

SILVER
BRANCH
GAMES

The Book of Bewildering Beasts



*Questers
of the Middle Realms*

Questers of the Middle Realms

The Book of Bewildering Beasts

Written and designed by Tim Gray.

PDQ System by Chad Underkoffler, Atomic Sock Monkey Press (www.atomicsockmonkey.com), used under licence.

Art: Front cover art by Eastern Raider Games. Most interior artwork copyright Octavirate Entertainment, used with permission. Some artwork copyright Louis Porter, Jr. Design. Some artwork copyright Dover Publications. Some artwork copyright V Shane.

© 2006 Tim Gray.

The **Prose Descriptive Qualities (PDQ) System** has been designed for evocative simplicity, speed, and flexibility in play. Three levels of resolution, suitable for any type of situation.

The **PDQ System** is used under license from Chad Underkoffler; the following materials are not necessarily endorsed in any way by Chad Underkoffler, nor is he in any way responsible for the content of these materials unless specifically credited.

www.silverbranch.co.uk

Contents

Reference	3
Revised Creature Qualities	3
Targeted damage	4
Monster Gazetteer	5
Creature Types	6
Creatures	8
Animal Demon	8
Aphid Golem	8
Dread Monkey	9
Dread Rabbit	9
Elemental	9
Empyrean Owl	10
Flesh Golem	10
Floating Fungus	11
Fomorian	11
Gargoyle	12
Ghost	12
Giant Scorpion	13
Gibbonewt	13
Glashtig	14
Globulus	14
Groundhawk	15
Hopping Corpse	15
Imp	16
Jack o'Spines	16
Kappa	16
Kobold	17
Kraken	17
Lantern Man	18
Manticore	19
Merfolk	19
Mildew Monster	20
Mummy	20
Night Rider	21
Plap Strider	21
Roc	22
Sensorius	22
Shade	23
Shark	23
Spriggan	23
Terror Lizard	24
Tremor Worm	24
Troll	25
Vampire	25
Water-Leaper	26
Wendigo	27
Werealbatross	27
Widderwight	27
Yeti	28
Zerigoz	28



Welcome!

Whether you're a *Questers of the Middle Realms* GM or an aficionado of another fantasy roleplaying game looking for interesting monster ideas, *The Book of Bewildering Beasts* has something for you!

It's a compilation of 44 monster write-ups. They were originally released in the mini-supplements *Ten Bewildering Beasts* vols 1-4 (number 4 was a special Halloween release with 13 beasties, and I've added a little extra for BBB). They've been packaged up with an expanded list of Qualities that crop up frequently, and a list of what monsters you might find where to help with adventure planning. A few have been tweaked slightly to remove errors and unintentional confusion. As always, remember that individuals can differ from the standard stats for their species - do customise to suit.

The lands of Median host a multitude of strange and fearsome creatures, of which this is only a sampling. Vaults and vermin await!

Tim Gray
Silver Branch Games

Reference

Revised Creature Qualities

As the *Bewildering Beasts* series progressed, a number of new common creature Qualities surfaced. This section gives you a one-stop reference by reprinting the common Qualities from the QMR rulebook alongside the new ones (which are Aversion*, Blood Hunger, Dweller, Evil, Magic Resistance*, Pack Hunter, Plant, Shocking Appearance). Some of the rulebook's creature write-ups could be tweaked accordingly (for instance the Faery and Wercreatures can now have Aversion to Iron and Silver respectively).

Arcane Resistance (specify) – near-immunity to one particular type of harm, like heat, cold, poison or strong cheeses. Ordinary “background” occurrences of the harm won’t bother the creature at all. Against those produced by key characters it adds its Target Number to resistance rather than its MOD, and if any damage is taken it’s as Failure Ranks.

Aversion (specify)* - with this Weakness something (e.g. fire, iron, garlic) is inimical to the creature. It can repulse, penalising the creature with the Poor [-2] MOD in active attempts to drive it back. In attacks it causes damage, bypassing Arcane defences and applying MOD to resistance. Deliberately touching an aversion object gives 1 Damage Rank.

Blood Hunger - with this Weakness a creature with *Energy Drain** that has no points in its energy pool is beset by hunger, becoming obsessed by the blood in those around it and suffering the [-2] if it needs to resist feeding. That Energy pool reduces by 1 point per scene, or thereabouts; they can’t go more than a day or two without a snackette. Whether they want to depends on the individual; many enjoy hunting whenever they can.

Claws, Teeth, Stinger, etc – some nasty sharp or pointy appendage(s) that can be used to attack; Rank reflects degree of nastiness.

Darksense – the ability to get around without any light at all. The assumption is that it gives something kind of like a visual image, even if it works by ultrasound or heat detection or just plain magic, though this is probably less detailed than ordinary sight.

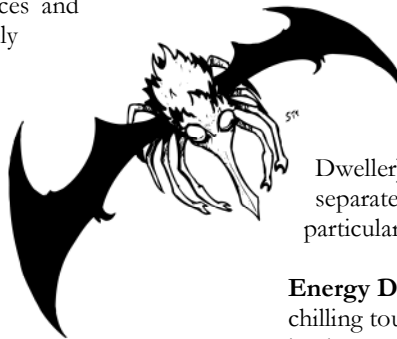
Damage Resistance* - increased resilience against all types of mundane physical harm, adding its MOD to a wide spectrum of rolls. It is bypassed by direct magical effects, which includes enchanted objects but not physical phenomena conjured by magic. There are often other specific substances or influences that can bypass it.

Dead* – found in creatures like zombies and vampires, acts as Arcane Resistance (adds TN, not MOD) against various kinds of effect that really only work on living subjects, including: death magic, life drain, most poisons and diseases, sleep and pain. The MOD can be used to oppose straightforward physical trauma. (It does quite a lot for one ability, but you do have to form close personal relationships with worms.)

(Terrain) Dweller - many creatures are particularly adapted to their environment and skilled in surviving there. This Quality is specified especially when that habitat has difficult conditions. Possible versions include Desert Dweller, Jungle Dweller, Ice Dweller, Ocean Dweller. It covers both the skills to find food, shelter, etc. and resistance to environmental hazards like the heat of the desert. It’s most commonly used for natural animals, as an aid to quick-and-dirty descriptions (size, type, habitat), often at Good Rank; less commonly for supernatural monsters (but you could use it for any character, with variants like City Dweller). Of course you can choose to specify separate Qualities instead (or as well if it’s particularly good at one aspect).

Energy Drain* – this can take various forms, like a chilling touch or blood drain. The victim takes damage in the usual way, and the user recovers that same number of Ranks of damage. If the user hasn’t lost that many Ranks, the surplus goes into a pool of up to 10 points that can be spent rather like Fortune to give upshifts (one per action).

