look into some of the "real-world" weird crap that you read about in Weekly World News or something. Maybe at the same time the dead rise, it starts raining frogs or rivers run red like blood or visions of religious figures appear in public. Hounfars are pretty damned strange to begin with, adding a new phenomenon to the event just adds a personal touch. As a special note, and as a rule of thumb, assume Living with a willpower of six or more will not be affected by the emotional strain of a Hounfar.

Augurs

Augurs come in all sorts of varieties, but for quick templates in a chronicle, below are some



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samples of the more common archetypes of augurs. Mortals or Supernaturals can fit any of these roles and more. (One archetype not listed is the accidental augur. Perhaps someone read an ancient necromantic tome from an old library or they accidentally knocked over a barrel of toxic waste onto a grave, in some way, they accidentally raised the dead. Since an accidental augur could literally be anyone, it's impossible to write up an accurate template for him or her.)

Okay, so why the hell does someone in his right mind try to raise the dead? Simple. They aren't in their right mind.* Augurs share passionate beliefs and stubborn wills. So stalwart are their desires that not even death itself will stop them from discovering its secrets or surpassing its limitations. This is not to say that Augurs are raving lunatics, rather they're unshakeable monuments to self-control. They may speak in calm, measured speech or have strange obsessive-compulsive disorders but other than that, they live normally in whatever society they're accustomed to.

*With the exception of the accidental augur.

Occult Scholar

(adapted from Arcanum Scholar, Mage: the Ascension, revised edition, pg. 284)

Attributes: Physical 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3
Abilities: Academics 4, Alertness 3, Computer 2, Dodge 3, Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Investigation 4, Leadership 2, Linguistics 3, Occult 4, Research 4, Science 2, Stealth 3
Willpower: 5

Image: Unassuming and plain looking, the occult scholar may know full well what they're doing as they raise the dead, but probably doesn't know the torture that she's inflicting on the person. Their conservative dress fits best in the dusty libraries of their colleagues. Generally, they consider Zombies to be mindless drones and will cling tightly to this notion no matter how much evidence is presented to the contrary.

Notes: Occult Scholars are a close-knit group and can call upon each other for cash, travel or shelter, but not for a last minute rescue.

Shaman

(adapted from Elder Shaman, Mage: the Ascension, revised edition, pg. 282)

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2,

Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Abilities: Academics 2, Alertness 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Intuition 3, Leadership 5, Linguistics 2, Meditation 3, Melee 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2, High Ritual 2

Willpower: 6

Image: In modern times, a shaman has the appearance of an average person. During a ritual, they may take on any variety of rituals, costumes, dances or music depending on their particular faith. Most traditions which practice zombification use it as a means of ultimate punishment.

Notes: Many shamans are able to speak openly with the spirits of the dead. They may have Ritual objects (knives, drugs, musical instruments, icons, beads, paints, poppets, etc.) ethnic clothing or robes, herbs, incense, or pets

Urban Shaman/Cultist

(Destiny's Price, pg. 98)

Attributes: Physical 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Mental 3
Abilities: Alertness 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Expression 2, Hearth Wisdom 2 to 4, Intuition, 1 to 3, Linguistics 2, Melle 2, Occult 2 or 3, Stealth 2, Streetwise 3, High Ritual 2

Willpower: 6

Image: As per Shaman.

Notes: As per Shaman.

Mad Doctor

Attributes: Physical 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Mental 4

Abilities: Culture 2, Drive 1, Enigmas 3, Etiquett 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 4, Occult 2, Research 5, Science 4, Subterfuge 2, Awareness 2

Willpower: 6

Image: The mad doctor is one who presented their ideas to the scientific community and ridiculed for their outrageous theories. Reanimation indeed. Seeking to vindicate themselves, they work late in basement labs and secret hideaways using grants for "medical research" to further their agendas. They view Zombies as experiments, projects, or aberrations.

Notes: They'll often have labs of varying degrees of sophistication, assistants, gadgets and various body parts attached to life support mechanisms

Slavers

The blinding beams of the motorcycle's headlights chased Connie and Monica into the woods. The hell-noise roar of its engine sent the forest birds screaming into the moonlit sky. Connie was a frail, skeletal little thing. She didn't stand chance against a slaver without Monica protecting her.

"Hurry, Connie!" Monica urged, finally deciding to carry the girl in her arms. Monica ran with a speed she scarcely knew she had. The vines and branches blurred with the stars and moon. Forest and Sky made love while the mother and daughter ran for their lives. No time for poetry. Gotta run. Gotta concentrate.

