ANTHROPOPHAGI
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ANTHROPOPHAGI

"This is Antarctic Research Station 27. Do not, I repeat, do not send a rescue mission. After the storm cleared, we sent a rescue mission to the Danish research station. We hadn't heard from them since they drilled down to a fresh water lake under the ice. We found nothing but charred ruins and dead bodies. We brought the bodies back here, so we could…what's that? Oh God, they're coming! Look, we were going to send the bodies back to Denmark, but when they thawed out, they came back to life. They eat flesh, they… <<sound of hammering in the background>> *they're at the door! You're only hope is to let them freeze here. Do not send a rescue…*<<unintelligible voices, sound of breakage, strange moan or wail, sounds of gunshots, screaming>>"*

–Transcript of final message from Antarctic Research Station 27.

"Anthropophagi" are undead devourers of human flesh (in fact, that's what the name means). The Game Mechanics present anthropophagi as a template useful for contemporary d20 System games. However, if you cut the science, you can easily use anthropophagi in fantasy d20 System games.

Anthropophagi (or, if you prefer "phages") are created by a virus the government has dubbed X-UGR.

The Virus (X-UGR)

X-UGR only reanimates humanoids, monstrous humanoids, and giants. All living creatures should check for infections (see below), but only those three creature types reanimate. The virus kills other creatures outright.

There are three sources of infection from X-UGR. First is the bite of an anthropophage. You will obviously know when this happens. Second is melee combat with an anthropophage. This should never cause infection if the hero is undamaged. Only if the hero has suffered lethal damage and is in melee combat with an anthropophage should you check for infection. Third is contact with an anthropophage destroyed in the last 48 hours. There are two easy steps to prevent infection in this case. Those who cover their skin (including long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and gloves) while handling anthropophage remains and who subsequently destroy that clothing and thoroughly wash up should not check for infection. This third source should rarely affect heroes, and is primarily mentioned here as a way for GMs to continue spreading X-UGR infections through ordinary populations.

Anyone who encounters one of these three sources of infection must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 15 + 1/2 anthropophage's Hit Dice) or become infected. Infection is always fatal. There is no cure. Death occurs after 12 hours, and reanimation as an anthropophage after 24 hours. As a result, GMs should strongly hint to heroes that there is something very wrong with that "cannibal" they're about to punch, kick, club, or stab.

Some groups may enjoy the role-playing experience of knowing that the clock is ticking away the time before a former team member rises from the grave and begins mindlessly attacking former friends. Some may, in fact, enjoy one-shot "survival horror" games where an outbreak begins in an isolated place (like an Arctic research station or a cruise ship) and the heroes see how long they can survive the experience. Make sure your players are comfortable with such a game before you run it.

Template Traits

"Anthropophage" is a template that can be added to any humanoid, monstrous humanoid or giant (referred to hereafter as the base creature). It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Anthropophagi look like the base creature, including the wounds it suffered in the course of gaining its infection.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Type: The base creature's type changes to undead (see Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes of the *d20 Modern* rulebook).

Hit Dice: Change all hit dice to d12 and recalculate hit point totals.

Speed: If the base creature could fly, its maneuverability drops two categories. If this reduces maneuverability below clumsy, the creature can no longer fly.

Defense: The anthropophage gains a natural armor bonus to Defense based on its size (but use the base creature's natural armor bonus if it's higher): Tiny or smaller +0, Small +1, Medium-size +2, Large +3, Huge +4, Gargantuan +7, and Colossal +11. It retains the benefit of any class-based bonus to Defense.

Attacks: An anthropophage has two slam attacks and a bite attack in addition to any natural attacks of the base creature. It loses all weapon proficiencies and manufactured weapon attacks.

Damage: Table 8-16: Undead in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* lists damage done by undead according to size. Use this to determine the damage done by the anthropophage's slam and bite attacks.

Special Qualities: An anthropophage loses all of the base creature's supernatural and spell-like qualities. An anthropophage may retain any or all

of the base creature's extraordinary abilities at the GM's discretion. Note that Talents from heroic base classes are considered extraordinary abilities unless specifically noted otherwise. In addition to gaining the undead type, an anthropophage has the following special qualities:

Blindsight (Ex): Anthropophage's have extraordinarily keen senses, beyond the explanation of current research. These senses have a 60-foot radius.