Enhanced Sense (specify) – gives an unusual sense (see Darksense above), or one that covers an unusual range (hearing ultrasonics), or one that’s unusually sensitive (tracking by scent). Give it a name to reflect



Targeted damage

Normally, the player of a character that takes damage has free choice of which Qualities lose Ranks. However, some effects target a particular broad type of Quality, like “strength” or “perception”. Ranks of damage must be taken first on any Qualities of that type. If they are reduced to Poor, any remaining damage can be allocated freely. (If the damage would generate a Story Hook, the player can use either the first targeted Quality or the first one they chose freely.)

If the character has no specified Qualities of that type, the first Rank of damage gives them a suitable temporary Poor Quality agreed between player and GM, and remaining damage is applied normally. For instance, if Strength is targeted you could gain “Weak as a kitten”. These temporary Weaknesses disappear when they heal.

what it does. This works like any other Quality, but the more Arcane versions might allow rolls that can’t normally be attempted. Sometimes sense Qualities stack up, like Keen Senses, Good Eyesight and Distance Vision.

Evil - a paired Strength and Weakness. Makes the creature more effective at things that demonstrate its nastiness, hooks it in to the evil social structure, and makes it susceptible to some metaphysical stuff.

Flight – the ability to move through the air, with or without wings. Rank gives speed and manoeuvrability.

Incorporeal* – lacking physical substance, like ghosts. It acts as Arcane Resistance against all ordinary physical attacks. It doesn’t work against direct effects of magic (as opposed to physical effects produced by it). Against physical attacks carrying a magical charge (enchanted swords etc.) it just uses MOD. Incorporeal creatures can’t make ordinary physical attacks, but often have some Arcane ability like Chilling Touch that does damage on an apparent physical attack. They can pass through solid objects, are untroubled by gravity and don’t need to breathe. The MOD can be added to tasks like stealth.

Magic Resistance* - adds MOD to resist the effects of any magic cast directly on the creature. It doesn’t work against indirect effects, e.g. physical phenomena created by magic, like fireballs and mutant chimpanzees.

Night Vision - the ability to see normally in low light conditions, though not total darkness.

Pack Hunter - adds on to aggression, courage, initiative and tactics when the creature attacks in a group of at least three.

Plant - pain and trauma don’t affect it as they would an animal. MOD resists physical blows, but not heat or cold. Resists effects designed specifically for animal life with its TN - e.g. poison, sleep, mind control, magic affecting the body.

Poison – there are many types. In most cases poison effects can only be healed within the scene by an agency targeted specifically at poisons, e.g. a Cure Poison spell or potion. The effect of a poison lasts “a while”, which will often count as continuing danger for healing purposes for the next scene or two. The onset period of fantasy poisons is usually “turn” (after everyone’s acted) or “scene” (end of this or early in next).

† Damage poisons - just does another lot of straightforward damage, opposed by toughness.

† Faculty poisons - target a particular Quality theme. These are phrased generally and damage is applied to whatever the victim has that seems appropriate. A “strength” one might do all its damage to Strength, Built Like a Brick Outhouse and such, while a “perception” one could damage Acute Hearing or Night Vision. Abilities won’t drop below Poor this way. If the victim has no applicable Quality they gain a new one at Poor, which disappears again when they recover.

† Condition poisons - resist the poison’s TN or suffer some condition, e.g. paralysis or blindness.

Regeneration – the creature heals very rapidly, regaining MOD damage ranks at the end of each round (Average counts as 1). There are often certain types of harm the regeneration can’t heal, for instance fire.

Shocking Appearance - when the creature is first encountered this Rank must be resisted by mental fortitude, taking the difference as Failure Ranks. (A complicated situation is suggested.)

Swarm - when a large group of small creatures acts as a single unit it becomes a greater threat. Qualities are those of the individual, but Swarm replaces size (it can be Average). It’s based on weight of numbers, good for resisting all physical attacks and splitting attacks.

Monster Gazetteer

This lists geographical areas, indicating creatures that are particularly linked with them to help you supply carnivorous scenery as your adventurers travel. (Many creatures can be found outside the listed areas, just less often, so do check the full write-up.)

The monster's name is followed by a simple code indicating where its write-up first appeared. (QMR) indicates the rulebook. (BB1), (BB2), etc. indicate the volumes of *Ten Bewildering Beasts*, which are now collected in this book.

Anywhere

Bear (QMR), Bloodbat (QMR - scenario), Demon (QMR), Dragon (QMR), Elemental (BB4), Empyrean Owl (BB3), Flesh Golem (BB4), Ghost (BB4), Gibbonewt (BB2), Globulus (BB1), Goblin (QMR), Imp (BB3), Lantern Man (BB4), Mildew Monster (BB1), Night Rider (BB4), Rat (QMR), Sensorius (BB4), Shade (BB1), Troll (BB1), Wereplatypus (QMR), Zombie (QMR)

Ar-Karap Desert

Bugra (QMR), Roc (BB2), Giant Scorpion (BB2), Jack o'Spines (BB2), Mummy (BB1), Tremor Worm (BB1), Zerigoz (BBB)

Challenger Hold

Terror Lizard (BB3)

Godsmile Mountains

Gnome (QMR), Roc (BB2)

Helongor

Dread Rabbit (BB3), Giant Weasel (QMR), Groundhawk (BB3), Widderwight (BB4)

Kadink

Floating Fungus (BB3), Swamp Shambler (QMR), Water-Leaper (BB4)

League of Groth

Vampire (BB1)

Logrin

Faery (QMR), Fomorian (BB3), Glashtig (BB4), Spriggan (BB2), Water-Leaper (BB4)

Murklemere

Squirtle (QMR)

Norwast

Tundra Cats (QMR), Wendigo (BB4), Wizen (QMR), Yeti (BB2)

Orthedia

Amphisbaena (QMR), Gargoyle (BB2), Gryphon (QMR), Manticore (BB2), Spriggan (BB2)

Plains of Plap

Giant Scorpion (BB2), Plap Strider (BB2), Zerigoz (BBB)

Scata

Gargoyle (BB2), Glashtig (BB4), Kobold (BB4), Spriggan (BB2), Vampire (BB1), Water-Leaper (BB4)

The Snaggles

Giant Scorpion (BB2), Jack o'Spines (BB2), Terror Lizard (BB3), Zerigoz (BBB)

The Swarm/Plunder Port

Dread Monkey (BB3), Jelly Corsairs (QMR), Terror Lizard (BB3)

Tek Wei

Animal Demon (BB1), Hopping Corpse (BB2), Jeopard (QMR), Kappa (BB3), Weremantis (QMR)