"I can beat them." Monica thought. "I've done it before. Just keep running and their fuel will burn out." She bounded over fallen logs, ducked under branches, and took sharp detours through thick weeds, all while desperately holding on to Connie. The rest of the cadre had scattered long ago. Maybe the slavers caught them. Maybe they got away. This has happened before, of course. It's just a regular thing around these parts. Anyone who makes it out of this alive will meet up back at the coffee shop on west & 45th the next morning to regroup. Just keep running. His snarling hog made impossible turns and somehow managed to keep up the pace through the rough terrain. Finally... finally, she lost him through a patch of palmettos.

"Connie." Monica whispered, setting the frightened child on the ground. "Remember what we taught you? The hiding game? In the dirt? I need you to do that now. Go as deep and far as you can go and stay there. Don't come out until you hear the morning birds, okay? Then go to the meeting place. The cadre will help you there."

"Mommy? You're not coming back, are you?" Connie's brow furrowed in grief.

"No, sweetie. I'm not." Monica cried, though she had no tears. "Never forget I love you, kiddo.... now hide. Don't let them find you."

"I love you too, mommy." Connie's feet slid quietly into the loose soil, holding tightly to Monica's hand. Her tattered jacket sank into the earth, then her shoulders, then her face and finally, her fingers eased their grip and sank too into the chilled comfort of the forest floor.

"Hold it!" A coarse western voice boomed from the darkness. The slaver, now without his bike, quickly tossed a cloud of salt into Monica's face. His

gloved hand plunged into the dirt, plucking the young girl out into the open air. Monica doubled over and wailed. She did not weep because of the unholy burns dissolving her face but because she realized that she had failed Connie. A few minutes later, the two Zombies were bound, stripped naked, had their lower jaws skillfully ripped off and a barest pinch of salt placed on their foreheads. All routine. The slaver spoke into the walkie-talkie on his shoulder.

"Knight three. Five by five. Strays caught and neutered. Team status?"

"Shh... Chk... Knight three. Knight seven. Five by five.... uh... Knight nine down.... I'm sorry."

The man almost dropped to his knees as the last syllable sizzled. He took a breath and replied. "Copy. I'm deep in the boonies right now. Be back in about two hours. Knight three out."

He turned and glowered at Monica and Connie, both of them staring forlornly at the sky. He reached for his pouch of salt, but hesitated.

"My God.... Y-You fucking monsters. You killed Cutter. YOU FUCKING KILLED HER!!!"

He took off his helmet and hung it on a broken branch.

Connie and Monica continued staring at the dawn sky.

He approached their still bodies, slowly undoing his belt and unzipping his pants.

The first rays of sunlight were easing through the clouds.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Social 2, Mental 2

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Survival 2, Law 1, Occult 2

Zombie Lore 1

Willpower: 4

Image: Slavers are called to re-capture Zombies who've escaped augur compounds. Believe it or not, it really is easier to recapture escaped Zombies than it is to just get new bodies for zombification. Less paperwork. There are only a few people who care to go through the danger of the slaver profession. Strangely, it seems augurs have been employing new types of slavers. Slavers with supernatural abilities that are especially potent against the Living Dead. Notes: They usually work in groups of 2 to 4. Slavers are usually equipped with nets, firearms, a van and salt in case of emergencies. "Neutering" a zombie involves ripping off their jaw with a crowbar.

Supporting Cast Creeps

Some regard the creation of Creeps as a form of necromancy and thusly accuse the creator of being an augur. Most however consider Creeps a sort of "guilt-free" Féo because Creeps can never attain a sense of awareness beyond an animal's. This doesn't mean that the creator doesn't care about her Creep, merely that there isn't the same stigma attached to Creep creation as there is in Zombification.

Storytellers should go through the creation process with their players to make sure they have a good idea what they want in a Creep and that they stay within the rules' guidelines. Furthermore, the possession of Creeps counts as a Background and may not be bought during character creation, only with experience points. It's important to remember that these are merely the requirements for **creating** Creeps, the requirements for **owning** a Creep are merely maintaining a steady diet.

Though Creeps are trainable and can learn to perform tasks such as delivering messages or guarding an area, they can never be more intelligent than a really smart housepet.

Purpose: The first step in creation of a Creep is the player deciding just why their character would make a Creep to begin with. Some are pets, others are servitors, and still others act as spies. The purposes for a Creep are only limited by the creator's imagination.

Rating: The next prerequisite for creation of a Creep is that the character has at least one dot in Dembellah and one dot in Batida. This means that Jackals cannot create Creeps.

Planning: The creator must have at least a vague idea of what their Creep will look like, be capable of and what they will be assembled from.

Parts: Of course, to create a Creep one must have the parts they wish to assemble the Creep from. An entire game session can be spent on this task alone, especially if the body parts wanted by the creator are rare or exotic. If a Creep has the body parts of a Supernatural, only the physical attributes of those parts are active.