Create Spawn (Ex): Once a victim is infected (see The Virus, above), there is a chance that she will become an anthropophage. Because they strongly prefer living flesh, anthropophagi will stop damaging a body once it begins to cool. Anyone who fails a massive damage check caused by an anthropophage's attack lost too much flesh while alive to reanimate. Others, however, rise again 1 day later.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the anthropophage hits with both slam attacks it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action, doing so without provoking attacks of opportunity. No initial touch attack is required. It can use this ability against creatures it size and smaller. A Small or smaller creature using improved grab does not apply its grapple modifier to its grapple check.

The anthropophage has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use its hands to hold the opponent. If it chooses to do the latter, it takes a –20 penalty on grapple checks but is not considered grappled itself; it still threatens an area, and can use its remaining attacks against other opponents.

When an anthropophage gets a hold after an improved grab attack, it pulls the opponent into its space. This act does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The anthropophage is not considered grappled while it holds the opponent, so it still threatens adjacent squares and retains its Dexterity bonus. It can even move, provided it can drag the opponent's weight.

Limited lifespan (Ex): An anthropophage not in cryogenic suspension simply stops functioning in 3 to 5 years. The remains begin to decompose normally once it stops functioning.

Scent (Ex): Anthropophagi can tell the difference between living and dead flesh by smell from a considerable distance, and have been known to hunt by scent. See Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* for the rules on Scent.

Variant cold effect (Ex): Anthropophagi do not suffer cold damage from attacks. Instead they suffer as if from the effects of a *slow* spell. After exposure to cold sufficient to damage a character (see The Environment in Chapter Seven: Gamemastering of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*), treat an anthropophage as unconscious to represent it being inactive. One hour after removing the anthropophage to a warmer environment, it

"regains consciousness" and begins functioning again.

Wounding (Ex): An anthropophage's saliva contains an anti-coagulating agent. Damage from an anthropophage's bite continues to do 1 point of damage every round. Wounding from multiple bites is cumulative, so a hero who is bitten twice suffers 2 points of damage per round. This wounding can only be stopped by surgery (DC 20 Treat Injury check using a surgery kit).

Allegiances: Anthropophagi lose all previous allegiances.

Saves: An anthropophage's saving throw bonuses are as the base creature, modified by new ability scores.

Action Points: Anthropophagi never have action points.

Reputation Bonus: Anthropophagi have the reputation bonus of the base creature. If they are recognized, it is as the base creature and not as an anthropophage.

Ability Scores: An anthropophage has the Dexterity score of the base creature, maximum 10. It has the Intelligence score of the base creature, maximum 3, and it has the Charisma score of the base creature, maximum 6. Like all undead, it has no Constitution score.

Occupation: An anthropophage retains the base creature's starting occupation. Obviously anthropophagi don't hold down jobs, but keeping this helps track skill point expenditures.

Skills: The anthropophage loses all Intelligence- and Charisma-based skills. They also lose all Wisdom-based skills with the exceptions of Listen and Spot. Anthropophagi have no ability to communicate, so they lose all ability to read, speak, or write languages. They use the base creature's skill totals for any remaining skills, modified by changes to ability scores and loss of feats.

Feats: Anthropophagi only gain feats based on their Hit Dice. They gain additional feats from the base creature being human, but they do not retain bonus feats from classes. They lose all the base creature's feats and replace them with feats from the following list: Multiattack, Power Attack, Improved Grapple (see below; anthropophagi ignore the prerequisites), Toughness. This list is in the order that anthropophagi gain the feats, so a formerly human anthropophage starts getting Toughness at 6 HD, and other anthropophagi start getting it at 9 HD.

Head Shots

A modern conceit for undead creatures is that they can only be killed by shots to the head. If you want to model this ability for undead in your game (including anthropophagi), we suggest the following rules.

Undead reduced to zero hit points aren't destroyed, but are effectively exhausted (move at half speed, can't run or charge, take a -6 penalty to Strength and Dexterity). Undead that suffer more than twice their hit points in damage are so hacked up as to be effectively destroyed.

When applying a template to create undead, keep a note of the Constitution score they had in life. The Constitution score drops by -2 every year and the undead is completely, finally dead when its Constitution score drops below 1.