Valharia

Fomorian (BB3), Tremor Worm (BB1), Wendigo (BB4), Yeti (BB2)

Wochilat

Giant Scorpion (BB2), Jeopard (QMR), Mummy (BB1), Roc (BB2), Terror Lizard (BB3), Weremantis (QMR)

Yrisiri Forest

Aphid Golem (BB1), Floating Fungus (BB3)

Ocean

Fomorian (BB3), Jelly Corsairs (QMR), Kraken (BB3), Merfolk (BB4), Shark (BB1), Werealbatross (BB4)



Creature types

One sometimes finds special versions of creatures in certain standard categories, usually because they've been souped up by some god or spellcaster, but sometimes because they've just grown that way. These work as paired Qualities like the races do, giving a Strength and a Weakness that kick in for different situations. Three common ones appear below - others are possible. One thing this does is to let you stat monsters very simply and quickly (e.g. Demonic Tiger = Good Large, Expert Predator, Good Nether Creature, Poor Large, Poor Nether Creature, possibly with some trimmings like claws and keen senses), and because it keeps the overall number of Quality Ranks down it's very suitable for creatures that should be overcome quickly.

(Note: Nether and Empyrean may be combined with Dread, e.g. a Dread Nether Budgerigar, but not with each other.)

Dread Creature

The most common and the most often created by mortals. These are creatures whose wild essence has been drawn out, making them bigger, tougher and fiercer, often growing dramatic bony spiky bits. Dread animals encountered tend to be those that are normally inoffensive, or those that are normally dangerous enough to make this overkill.

† *Create Dread Creature.* This spell transforms an animal, giving it the Dread Creature Quality at the spell's Rank (plus corresponding Weakness). For Average just give a Rank in one Strength from the type, with purely cosmetic alterations.

Strengths

MOD:

- † **Tough.** Helps in resisting physical injuries and environmental damage.
- † **Fierce.** Intimidation, resisting control, etc.
- † **Spiky.** Anything having close contact with this creature, e.g. constriction, must resist the Dread Quality or take a Damage Rank.

Innate:

- † **Bigger.** Each Rank raises the creature's size by one level. Work out what size it actually is.

Weaknesses

MOD:

- † **Bit Mad.** Enhanced rage tends to cloud judgment, especially faced with prey or enemies.

Innate:

- † **Bigger.** The negative Quality for its actual size.

Empyrean Creature

These are servants of the gods, imbued with the energies of the high planes where they dwell. These are the least likely to be created by mortal agency, but priests might be able to summon them. They often have human-level intelligence, and sometimes the power of speech. Many have one or two magical abilities bestowed by their patron (but cast using innate fatigue.)



Strengths

MOD:

- ✦ **Damage Resistance***. Not vs fire.
- ✦ **Magic Resistance***.
- ✦ **Darksense**.
- ✦ **Glorious**. Charisma, glowing auras, metallic trim, or whatever: they impress mortals.

Downshift:

- ✦ **Empyrean Smite**. Add TN rather than MOD to one attack against an Evil or Nether creature.

Weaknesses

MOD:

- ✦ **Prissy**. They have a tendency to be formal, proper and prudish. Even if they can be persuaded to tolerate or be involved in something dodgy or salacious (which the Strength would resist) they won't be very good at it. (Even the gods can find this irritating.)
- ✦ **Obvious**. Hard to conceal its presence or nature.

Nether Creature

These are imbued with the demonic energies of the Nether Realms, making them darker and tougher. (Azanüt and his servants tap into this too.) They often have human-level intelligence, and sometimes the power of speech. Some have one or two demonic magical abilities (cast using innate fatigue), but they're just as likely to have physical enhancements.

Strengths

MOD:

- ✦ **Damage Resistance***. Not vs electricity.
- ✦ **Magic Resistance***.

Favoured Empyrean beasts

The gods have a variety of servants who they can despatch or allow to be summoned by the faithful, and among these are animals of the Empyrean creature type. Each god generally uses just one or two kinds of animal. Often it's an obvious choice - for instance, Slobop the Frog God uses the fearsome Empyrean Frogs - and sometimes it's a beast with symbolic ties to the god's nature. Here are the main favoured types for the Greater Gods. (Where there's more than one, the selection is on the kind of task and the area it's in, e.g. bears would be more commonly sent to the north.)

- ✦ Elal: eagle, bear
- ✦ Eaki: spider, fox
- ✦ Ashtir: boar, lion
- ✦ Shamutu: falcon
- ✦ Nansin: owl
- ✦ Ninmuzi: bull, serpent

- ✦ **Darksense**.

- ✦ **Scary**. They tend to be fearsome, shadowy and/or twisted.

Downshift:

- ✦ **Nether Smite**. Add TN rather than MOD to one attack against Good or Empyrean creatures.

Weaknesses

- ✦ **Nasty**. They bite a man when he's down and help old ladies into the road when a wagon's coming. Nether resists being persuaded to be polite or charitable, and penalises attempts to make people like them.
- ✦ **Light-sensitive**. Penalty to resist strong light.

Creatures

Animal Demons

These beings are found almost exclusively in Tek Wei. They're often functionaries of the celestial bureaucracy there, or byproducts of the complicated system of soul recycling. They are animal spirits incarnated in human form, or people demoted to animal-human hybrids, or some such. Despite their name they are not all evil - though some certainly are. Elements of their appearance and abilities come from the animal type, and they seem to be very long-lived. They spend their days in their chosen pursuit, like delivering messages for the gods or attacking travellers in the mountains.

As there are so many possible animal types, here's a toolkit approach that should work in most cases. (This is just for innate Qualities: if they have trained ones as well, like being a good fighter, add those on. That might include Arcane abilities and extra Weaknesses.)

- † Good [+2] in one of the creature Types: Grazer, Scavenger or Predator.
- † 2 Ranks among the sorts of abilities that are "attributes" in other systems: broad headings for innate stuff, mostly covered by Strength, Agility, Quickness, Endurance, Intelligence, Will, Charisma and Awareness. These are spread out as Goods more often than focused. Bear in mind that the Types overlap with these.
- † 2 ranks in special abilities associated with the animal. Many have an Enhanced Sense, e.g. Track By Scent for a dog. Others might be Night Vision for an owl or Poisonous Bite for a snake.
- † 1 extra Rank to spend on any of the above.
- † One Poor [-2] Weakness associated with the animal type, either physical or personality. For instance a cat might have Obsessed About Appearance. These should be played up a lot. If you wish, take an extra Weakness and get an extra Rank to spend on any of the above Strengths.