Complexity: The limits of the Creep's anatomical complexity are defined by the creator's knowledge of Dembellah. The requisite dot in Dembellah assures that the Creep won't fall apart at when faced with a light breeze. Example: Andrew, who has Dembellah 1,

cannot create a 20 foot long spinal snake with tusks to impale enemies but he could assemble a finger with bone legs.

Abilities: The abilities ("functioning" organs, Pulse communication skills, training, obedience, etc.) of a Creep are limited to the creator's knowledge of Batida. The requisite dot in Batida assures that the Creep can move (if it has a means of locomotion) and absorb Viscera. Example: Andrew has attached tiny eyes all over his Creep's body but it would still bump into walls if Andrew doesn't have a high enough rating in Batida to make those eyes function.

Time: Of course it takes time and effort to create a Creep. For something as simple as Andrew's Creep, it would take about fifteen minutes to assemble the bone legs, poke holes into the finger for leg sockets, and attach the legs. The eyes, on the other hand, would take quite a while longer to attach, possibly several hours. The assembly process needn't be done all at once; indeed Andrew may have an entire workshop full of unfinished projects. Certain major projects like Dracolichs and the like can easily take years to create.

Blessed Event: A Creep first comes to life when its creator pulls a bit of flesh from their body, the equivalent of one Viscera point and feeds it to the Creep. If the Creep has no mouth, than the creator may rub the flesh liberally over the Creep's body until it begins to show signs of life.

Maintenance: All a Creep needs to start its existence is one point of Viscera. To maintain its existence, it may need a lot more and more often depending on its size, complexity and the parts from which it's composed. Andrew's Creep, a finger with bone legs and mundane eyes, won't need much more than one or two points of Viscera everyday. A major assemblage of multiple body parts and complex physiological processes such as Frankenstein's creation could easily require upwards of twenty points of Viscera a day or more. The creator's Viscera is necessary to grant the Creep life but any Viscera from any source is suitable to maintain it. Many game sessions can be spent just looking for people or animals to feed to the hungry Creep.

Growth: Further alterations can be made to the Creep at anytime. Andrew's satisfied with his Creep but as he learns more about the arts of bodily augmentation and Meridians, he will want to experiment more on his Creep. As the years go by, the



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Creep evolves into something totally unlike its original form. By now, Andrew's given his Creep a mouth to feast with, a more articulated means of movement and a dependable sensory system.

Bonuses: Storytellers should adjust the difficulty and required time it takes to create a Creep if the character has any dots in Body Crafts, Medical Science or Anatomy.

Empty Nest: For any number of reasons, a creator and Creep can part ways. The Creep will wander about living from meal to meal, trying to avoid detection. Sometimes a Zombie may find a stray Creep and take it as its own. This new owner needn't have either Dembellah or Batida to have a Creep as a companion, just as long as it keeps the Creep fed and content. A rogue Creep's existence usually ends tragically at the hands of starvation, the Living or some random crazed Supernatural.

Props Epitaphs

Over the years, many Zombies have opted out of creating sentient “offspring” and focused their attentions to creating tools, gadgets and weapons out of body parts. Jackals, frustrated with their inability to create Creeps, were the first to propose this idea and soon the fad spread far and wide. Now, along with Creeps, Beats and the standard Viscera, Jackals have the edge in their own niche of the Market: Epitaphs. Both Jackals and Grandes can make Epitaphs, but Jackals have had the corner on the market for the past few years.

Despite their highly unusual abilities, only the highest level Epitaphs will approach the abilities of low level Vivas or Mutations. Here are the guidelines of making an Epitaph followed by a list of sample Epitaphs.

Purpose: As with Creeps, the first thing to take care of is what this Epitaph's purpose will be. While many Epitaphs can mimic the abilities of common technology, they can also perform effects that are entirely unavailable to Living science. Still, some Zombies pack Epitaph firearms because they can go through metal detectors and because they're just “cool.” All Epitaphs have a unique appearance, often following the creator's signature theme or whatnot.

Creation Process: The creator gathers the bones necessary to create the Epitaph's skeleton and rolls

Body Crafts + Intelligence, difficulty 7 + the Epitaph's Background rating. A difficulty higher than nine creates a threshold of necessary successes.

Generally, Epitaphs follow a structural pattern of handle, mouth and trigger. The handle is obviously how the Epitaph is to be held. The “mouth” is where Viscera is fed into the Epitaph. It is a simple port of entry for any type of flesh, living or dead. All Epitaphs require a certain amount of Viscera to operate. Finally, the trigger is a simple method of activating the effect for which the Epitaph is designed. Occasionally, high level Epitaphs will be able to perform multiple effects. In this case, there must be a different trigger for each effect.