Undead that suffer more damage than their Constitution score automatically fail their Massive Damage checks and are considered destroyed. This represents the possibility of shots to the head, without introducing a hit location chart.

If you use this variant, increase the Challenge Rating of your undead by +1.

Possessions: Anthropophagi continue wearing the clothing they had on when they reanimated. In some cases, this may include equipment worn on the body (e.g., backpacks and their contents, body armor, or pistols in holsters).

New Feat

This feat is adapted from version 3.5 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Improved Grapple

You are skilled at grappling opponents.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Brawl, Improved Grab.

Benefit: You do not provoke an attack of opportunity when you make a touch attack to start a grapple. You also gain a +4 bonus on all grapple checks, regardless of whether you stared the grapple.

Normal: Without this feat, you provoke an attack of opportunity when you make a touch attack to start a grapple.

Bonus Feat: Improved Grapple is a bonus feat for the Strong Hero, Tough Hero, and Martial Artist advanced class.

Sample Anthropophagi

Low-Level Anthropophage (former mechanic): CR2; Medium-size undead; HD 2d12; hp 13; Mas—; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (-1 Dex, +1 Strong, +2 natural armor); BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+3 bite plus wounding); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+2 bite plus wounding) and +1 melee (1d6+2, 2 slams); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ 60 ft. blindsight, create spawn, improved grab, infection (DC 16), limited lifespan, scent, undead, variant cold effect, wounding; AL none; SV Fort —, Ref –1, Will +2l AP 0; Rep +1; Str 14, Dex 8, Con—, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Occupation: Blue collar (class skills: Drive, Intimidate).

Skills: Drive +1.

Feats: Multiattack, Power Attack.

Ogre Anthropophage: CR 3; Large undead; HD 4d12; hp 26; Mas—; Init –1; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 13, touch 8, flat-footed 13 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +5 natural); BAB +3; Grap +12; Atk +8 melee (1d8+7 bite plus wounding); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+5 bite plus wounding) and +6 melee (1d8+5, 2 slams); FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SQ 60 ft. blindsight, create spawn, improved grab, infection (DC 17), limited lifespan, scent, undead, variant cold effect, wounding; AL none; SV Fort—, Ref +0, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 21, Dex 8, Con—, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +4, Listen +2, Spot +2.

Feats: Multiattack, Power Attack.

High-Level Anthropophage (former police officer): CR 10; Medium-size undead; HD 10d12+3; hp 68; Mas—; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; Defense 21, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+0 Dex, +3 Strong, +3 Dedicated, +2 natural armor, +3 special response vest [non-proficient]); BAB +8; Grap +11; Atk +11 melee (1d6+4 bite plus wounding); Full Atk +11 melee (1d6+3 bite plus wounding) and +9 melee (1d6+3, 2 slams); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ 60 ft. blindsight, create spawn, improved grab, infection (DC 20), limited lifespan, scent, undead, variant cold effect, wounding; AL none; SV Fort—, Ref +2, Will +6; AP 0; Rep +3; Str 16, Dex 10, Con—, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Occupation: Law enforcement (class skills: Drive, Intimidate).

Skills: Climb +0*, Drive +10, Spot +6, Swim +4. *Includes –6 penalty for special response vest.

Feats: Improved Grab, Improved Grapple, Multiattack, Power Attack, Toughness.

Adventure Seed

Here's a short adventure seed that incorporates anthropophagi into games set in the modern era.

The Setup

Frank LeStrae lived near Altus, Oklahoma. He worked for various companies bringing natural gas up from the Anadarko Basin starting when he was 16. Most recently he worked for the Arkansas-Louisiana Gas Company. He married his high school sweetheart, Edith, when they were 18. He served in the United States Navy during the Vietnam War. They had two sons, Greg and Andrew. Frank was checking a well-head a few days ago when he was attacked and killed by a wild animal.

Except it wasn't a wild animal, it was an anthropophage escaped from an experimental facility deep beneath a military base across the state border in Texas. His distraught widow and his two adult sons were present in the funeral home when Frank re-animated. Edith convinced the boys that their father hadn't really died, and was confused and upset because he woke from his "comer" in a funeral home. They subdued the anthropophage, but not before it bit the funeral home director and Andrew. They took it back to Edith's home and confined it in the storm cellar.