Example: Pig Demon

He's a stout fellow with a flattened nose and slightly pointed ears, very fond of his creature comforts. Strengths: Good [+2] Scavenger, Good [+2] Strength, Good [+2] Endurance, Good [+2] Sensitive Smell, Good [+2] Resist Toxins, Good [+2] Indulge Appetites Weakness: Poor [-2] Animal Appetites (always running after food and pretty ladies)



Aphid Golem

These are sorcerous constructs created by the elves of Yirisriel Forest. A single leaf is placed under strong enchantments that preserve it from harm and decay, and can then be carried in a sealed container until needed. When activated by its creator, it summons thousands of greenfly from the surrounding area to form a mass vaguely resembling a human body that can move and act as a single entity, obeying simple commands from its master. They are sometimes found in a "standby" state, working on whatever commands they were last given. Individual aphids come and go to feed and whatever, and the mass draws in new ones to maintain itself as long as it's in a suitable area.

In fact these constructs have limited utility, because they're just so messy. They can fetch and carry things, but those will probably end up a bit sticky. They're best used as guards against fastidious intruders - which works for elves - and the portability is a bonus.

Strengths: Master [+6] Aphid Body, Good [+2] Strong, Average [0] Shocking Appearance, Good [+2] Supersize*, Average [0] Regeneration, Expert [+4] Arcane Resistance - most mental effects

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Independent Thought, Poor [-2] Sugar Craving, Poor [-2] Obedient to Ants

- † *Aphid Body*: MOD resists damage from physical blows, as they just damage the component insects, but doesn't resist energy. If an unarmed attack by the creature does damage to a character, the first damage Rank targets Qualities relating to appearance and socialising if they have any, as bits of squished greenfly cover their hair, skin and

clothes. The player decides which such Qualities take the hit, and remaining damage Ranks are allocated normally. Something similar happens when the creature is damaged by a hand-to-hand attack: the attacker takes one Failure Rank (this cleans off easier) to a social/appearance Quality. (Squishing Ranks don't cause a zero-out unless all other Qualities are Poor.) Any attack causing serious damage - more than this Quality's current TN - has reduced aphid numbers enough to reduce size one level, and if it reaches Master [+6] Small the enchantment switches off.

- † *Supersize*: some aphid golems have extra magic enabling them to grow by boosting the aphids' already prodigious ability to produce live young asexually. In game terms, the golem burns a Rank of this Quality to gain a size level. It takes a few moments, though - two full rounds in which it can't initiate other action - so is better done outside conflict rounds.

Dread Monkey

The islands of The Swarm have a rich and varied tapestry of wildlife (not least because of the thaumaturgic colleges ~~exiled~~ based there). Monkeys of various kinds are quite common. There are also a fair number of Dread Monkeys, both loners and small groups. (There are signs that individuals that had different species before the change get absorbed into the population and contribute to the hybridised mix.) They are 2-3ft high, with shaggy fur of varying colouration, a sturdy body, long limbs, and a somewhat human-like face with a slight snout and large teeth. They often grow spikes on the brow ridges, at the elbows and on the back. They are curious and bold, and will certainly investigate new things like a camp and take a few souvenirs, but if confronted will often turn aggressive rather than fleeing.

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Good [+2] Scavenger, Good [+2] Dread Creature, Good [+2] Agile, Good [+2] Climbing and Swinging, Good [+2] Stealth, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Curious

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Dread Creature, Poor [-2] Curious

Dread Rabbit

These are bigger, tougher versions of ordinary rabbits, with an aggressive attitude. They often have bony spikes on their backs. They might be encountered anywhere as individuals or small groups, but Helongor

in particular has breeding colonies. (It also has ordinary rabbits, who tend to make sure there's at least one significant land feature between them and their cousins.)

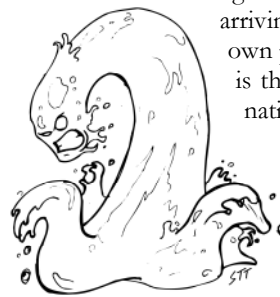
The Helongorim call them Turnfoots, due to the holes and unstable ground caused by their aggressive (some might say demented) burrowing, making their territory hazardous to man and weasel alike. There's also the problem that a Dread Rabbit will attack a lone traveller if it's feeling its oats or has a couple of friends. They won't generally bother a giant weasel unless there's at least half a dozen of them. The weasels quite like the challenge of hunting them, finding them gamey and crunchy; they're also preyed upon by groundhawks (though with some caution, rarely diving into groups).

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Expert [+4] Grazer, Good [+2] Dread Creature, Good [+2] Gnawing Teeth, Expert [+4] Sensitive Hearing, Good [+2] Digging, Good [+2] Jumping

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Dread Creature, Poor [-2] Intellect

Elementals

These are creatures embodying the primal elements of nature. They're usually encountered as the result of magical summoning, rather than arriving in the world under their own power. The general consensus is that they are spirit creatures native to some other plane who form a body from the elemental substances where they arrive, but maybe they wear a similar form at home. Perhaps each element has its own dimension, or perhaps they are all aspects of a single world. Scholars, as is their wont, have a plethora of theories and schemas, few of which manage to be both sane and relevant.



Anyway, once elementals arrive in the Middle Realms they perform services for friendly or coercive spellcasters, or follow their own natures and allegiances. They do have positive and negative relationships with various gods, and some priests are granted the ability to call them. An elemental usually returns to whence it came after completing its task.

The commonest types are fire, water, air and earth. Others are possible, e.g. smoke, mud, ice. In Tek Wei metaphysics the "standard" elements are fire, water, earth, metal and wood.

Elementals are statted up in kit form - each type follows a similar structure and just needs a bit of detailing. Give it an overall power level from Average to Master: that sets its Rank for Body of (Element), and its size from Good [+2] Small to Expert [+4] Large.

Strengths: Size Quality (see above), [Rank] Body of (Element), Elemental Qualities (see below), Good [+2] Move Through Element

Weaknesses: Size Quality (see above), Poor [-2] Body of (Element), Poor [-2] (Elemental Quality)

† *Body of (Element):* covers all the benefits of the creature physically being composed of an elemental substance. It starts at Average



for a particularly weak creature, and goes up. For instance an earth elemental could use it for damaging physical attacks and armour. In fact most types can use it to resist physical damage, due to being tough, amorphous, insubstantial, etc. It also gives Arcane Resistance to harm that depends on being fleshy with a nervous system (like poison or sleep), and against its own

element (e.g. a fire elemental can walk through flames and is unlikely to be hurt by fire spells). However, this Quality is paired with a Weakness, because on some occasions being made of (stuff) is a liability. That could include being vulnerable to certain types of attack, and even trigger environmental damage. For instance an ice elemental's body can turn blades, but it's vulnerable to heat; a smoke elemental is easily blown away.