After construction, the creator wraps the Epitaph entirely in flesh pulp, spends a number of Willpower points equal to double the Epitaph's Background rating, and waits for a number of weeks equal to the Epitaph's Background rating. During this time, the Epitaph must remain undisturbed and untouched while the flesh rots and hardens around the Epitaph. A busy Epitaph dealer's workshop is probably the smelliest place one can ever find. Once the “cocoon” is complete, the result is a unique Epitaph with a very durable, leathery shell shaped around a homemade skeleton of assorted bony bits.

Operation: As long as the Epitaph has a supply of Viscera, it can be activated. Activation depletes a bit of the Epitaph's Viscera pool. The upper limit of the Epitaph's Viscera pool is double the Background rating. Epitaphs are effectively “Jackals” in that they can only accept Viscera from rotting corpses or Zombies. This Viscera is “fed” to the Epitaph by shoving it through whatever port has been created for it. After about three seconds, the Viscera then dissolve into the Epitaph. The pool is replenished.

Some advanced Epitaphs are equipped with some method of gauging how much Viscera is left in the Epitaph. Aside from this, there is no way to determine how much Viscera is left in the device.

Maintenance: One of the nice things about Epitaphs is that they're so bloody durable. They effectively have their own auto-soaking when damage is applied to them. The odd bit is that all damage that is “soaked” by the Epitaph will immediately be transferred to the next person that touches it. The damage has to go somewhere and for some reason, it always has to go to a person.



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Epitaphs can auto-soak five times their Background rating in Bashing damage, half of Bashing in Lethal damage (rounded up) and half of Lethal in Aggravated damage (rounded up). So a five dot Epitaph can auto-soak 25 Bashing, 13 Lethal and 7 Aggravated. A one dot Epitaph can soak 5 Bashing, 3 Lethal and 2 Aggravated. However, this auto-soaking is only done as long as the Epitaph has at least one point of Viscera.

Sample Epitaphs

1 Skeleton Key

Pretty simple, really. It opens just about anything with a keyhole. The Jackal who built the first skeleton key was thumbing through some role-playing game manuals and decided it would be punny to create his own key like the “magical item” he found in the glossy-paged tome.

Skeleton Keys are fashioned from a chain of finger joints. The “handle” is usually rather bulky and ornate while the “key” is a simple dull point. To activate the key, the user shoves a bit of viscera into the keyhole until it builds a slight mound. The user must then poke the pointy end of the key into the mound. The viscera will dissolve into the key and the lock will open. The key only works on locks and doors with keyholes, not card-sliding or combination-punching locks and doors.

11 Zombie Personal Security System

This rather novel Epitaph alerts the Zombie to the presence of an active Hounfar, someone else’s Lich or nearly anything or anyone else the Zombie can imagine. The PSS is usually a small mound of two or three teeth fused together into a lumpy sphere about the size of a large marble. If there is a Hounfar going on within a 20 mile radius, it will vibrate lightly. It will also vibrate if within a 10 mile radius of a Féo.

The PSS is a passive little gadget and must simply be “re-charged” with Viscera every so often if it is to maintain its watch. All the user must do to recharge the PSS is to surround it in Viscera for a full night. After this time, it loses a point of Viscera every week.

The PSS can also be “set” to detect a specific person. This procedure can be a bit tricky since it requires that the user fetch a small piece of the target’s body (hair, skin, etc.) and place it in contact with the PSS.

111 XiZ Pistol

The XiZ (“Eck-SIZ”) pistol is the standard weapon used in the grittier areas of the Living Dead

community. It is about the size of a normal light 9mm pistol. The primary attraction of the XiZ is its stealth. When fired, it only makes a low thumping noise and is quieter than a silenced handgun. The XiZ will not register in metal detectors and can easily be tucked in a Zombie’s belly or other body cavity making the XiZ almost impossible to find in a standard security checkpoint.

The pistol’s “clip” is actually one half of a human jawbone. The pistol’s rounds are human teeth ripped from the jawbone and hurtled through the barrel at bullet speeds. When the clip runs out of teeth, it falls out of the pistol’s handle. To reload, the user smears some Viscera on the clip and shoves it back into the bottom of the handle. The clip seals itself in the pistol again and can continue to be fired. Each bullet costs one Viscera.