What happens next is an outbreak. Andrew LeStrae and the funeral director, Edward Simkowicz, die within twenty-fours of being bitten, in Altus' only hospital. When they reanimate, they infect several other people who also die and reanimate. The population (21,447 in the year 2000), and tourists visiting the Quartz Mountain State Park, Wichita Mountain Wildlife Refuge, and the Red River area, are now at risk.

The "men in black" came to Altus AFB and recaptured the escaped anthropophage without incident (they confined it in a cage in a specially guarded hangar on the base), but didn't connect it with the attack on Frank LeStrae. Even when they

become aware of the spreading ring of vicious "animal" attacks around the hospital, they have no reason to connect them with Frank's death. They use draconian measures to contain the outbreak, spreading a story about an unidentified disease, blockading the roads, and sending patrols to hunt for "vectors." Even though they know the real threat, they aren't immune to X-UGR, and even some of them become infected.

Involving the Heroes

Heroes could get involved for any number of reasons.

- Department-7: However you define Department-7 in your game, it can assign heroes to investigate the cordon of silence around Altus. This is a good introduction for any heroes of any level.
- The Center for Disease Control (CDC): The Air Force is stalling and misdirecting the CDC, but its Atlanta headquarters is less than a thousand miles away and could easily dispatch an investigatory team when it loses patience with the lack of interagency communication. A team of heroes, of any level, composed of scientists and investigators, is a good fit for a CDC introduction to this situation.
- Local Law Enforcement: Whether the Altus PD, the Jackson County Sheriff's Department, or the Oklahoma State Police, law enforcement is going to get pretty angry when the Air Force takes over. This is an excellent hook for heroes with military or law-enforcement training and low- to middle-levels.
- Air Force: The United States Air Force is made up of much, much more than just pilots. The 97th Air Mobility Wing, stationed at Altus AFB, includes air traffic controllers, medical personnel, security specialists, mechanics, technicians, and more. Not all of them know the truth about what's happening in town, and don't understand why the town is off-limits. They resent these plainclothes operatives from Texas just showing up and taking over their base. They have friends and loved ones in Altus and want to check on them. This is a good hook for almost any kind of hero of any level.
- Residents and Tourists: Even a single anthropophage is a significant threat to a 1st-level hero, but if you manage encounters carefully (and if heroes are willing to spend a lot of time running away from danger), this is a good hook for that moment when ordinary people become heroes.

- Arkansas-Louisiana Gas Company: The Anadarko Basin is one of the largest natural gas reserves in North America. The ALGC will not be happy with any interference with its operations, which this outbreak and the government intervention certainly are. They could hire investigators, mercenaries, or (if you want to model the most humanitarian side of the company) medical personnel. This is a good hook for mid-level heroes.

Developments

For low-level heroes, this adventure is all about survival. Getting information about what's really going in Altus will quickly become secondary to getting on the far side of the security cordon.

For mid-level heroes, this adventure should be about rescuing survivors in Altus and getting as many as possible to safety. Safety might mean the top of a tall building (after destroying all the stairs and fire escapes), a reinforced storm cellar, a church, or it might mean the Air Force (if not the men in black).

For high-level heroes, this adventure is all about ending the threat. Regardless of the number of anthropophagi, high-level heroes should be shooting them, hacking them up, and exploding them. Of the three levels of heroes, the high-level ones should be most interested in the elusive "patient zero," Frank LeStrae. Frank is still in that storm cellar, and occasionally escapes, starting outbreaks all over again…

A campaign could start in Altus, or have its direction changed by it. After Altus, it is about staying out of the government's clutches while trying to alert the world to the anthropophage threat. As heroes advance in levels, they become more involved in defending others from outbreaks and eliminating the sources of infection no matter how secure the installation that contains them.

Anthropophagi

The low-level anthropophage sample presented above is ideal for Frank LeStrae. Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* presents many ordinary archetypes appropriate for this adventure, including thugs, mechanics, police officers, gang leaders, gang members, criminals, taxi drivers, drug dealers, crime lab technicians, politicians, and reporters. You can use terrorists to represent the personnel at Altus AFB. *Menace Manual*, however, provides numerous additional archetypes that can more accurately represent the people of Altus, Altus AFB, and Jackson County.

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