† *Elemental Qualities:* the elemental's nature includes certain physical, mental and personality Strengths and Weaknesses. An Average elemental gets two Good Strengths and one Poor Weakness. Further Ranks of power can increase existing Strengths or buy new ones at Good. You can individualise by making stuff up, but most follow a similar pattern:

Fire: Fast, Agile, Fierce; Hot-tempered

Water: Strong-willed, Adaptable, Intuitive; Temperamental

Air: Fast, Agile, Quick-witted; Flighty

Earth: Strong, Tough, Stolid; Slow-moving

Wood: Strong, Flexible, Passionate; Emotional

Metal: Tough, Logical, Unflappable; Pedantic

† *Move Through (Element):* all elementals can move three-dimensionally through volumes of their element, usually at the same kinds of speeds as a walking or running human.

Empyrean Owl

These creatures are the particular servants of Nansin, goddess of the moon. They act mainly as messengers and guides for her chosen heroes, but if the need arises they are fierce fighters for justice and the sanctity of the night.

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Good [+2] Predator, Good [+2] Empyrean Creature, Good [+2] Flight, Expert [+4] Silent Glide, Expert [+4] Night Vision, Good [+2] Keen Hearing, Good [+2] Unnerving Stare, Average [0] Moon Warrior's Favour*

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Empyrean Creature

† *Moon Warrior's Favour:* imbues a weapon (natural or crafted) with Nansin's power - it takes on a silvery sheen, gives an Upshift to attacks if used at night, and bypasses the Damage Resistance* of lycanthropes. (There is a brother spell from Shamutu, *Sun Warrior's Commission:* golden sheen, Upshift in the day, bypasses Dead* for damage.)

Flesh Golem

This patchwork of creature parts is assembled into a humanoid shape with pins and stitches and given a mockery of life through alchemy and magic. It's constructed as a servant, or just as an experiment. It has great strength and follows its creator's commands obediently (most of the time), but is somewhat slow and clumsy, only able to shamle around. It's also a rather off-putting sight, and smells of death and chemicals, so tends to get relegated to the second-best laboratory.

The parts involved are selected carefully, because each contributes something to the whole. If using human, er, ingredients you might look for the arms of a wrestler and the head of a scholar (though something - possibly a curse of the god Ninmuzi - causes assistants in this work to mess up the procurement with statistically improbable frequency). Most Flesh Golems are single species creations, but you can combine different species of similar size if you're good enough - perhaps getting claws for combat or good night vision. However, the essence of the, er, donor that provides benefits can also sometimes get out of



control, causing that creature's impulses to dominate the construct's actions and possibly even overcome its creator's control. For instance if you gave it an arm of a Great Green Ape it might take to swinging from trees or ceiling fixtures.

Strengths: Component Qualities (see below), Strong (components +1 Rank), Good [+2] Dead*, Expert [+4] Magic Resistance*, Good [+2] Shocking Appearance, Good [+2] Emotionless

Weaknesses: -1 Rank for the following, or close analogues - Agility, Slow Reactions, Stupid; Poor [-2] Smelly

† *Component Qualities:* for simplicity, consider the creature as 6 main bits - arms, legs, torso, head. Each bit contributes one Rank of a Quality that creature or individual might have had, added on to the baselines and each other. (For instance a smart head could counter the Stupid Weakness.) However, if a task involving that Rank rolls double 1s or double 6s, that essence dominates for a scene - or until the creature's creator can overcome the Quality's TN with force of command. (If more than one bit is involved find a way to manifest both, either in harmony or fighting each other.)

Floating Fungus

This creature looks like a mushroom or toadstool the size of an adult human. The cap is purple with yellow spots. Sometimes they're found alone; sometimes in a small group.

Unlike most fungi, which wait for dead organic matter to turn up so they can feed, this one expedites matters. It is so named for two reasons. First, if one doesn't notice the root-like tendrils on which it creeps about, it has the appearance of floating. Second, the four tentacles with which it strikes prey secrete a poison with narcotic and hallucinogenic effects. Victims tend to just lie down to watch the pretty colours and never get up again.

The floating fungus can be found in dark or shady places across the temperate regions, including underground. It's known particularly in Kadink and the Yrisiriel Forest. There is, of course, a market for the drug it secretes and, of course, the Kadinkians undertake the hazardous work of gathering it - as well as its flesh, which is accounted a gourmet item.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Plant (technically it's not a plant, but the effects are the same), Good [+2] Lashing Tentacles, Good [+2] Tentacle Poison, Expert [+4] Darksense

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Intellect, Poor [-2] Slow-moving

† *Tentacle Poison:* on a successful tentacle strike the target must also resist this faculty poison, which targets perception, clear thinking and willpower.



Fomorian

These brutish folk dwell on the Torig Isles, somewhat north-west of Logrin, and roam the northern ocean as pirates. They may be encountered on the coasts of Logrin and Valharia, perhaps on a raid or at a secret camp, and out at sea. They are skilled shipbuilders, sailors and fighters. Sometimes they are found working as hired muscle for unsavoury types.

An average Fomorian is a 7-foot humanoid, broad-built and coarse-featured. However, the entire race is subject to a chaotic body warping effect, so that each has its own strange variation on the humanoid form: for instance no feet; bloated lips in the breast and four eyes in the back; one arm, one eye, one leg. In a few cases this warping includes an Arcane power - such individuals tend to rise to high status.

In Fomorian society the strong take what they can and dominate the weak. The worship of Azanüt is socially accepted, alongside some broad-minded lesser gods. Non-divine magic is pretty much unheard of.

These stats are for a bog-standard individual.

Strengths: Good [+2] Pirate, Good [+2] Brawn, Good [+2] Resilient Constitution, Good [+2] Body Warp

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Bully, Poor [-2] Greedy, Poor [-2] Body Warp

† *Brawn:* applying muscle power over short and long hauls, and showing it off to influence others.

† *Resilient Constitution:* throwing off baleful physical influences like poison, weather and harmful magic.

† *Body Warp*: its main function is to act as Shocking Appearance, a hazard resisted by mental fortitude when the creature is first encountered in a scene. It can also add to attempts to intimidate other races. Rank can vary from Average upwards depending on how extensive the warping is. The corresponding Weakness affects social interactions with other races, though Fomorians aren't generally too bothered about that.

† *Excruciating Smalltalk*: listening to the inane and pedantic conversations of gargoyles for any length of time is a hazard resisted with mental fortitude. It causes Failure Ranks that target mental Qualities.