Damage: 5 lethal

Range: 15

Rate: 3

Clip: Viscera pool

Conceal: P

1111 Pulse Dampener

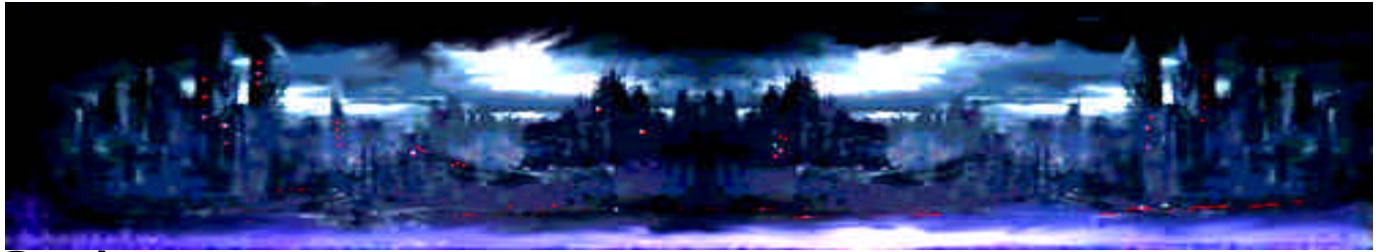
A particularly useful device against Knochen with no eyes, ears or nearly anything else save for bones, the Pulse Dampener does exactly that... it dampens the Pulse. Anyone within the same room or equivalent area of the dampener will immediately lose the Pulse. Eyeless Zombies will become blind, earless Zombies will become deaf, and so on. The only Zombies that might not be affected by this Epitaph are Pelés in really, really good physical condition.

The dampener varies in form but is usually two human brains fixed to each other to form a ball. Human ears surround the brain ball. To replenish the dampener’s Viscera, the user shoves the flesh in between the ears into the brains. Once activated, the dampener will lose one point of Viscera per round.

11111 Fever Bomb

The closest thing to a nuke a Zombie could possibly obtain. Only the suicidal or insane would make or purchase this Epitaph. It only does one thing and can do it only once. Increases Fever rates to deadly levels.

It looks a little like a grenade made of vertebrae. To activate the bomb, the Zombie surrounds it in Viscera. Two rounds later, every Zombie (including the user) within a mile radius takes ten points of Fever.



Backstage The World of Darkness

The skin of the known world rumbles and bulges from the things that lurk beneath. Zombies do not live in a vacuum. While truly little is known about other Supernatural denizens of the World of Darkness. Here is a brief synopsis of the Zombie perspective. Keep in mind that Zombies, possibly moreso than any other Supernatural, are subject to prejudice and stereotype. Some Zombies use this to their advantage but others find such behavior demeaning and fight the misconceptions as hard as they can.

Mortals

"This workin? c'mon... ok, got it?...You can't suspend me, Mr. Carter, ya bastard, you hear me? oh wait, you can't, 'cause yer dead! That'll teach you to mess with me! Oh, if anyone else at school is seeing this vid, you all should know that every single one of you who ever teased me, picked on me, rejected me or even looked at me funny is gonna pay the ultimate pri- ugh... ughh....."

".....um... ted?... ted?... HOLY SHI-....."

--Police evidence archives. Video confession of two main suspects to the murder of George Carter, found in a camera at the scene of the suspects' own murder. The boys' assailant is not clearly seen due to poor video quality. George Carter's body still not found.

"Sure you could have no conscience about eating these people, until you get Whispers of how you were once like them. Ya start thinking about how guilty you feel. That's when your Lich comes though and tries to jam Mortality and slavery to the Coil down your throat. So it's best to keep a picky diet... criminals... abusive parents... bad tippers... people who deserve it. Remember, the original augurs came out of this flock... just food for thought, so to speak.

--Johnny Muertos

Contrary to popular belief, Mortals run everything. Mortals are the most powerful beings on

the planet. Mortals can build armies. Can Zombies build armies? Hm? When was the last time a Werewolf nation invaded an island? Aside from these shallow penis contests, the fact remains that humanity is the default by which everything else is measured. Mortals are the building blocks of Zombie existence and society. If you need help, there is only a one in a million chance that anyone **but** a mortal can help you out.

Werewolves

"The end is nearing. I saw one of them, whatever they are, they stunk of all the corruption of a Wyrms spirit but I felt something else too. There was a Weaver influence, like it was the Weaver that kept it together. I can't explain it better than that. Believe it or not, there was also a Wyld there too. Especially in the way it fought, so unpredictable. It was quickly killed, I think, but the incident made me wonder. Has the Wyrms finally corrupted the rest of triat and spawned these creatures? The thought chills my bones"

--Jared fights-for-Gaia

"Geez. I heard stories from the Eyes about the werewolves being pretty cool. Legends of 10 foot tall wolf guys with names like Mitch rips-up-stuff and Jerry knocks-things-over. When ya finally meet 'em, what do they do? They start growling about worms and they try to slash us to bits. Who are they to judge? They've got fleas! Damn, do they smell. I'll tell you what though, I'm never heading out into the woods on a full moon unless I'm driving very, very fast."