† *Harmed by Daylight*: the touch of daylight is inimical to these creatures, acting as Average environmental damage each round (bypassing Stone Body). If they're in contact with stone to sustain them this is Failure Ranks, but if not it's Damage Ranks (and painful).

Gargoyle

This malicious stone-like creature, presumably created by magic long ago, is a native of Scata, though it has been seen in northern Orthedia. It appears as a winged humanoid statue around 5ft tall. During the day a gargoyle is dormant: it must perch on stone by sunrise and is then motionless, hard to distinguish from any other statue and often hiding among carved stone figures on buildings. During the night it is active and flies about looking for people to terrify and kill. Sometimes gargoyles are encountered on their own, sometimes in small groups, occasionally in flocks of about a dozen.

During the day gargoyles remain aware, and everything is stored away in their crystalline brains. When not torturing victims (or when taking a break) they chat to each other about every tedious detail of the mundane to-and-fro. The gargoyles don't realise it, but to their victims this is another form of torture. Of course they do sometimes pick up useful information too, but it's a doughy soul who'll persist to get it.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Stone Body, Good [+2] Flight, Good [+2] Claws and Teeth, Good [+2] Evil, Good [+2] Night Vision, Expert [+4] Excruciating Smalltalk

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Dense, Poor [-2] Harmed by Daylight, Poor [-2] Evil

† *Stone Body*: aids in resisting most forms of harm and hardship, and with blending in against a stone background and seeming like a statue. Also resists Arcane effects designed for fleshy life-forms. Poor quality weapons will just shatter without effect.

† *Dense*: packing a lot of mass for your size can give problems for floating, jumping, etc. (Doesn't affect Flight.)



Ghost

Ghosts are a varied lot. Well, they're all spirits of the dead that have remained in the physical world, but beyond that they range from shrieking, hateful marauders to amiable old duffers who go on about the war. By their nature they're obsessive personalities to some degree. (In fact, in Bynight a woman called Silence Carnacki has set up a practice as a ghost therapist. "How's business?" "Dead." Or, "Do you see dead people?" "Of course, come right in." Heh.)

Some ghosts are merely a collection of impulses, echoes of a violent death or unfulfilled life, with varying amounts of personality. They might not even realise they're dead. Others are fully intelligent and aware, usually with a clear purpose. Ghosts almost always have an anchor that keeps them in the material world - a person, place or object that they must stay close to. Destroying the anchor might banish the ghost, but it'll probably fight tooth and nail to prevent this, and might be able to hook on to something else anyway. The safest way to get rid of a ghost is to satisfy the impulse that keeps it here, for example granddaughter is happy, revenge is achieved, message is delivered.

Strengths: Master [+6] Incorporeal*, Expert [+4] Invisible*, Master [+6] Dead*, Good [+2] Energy Drain* (chilling touch), Good [+2] occupation, Good [+2] personality trait; possible special abilities

Weaknesses: possibly Poor [-2] Obsessed, and Poor [-2] Self-Awareness or Intellect for a fragmentary spirit

Ghosts can develop special powers. The following are common, though a given spirit would probably have just one or two.

† *Impression**: convey fleeting sensory echoes of the ghost's life or death, perhaps unconsciously or as an attempt to communicate, potentially causing

Failure Ranks of fear. (Sound, smell and texture are more atmospheric than sight.)

- † *Shocking Appearance**: the ghost can drop invisibility and present itself as a scary horrible figure using this as a fear attack.
- † *Move Object**: affecting the physical world by willpower. It's like a hand with a range of about a room but Downshifted strength and coordination.
- † *Possession**: taking over the body of a living person. Only powerful ones can do this, but others might be able to use *Suggestion** to "push" a living person to do a certain task.

Giant Scorpion

These are much like normal scorpions, but man-sized to horse-sized and willing to attack almost anything. They're found in Ar-Karap, Plap, Wochilat and The Snaggles, adapting to almost any terrain. Colouration varies: black, yellow, brown and even a dull red.

They patrol their territory on the hunt or wait under a rock or buried in the sand to ambush passing victims. They attack by grabbing prey with their pincers, crushing it if possible and only bringing the venomous tail sting into play if necessary.

There are rumours of a desert tribe who conduct formal duels armed with a scorpion pincer worn like a glove. Certainly sections of carapace have been seen adapted as armour. There are also rumours of ancient individuals that have grown to truly colossal size and acquired strange mutations.

These stats are for the larger common size - adjust as necessary.

Strengths: Good [+2] Large, Good [+2] Predator, Good [+2] Pincers, Good [+2] Armour, Good [+2] Tail Sting, Good [+2] Venom, Good [+2] Scuttling, Good [+2] Lurking, Good [+2] Survivor

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Intellect

- † *Pincers*: the initial attack is usually to grab on, and if it succeeds the target must then use suitable Qualities to get free. Once grabbed, the scorpion can use its actions to crush with the pincers for straightforward damage.
- † *Tail Sting*: strikes with the wicked barbed tail.
- † *Venom*: comes into play on a successful tail strike, but is Downshifted each use. Victims failing to resist TN are paralysed (for later consumption); any margin over 5 becomes Damage Ranks.

† *Scuttling*: for moving fast or on tricky surfaces, and generally being a bit creepy to us mammals.

† *Lurking*: for hiding ready to ambush.

† *Survivor*: MOD for resisting environmental-type harm like heat, cold, toxins and even weird magical radiations. Can Downshift to shrug off such harm.

Gibbonewt

In the proud tradition of smushing random animals together...

Magi, it's often said, should get out more. Take up hobbies, meet new people. But of course they remain ensconced in their libraries and laboratories, mucking around with the Natural Order of Things. One of their pursuits is the creation of bizarre hybrid creatures, and one such is the gibbonewt.

It is a blend, as one might guess, of the gibbon from the forests of the south and the newt from the swamps and streams of the central regions. As is common with hybrid creatures, the result is both surprisingly big and surprisingly fierce. It stands around 7 feet tall, a lanky thing with smooth brown-green skin and darker spots on the back. A mane of hair frames the face, which is somewhat human-like apart from the goggling eyes and wide mouth. Its hands and feet have long, dextrous digits. Its call is a loud, damp squeak, like a wet finger drawn over glass. Gibbonewts shed their skin, and this can sometimes be found.

They spend most of their time swinging through the tree branches on their long arms, or waiting in water. When prey appears the gibbonewt shoots out its sticky, muscular tongue and draws it in to be crunched up by its sharp little teeth. They seem to have trouble realising that prey is too large for them, and will have a go at targets up to horse or bear size.