--Johnny Muertos

Naturally, Zombies favor locations with a large population to feed on. Thus seeing a Zombie in the wilderness for any length of time is highly unusual. Those few who do stay in the woods tell tales of late night sounds of wolf howls and unexplained sites of highly unusual battle. Occasionally, a stray body part



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will be left behind laying grotesquely on a bed of dead leaves for a clever Zombie to attach to their body. Not much is known about the werewolves because none of them will let such a creature near, often attacking the Living Dead on sight.

The groo as some of them seem to like to call themselves. Seem to have all the abilities that they're supposed to have, shape changing, super strength, super speed. There are some other things too. They seem to actually have a bunch of spirits at their back. Whether these spirits are the same ones that the Living Dead have dealings with is unknown.

Also, encounters between the groo and the living have been noted to have a strange recurring theme. Groo changes into wolf-man form, mortal runs away screaming. Zombies have a few theories but no hard evidence supporting any reason why this occurrence is so common. Though a werewolf in full battle form is very frightening, Zombies do not experience the level of sheer terror noted in the Living.

Technicalities: Zombies can be created out of the corpses of Werewolves just as easily as from any other organism. When a Werewolf dies, they revert to the form they were born in, i.e. human, wolf, metis. A reanimated werewolf has none of the advantages of its previous life. The Metis, when reanimated, do not get a bonus for clawed attacks, they simply appear to be horrible reanimated corpses of wolfmen. All reanimated werewolves will begin their death-lives as Féos just like any other Zombie. Once Born, if they're Born, a werewolf does not retain the ability to change their form unless of course they're a Jackal. They do not have Rage, Gnosis or any connection to the spirit world. They're now a Zombie through and through. All this might be a moot point considering what it takes to actually kill a werewolf.

Mages

Log entry #164A4

Success is near! My experiments and years of hard work will soon revolutionize Science. No longer must death be forever. Immortality is near! I can feel it! Today the cadaver has been able to blink, soon it may be able to talk.

Note: The attempts to deter the more annoying habits of life, like hunger, have not been as successful. Indeed, the creature's dietary desires seem to be very specific. So far all attempts to feed it have been

unsuccessful yet it still wishes to eat. I'll have to continue to study my results to find out precisely what it is that it wishes to consume.

--Sandis Kobatch, mad scientist

"Some of the magicians are cool, at least in theory, but most of them couldn't think any less of a Zombie. If you approach them, they speak about you in a detached manner. Like you're not even there! Sometimes you'll hear 'em talking about our flesh being containing some quint-crap. Bloody Merlins think they run reality or something, delusional is what they are. Not to mention a good number of them are augurs too."

--Johnny Muertos

Mages and Zombies have little contact with one another beyond the occasional mad scientist's lab or hermetic wizard's study. Quite a few Zombies have been produced by a wizard's search for immortality throughout the years but contact beyond that has been limited. However, some Zombies have told of a group of death mages who've suddenly developed a definite interest in learning more about the Living Dead. Contact hasn't been made yet because mages are an untrustworthy lot who've long had a history as augurs. Mages have also been known to seek out the flesh or blood of supernaturals for some reason, presumably for arcane magical workings of some sort. **Technicalities:** Mages are very mortal but their powers of magic are highly flexible. Indeed, theory holds that a wizard can literally do anything, why they don't is a complete enigma.

Note for Mage players: One dot of quintessence can be gained for every two dots of Viscera siphoned from a Zombie's flesh. Zombies **really** don't appreciate this though. Technocratic devices cannot be attached using Daedalus' blessing.

Wraiths

"So I had this boo job on the lower east side, ya know? The pay was pretty good, so I jumped at the offer. From the description, I'd anticipated some goth wank out looking for abandoned warehouses, beleive me, I've seen a few. Anyway he wasn't too hard to find, looked like a vagrant or somethin', all bundled up in rags an' shit. This guy absolutely reeked of decay, parasites maybe--what do I know?--anyways I gave him a week tops. Maybe I'd even scare him to death (that usually costs extra.) I figured there was no point



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in overkill, so I went for a simple manifestation. As soon as I tried to speak-warnings from beyond work well, especially with religious fucks-this guy whipped around like I'd set him on fire or somethin' an' then-and I swear this happened-his head fell off.

Now, I've been in a few fights in my time and I'd be the first to admit I'm not exactly a come-hither beauty, but... anyways I was feeling pretty good, a job well done and all, until the motherfucker bent down and started looking for his head. At this point I figured discretion was the better part of valor, so I took the liberty of fading out just at the headless homeboy snagged his missing melon, and sneaking out the door. I didn't come back, but apparently neither did he, 'cus I got paid the next day. They really don't pay me enough to do this shit.

--James "Oh, the Horror" Haynes, Wraith
"Don't ever go in that warehouse over there, man. The place is haunted. Hey, you heard me. There's ghosts out there, the real deal, not some boo berry, beetlejuice, ectoplasm shit. The real deal, poltergeist, restless dead, make you crap your pants, turn-you-inside-out-without-a-second-thought ghosts. I've been to one of these things my firends like to go to. Séances I think called. Anyway, I went to one and I saw some scary things. Blood on the walls, cold spots, scratches on the skin, everything.

I'm not one of these guys who talks with the caspers all the time or anything but they seem to have a major chip on their shoulder when comes to us. I think they're jealous of us being alive. Some of the Zombies 'round here talk with them on a regular basis but they don't say much about what's goin' on the other side. I've heard rumors about some hurricane or something. Something that's part of the reason there's been so many little hounfars here and there. I don't know what to make of it all but I'm not having anything to do with something that powerful any time soon.

--Johnny Muertos

Few Zombies without the Viva Ghed will communicate with ghosts, or any spirits for that matter. Ghosts, on the other hand, seem to be more than eager to take out their jealous rage on a Zombie. At times Wraiths will forego their anger in favor of mutual benefit.

In a world as dangerous as this, the Living Dead need as many allies as possible. Wraiths will never offer their services for free and will often ask a Zombie to dissolve the membrane between the living world and

dead world so that they might experience the "wonders" of the living world at least for a few moments. It is said that Wraiths too have a massive nemesis that permeates almost everything they see. This nemesis seems to be very similar to the Coil but further study into the subject has not been made so this remains hearsay at best.

Technicalities: Wraiths have ten health levels and no wound penalties. A Ghed/Meno Beat may be used to inflict aggravated damage. A wraith who is "killed" with bashing or lethal damage may return to haunt her tormenter while a wraith "killed" with aggravated damage never returns.

Note for Wraith players: The Meridians shackle the consciousness of a Zombie to their body and the physical world. This is why they can't enter the Umbra and why they can't be inhabited, embodied, skin-ridden, etc.

Risen

"Once, I encountered another like me. There was something strange about her though. Her wounds hadn't been healed when she rose, she didn't have a Conduit as far as I could tell, and it seemed like her memories were fractured at best. I decided to pass these things off, she seemed to like me because of our common situation. The time we spent together was wonderful. When I could manage to spend some time away from the kindred among whom I was hiding out, we went to gardens, parks, all the beautiful living places.

I was walking through the city one night when the most horrific scene fell before my eyes. There she was, kneeling over this twitching corpse, with her back to me. I hoped she was just trying to play up her cover that she was a vamp by drinking someone's blood. But there was no one else around, she heard me approach and I saw her there. She was chewing the last bits of pulpy flesh from the cadaver. I ran as fast as I could, hoping never to see her, it, again."

--Marcus DeLeon, Risen

"A girl I knew, Donna was her name, she met a Zombie once. A Pelé. He was pretty smart for a Pelé too, romantic to boot. Oh yeah they had a rip-roarin' time, just livin' it up all around town. Then her boyfriend catches her Feasting and he freaks out like he's never seen anyone eat before or something. Donna took it real bad 'cause she's been wanting a



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boyfriend for a long while now. It's hard to get a date with a gunshot wound in your forehead.

Anyway, Donna took it really personal. She was moping around the city for weeks afterwards. Then she eventually fell Occasionally one of us would give her a call to see how she was doing. 'course she didn't say much. That was pretty much the last time I heard from her. Rumor says a freaky lookin' pitbull was walking into her apartment. It had to be her Lich. Just had to be. I don't know if she could, or would, put up much of a fight though. Damn shame too, I kinda liked her."

--Johnny Muertos

Those who know a little about wraiths know even less about Risen. The Risen are ghosts who've returned to their own bodies but do not seem to have Compulsions, Fever, and they still remember their mortal life. A Zombie encountering a Risen will usually pass them off as a Pelé because Risen don't even decay after they've returned. Some among the Living Dead would definitely like to get in contact with one of these beings but, so far, knowledge of the existence of Risen is a well-guarded secret.

Hunters

"They're everywhere, I tell ya. Those shambling, no-good, falling apart, pieces of rat shit that just won't bloody die! I'm just trying to keep my job but everywhere I look, there they are. The guy behind the counter at the chicken shack. The client who's sitting at my desk. Even my wife is beginning to look a little hollow nowadays. What's happening?"

Just last night I was driving back from a company camping trip when these... things... just started coming on to the road. They just kept on coming. I had to plow through what seemed like miles of country road and walking corpses just to get into the safety of the city. That's just it though, I don't know if the city is safe either. What if they're smarter than I think? Somebody help!"