Strengths: Good [+2] Predator, Expert [+4] Agile, Good [+2] Strong, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Swinging, Good [+2] Swimming, Expert [+4] Ensnaring Tongue, Good [+2] Defensive Secretion

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Drying Out, Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Cold

† *Ensnaring Tongue*: This prehensile, sticky appendage can grab prey up to around 12 feet away. It doesn't do direct damage, but once an attack succeeds the victim must resist it to escape or avoid being pulled in to biting and rending range on the creature's next action.

† *Defensive Secretion*: When stressed, the creature can exude a white gummy fluid that emits a strong

bitter smell and irritates the skin of most creatures. Resist its Rank to avoid damage: the first 5 Ranks are Failure, but further Ranks are Damage.

Glashtig

These vampiric creatures are known mainly in northern Logrin and Scata. They seem to be attractive human women (it's unknown whether there are any males), appearing most often to young men in remote locations and enticing them with the prospect of dancing and pleasant company, but seeking only to get close enough to slash open a victim's veins and drain his blood.

Glashtigs conceal a bestial nature - their feet, normally hidden by a dress, are hooves like those of a deer or goat. They seem to have a particularly strong aversion to iron and steel - a dagger or horseshoe is said to keep them at bay - and the fact that they appear at night and are gone at daybreak suggests that they dislike the light.

It's rumoured that some members of Logrin's upper class deliberately seek out glashtigs as a rather dubious sort of extreme sport.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Attraction, Good [+2] Deceit, Good [+2] Predator, Good [+2] Strong, Good [+2] Tough, Good [+2] Quick, Good [+2] Agile, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Stealth, Good [+2] Survival, Expert [+4] Energy Drain* (drinking blood), Good [+2] Night Vision

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Light, Poor [-2] Aversion to Iron*, Poor [-2] Blood Hunger



Globulus

This is a sort of living jelly, an amorphous blob with rudimentary animal-level intelligence. Their main drive is to feed, which they do by flowing over organic matter and secreting acid to digest it. They can be found almost anywhere that's reasonably cool and damp. Obviously they lack the usual senses, but they seem to detect motion and scent/taste with their whole body.

Individuals exhibit differences that lead some scholars to think there are sub-species. Some globuluses lie around in a puddle, while others maintain a shape, such as a cube. Some wait for prey to pass nearby, while others ooze about searching for it. Most are almost transparent, but some have faint or strong colouration. Size varies quite a bit too.



"Globs" sometimes have valuable remains of past meals suspended inside them, though getting these items out can be painful. It's rumoured that some scholars, inventors or magi are attempting

to breed or create small, more intelligent and less corrosive globuluses as pets.

Strengths (core): Expert [+4] Damage Resistance*, Good [+2] Engulf, Good [+2] Acid, Good [+2] Darksense, Good [+2] Arcane Resistance* - mental effects

Strengths (optional): Good [+2] to (rarely) Expert [+4] Large, Good [+2] Hard To Spot, Good [+2] Wallcrawling, Good [+2] Pseudopod Strike

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Intelligence, Poor [-2] Slow-moving, Poor [-2] Large if applicable

† *Engulf:* the creature envelops its victim in order to consume it. This won't work on a victim larger than itself, but if the creature is larger it gets +2 per level of difference. The Engulf itself does no damage, but the victim can't do a lot until they manage to escape it. They'll also suffocate: each round, resist a Failure Ranks TN of the number of rounds you've been in there (i.e. it counts up).

† *Acid:* any contact with the creature does extra damage from its digestive acid. This dissolves organic materials very quickly (check each round, destroys items that fail to resist, e.g. with quality or Arcane properties), metal slowly (perhaps giving items a Damage Rank until repaired), and does not

affect stone. On a momentary strike the Acid MOD is just added on; if a victim is engulfed they must resist a separate Acid attack each round.

† *Wallcrawling*: the creature can move freely up walls and along ceilings.

† *Pseudopod Strike*: the creature extends part of its body to attack a nearby target. If this succeeds it grabs on, and unless the victim gets free they can't dodge a subsequent Engulf, which gets an Upshift.



Groundhawk

This raptor is native to Helongor. A typical adult has a 5ft wingspan and body length a little under 2ft, with dark brown plumage on the back and light grey on the underside. It has no particular interest in people, but there are sometimes nasty accidents when someone gets in its way, threatens its young, leaves food or small livestock lying around, catches it on a bad day...

The fishhawk of the north-western coasts is adapted for diving into the water after its prey. The groundhawk is adapted for diving into the ground after prey that hides in tunnels. The head is somewhat conical for streamlining, the sharp beak extending into a bony plate on the forehead; it has membranes to protect the eyes and the ability to close its nostrils. Its feet sport flattened digging claws, the equal of any mole or badger, on lengthened legs. When it spots prey about to duck into a hole it extends the feet to the front of the body and begins to rotate them powerfully, then dives, cutting through roots and soil to reach its victim.

There's a popular fireside story among the Weasel Riders of an unlucky fellow who wandered into the path of a groundhawk dive. Not all travellers believe that it could actually go right through a man, but they do check the sky occasionally once they've heard it.

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Expert [+4] Predator, Good [+2] Strong, Good [+2] Flight, Good [+2] Hovering, Good [+2] Diving, Expert [+4] Claws, Good [+2] Digging, Good [+2] Distance Vision, Good [+2] Sensitive Hearing

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Intellect

Hopping Corpse

This undead creature from Tek Wei is somewhere between a zombie and a vampire, a near-mindless hunter of the living. It gets its name from its distinctive way of moving: short jumps with the feet together. It's a hungry predator with the ability to track prey by breath, great strength and a touch that can kill; but a six-inch threshold at a front door keeps it out. (Foreign visitors to Tek Wei often find themselves face-down on the floor the first few times they enter a house.)

A hopping corpse can be created when a person's soul fails to leave the body at death or is called back into it. This can happen if the proper rituals and offerings are not provided, which is particularly likely if someone dies away from their home village, where people know what they liked and can come up with some reasonably convincing good things to say about them. Some practitioners of magic have the ability to shepherd hopping corpses along and can be hired to bring one back to its home, where hopefully a ceremony can put it to rest. The annual Corpse Drives see rugged spellcasters riding cross-country to round up undead from ancient battlegrounds and bring them to the cities of the south. There are also spells that can be inscribed on paper and placed on the creatures to put them to "sleep", but they become active again if the inscription is removed by foolish explorers, blown away by the wind, taken by birds as nest material, etc.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Dead*, Good [+2] Strong, Good [+2] Persistence, Expert [+4] Sense Breath*, Good [+2] Energy Drain* (touch, often by strangling), Expert [+4] Night Vision

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Dead, Poor [-2] Hopping

† *Sense Breath**: a mystical ability to sense the life-force in the breath of living creatures (more than the sound it makes). This makes it able to locate prey even when hidden, though good cover might give a Shift. Characters who know how the creature's senses work and deliberately hold their breath can oppose this with stuff to do with endurance and willpower.