--Bob934, Hunter.net

"Ooh... don't get me started on these guys. I don't know who these people are or where they came from but they just piss me off. I mean, we've always had our share of mortals who hang around us without freaking out. Sure most of those people were augurs but a good portion of them were just people who accepted us for who we are.

After the last mass rising though, we found more and more of these schizophrenic superhero-wannabes with some sort of magic powers. Paranoid little buggers, they can see straight through any Erzulie disguises so you better duck and cover when you spot one. What really bites is that you can't tell these guys apart from your mailman. You never know if your neighbor is some paramilitary psycho or if that friendly guy who says hello every morning will wind up holding a sharpened spoon to your throat. Fortunately, they mostly go after Féos, Grandes and Jackals are too smart for 'em to catch us. At least for now.

--Johnny Muertos

Hunters are mortals who are hell-bent on destroying all Zombies. So far the hunters have been focusing their attention on Féos with only the occasional encounter with a Grande or Jackal usually leading to the hunter's demise. While hunters in the general sense are nothing really new, recent times have given rise to reports of hunters with mildly supernatural powers like being able to hide a weapon anywhere and not being deceived by Erzulie. Many think that this new breed of hunter is a ploy by the Coil to finally destroy all Living Dead.

Technicalities: Hunters are dangerous but very fragile mortals. They have the ability to hide a weapon anywhere, make any object deal aggravated soakable damage, and are completely unaffected by illusions.

Vampires

"Sire, I fear I have bad news to report. It seems our servitors have been stolen. For what purposes, I do not know. An odd piece of evidence is that the culprits tried to make the theft seem like the servitors had left intentionally, as if in an organized escape. Whoever these criminals are, they're apparently not bright enough to realize that those helpless drones are completely incapable of any sort of cognitive reasoning. Don't worry, sire. We'll get to the bottom of this."

--Lord de Luca, Vampire, augur

"I'm pleased to report to you, my brethren, that the raid of the augur's mansion was a success. Thirteen Féos were rescued from captivity and are being rehabilitated as we speak. With luck, and with Zemi's blessing, all of them will be Born and be granted the free will that all beings are entitled to



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under natural law. Celebrate tonight, for tomorrow we set to work again."

--Sir Alan, Mortuum Templum, addressing his extended Cadre, including Johnny, at a celebratory dinner.

Few things will polarize a Zombie more than the mention of Vampires. Vampires apparently outnumber Zombies at least ten to one, so for now, Zombies know enough to keep any conflict to a minimum. This complacency doesn't sit well with many. There have always been rumors about Vampires using their own strange Vivas to raise the dead to be nothing less than slaves. Several witnesses have come forth in recent days, however, to confirm what was once believed to be urban legend. This revelation has many among the Living Dead worried that a confrontation between Vampires and the Living Dead is inevitable. For the time being, the blood-suckers have little to no knowledge of Zombies beyond

their own servitors. Most Zombies want to keep it that way.

As of yet, there has been no word of an all-out battle between Zombies and Vampires. If there are clashes the Vampires sometimes simply pass off the incident as an encounter with a random supernatural. Eventually, this will end and Vampires will make an effort to find out what these strange beings are.

On Samedi: It's not uncommon to hear about raids of augur's households where the augur turns out to actually be a Vampire. Most of the time this is known before hand as the Cell of Eyes sends spies into the ranks of Vampires posing as Samedi. The Samedi are Vampires whose skin and flesh have continued to decay even after they've become Vampires. The Zahn, as usual, suspect a conspiracy. Word has it that Vampires know more than they're letting on and there are actually Vampire spies inside the Living Dead population.

Credits

Creator/Developer: Daniel Solis

Prologue: Jean-Paul Gagnon

Non-schizophrenic History section: Derek Guder

Illustration page 41: Kevin Converse (thanks Kevin!) page 94: John "Olrak" Narciso, page 104: Ruud Dirven

All other illustrations: Daniel Solis

Thanks:

Derek "craziness" Guder for feeling shamed and alone.

Jean-Paul "mouthpiece" Gagnon for worms dropping off his tongue

Stacia "Madison" Coggan for loving her jelly donuts

Cornelius for fending off the Great Old Ones with flatware

Isaac "Satan's Thesaurus" for causing a brouhaha

Andrew "Igor" Krug for giving everyone the Creeps

Amanda "Undrawable" Horton whose foot is unaffected

Robert "Jesus is melting all over my pizza" Nabers for turning Santaki into a flowing river of blood

Cynthia "Poison Maiden" Jackson for her army of genetically engineered kitten things.

Scott "Smiling Bandit" Hacker for his work making this file, even though I barely know him. He's so cool!

And finally...

With the help of Ex Libris Nocturnis and the rotating cast of lovable nutjobs at the Pulse, Zombie: the Coil has become the biggest fan-made net supplement in the world. Thanks, you guys!