† *Hopping*: the creature can't walk in the normal way but must travel using small jumps with both feet. It can manage ordinary walking speed indefinitely, but can't run or get over an obstruction more than a few inches high. (It can, however, wait still and silent till the prey comes out again.)

Imp

These little demons have more interaction with mortals than most of their brethren - they are easy to summon for spellcasters of flexible morality, and some have

them as familiars. They make good spies and co-conspirators, though they can sometimes be irritating and are, of course, obliged to tempt their “master” to evil from time to time.



An imp is a 2-foot-tall humanoid with dark red skin, a pair of horns on the head and batty wings. The barbed tail has a poisoned

sting, rarely lethal but affecting a victim’s motor skills. Imps tend to take on less savoury human characteristics over time, so most are truculent and sarcastic, with a fondness for drinking and smoking. In spite of their attitude they’re not overly brave and prefer to keep out of the way of danger.

Some imps prefer the Middle Realms to their home in the Nether Realms, and are tokenistic with the evil and the tempting in order to maintain contractual requirements without getting themselves thrown out. Others are more evangelical about the cause, taking every opportunity to spread pain and corruption.

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Good [+2] Evil, Good [+2] Spy, Good [+2] Agile, Good [+2] Flight, Average [0] Tail Sting, Good [+2] Tail Poison, Good [+2] Attitude, Good [+2] Darksense, Good [+2] Arcane Resistance (Fire), Good [+2] Limited Shapeshift*, Average [0] Sense Good*, Average [0] Sense Magic*

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Evil, Poor [-2] Self-preservation

† *Tail Poison:* a faculty poison targeting Qualities of movement and coordination on a successful tail strike.

† *Limited Shapeshift*:* the creature can turn itself into one specified form of broadly similar size. (This is usually an animal like a cat, rat or crow, but imps have been known to appear as children, books, carpet bags...) This is innate magic requiring a fatigue check.

Jack o’Spines

These are cactus people, found in the Snaggles and sometimes in the Ar-Karap Desert. From a distance they can be mistaken for a large ordinary cactus with two outstretched “arms”. Most of their time is spent standing still and soaking up the sun, but the lower stem is actually split into two sturdy “legs” on which they can get about, albeit a little clumsily. There are two dark patches that serve as eyes; a mouth, into which they occasionally shovel earth and gravel for minerals, and which is capable of a very limited range of grunts; and crude mitten-like hands. Most are a bit larger than human size, but juveniles are smaller and mature ones can grow to Good [+2] Large. They seem to have some silent way of communicating with each other.

“Jack o’Spines” is the name given to them by the folk of the Snaggles. They are not malevolent or predatory, but are dangerous when provoked - for instance by intrusions in their territory (respectful behaviour can minimise this), damage to their environment or harm inflicted on members of their kind by people thinking they’re just plants.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Plant, Good [+2] Strong, Expert [+4] Spines, Good [+2] Plant Camouflage, Expert [+4] Desert Dweller, Good [+2] Grumpy

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Intellect, Poor [-2] Slow-moving, Poor [-2] Damp Rot

† *Spines:* close contact with a Jack is an uncomfortable experience. This Quality adds to its unarmed attacks. It also adds to defence against unarmed attacks, as the attacker tries to land a blow past the spines, and if the attack is defeated the attacker takes 1 Damage Rank unless they have armour-type Qualities at least as high as the Spines.

† *Damp Rot:* penalty to resist water-based attacks. Also, being substantially immersed in water can cause environmental damage: Rank Average, can only actually take damage once per scene, though can be tested multiple times till it takes effect. (For instance, a knowledgeable group attacked by one might empty all their water skins on it.)

Kappa

This peculiar creature of Tek Wei’s rivers and lakes is a child-sized humanoid with features reminiscent of monkey and frog. It has yellow-green scaly skin, a shell like a tortoise’s on its back, webbed hands and feet, an apelike face and a faint fishy smell.

The most unusual feature, though is a cavity or depression in the top of the head, ringed with scraggly hair and filled with water. This liquid is the source of the creature's extraordinary strength. Unfortunately the creature has a strong sense of etiquette, so if someone bows to it the kappa reciprocates, spilling the water and leaving it seriously weakened. (Run this as a contest to see how convincing the bow is. By the way, drinking the water from a kappa's head has no special effects beyond an Average digestive upset.) The same principles prevent it from breaking its word, and sometimes people gain its aid through trickery. Kappa are also afraid of fire.

Kappa are troublemakers, with behaviour ranging from passing wind to theft to eating small children (or even adults). [The official mythological account of kappa attacks is that they suck the entrails and/or life-force out through the anus. Some groups might enjoy the opportunities this presents for bawdy fun. Other groups will find it distasteful or inappropriate - particularly if dealing with attacks on children. If this is the case, have the kappa latching on and draining blood instead.]

However, they may become friendly with those who do well against them in challenges of skill (especially wrestling) or give them gifts, particularly cucumber which is their favourite food of all. A friendly kappa is very helpful, for instance aiding in irrigation and employing its great knowledge of medicine.

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Master [+6] Strong, Good [+2] Amphibious, Expert [+4] Swimming, Good [+2] Tough Skin and Shell, Expert [+4] Medicine, Good [+2] Wrestling, Good [+2] Control Water*, Good [+2] Energy Drain*

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Water-dependent*, Poor [-2] Cucumber Addict, Poor [-2] Etiquette

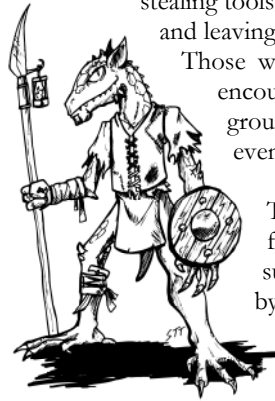
† *Water-dependent**: if the creature suffers any mishap that would cause water to spill from its head, e.g. being tripped or thrown, its powers are reduced. At least one damage Rank must be allocated on each of Strong (minimum Poor) and Control Water* (minimum Zero - can't use but not necessarily defeated). In some situations all damage could be targeted at these, e.g. holding it upside-down. Refilling the cavity if fresh water is available takes an action and gives 1d6 Failure or Damage back (a bit like spending Fortune). Energy Drain* cannot restore damage from water loss. This Quality also penalises resistance to drying-out effects.

Kobold

These small, reptilian-looking humanoids live underground, mainly in Scata and the mountains.

Miners tell of them as elusive, mischievous presences, stealing tools or taking what they've dug up and leaving worthless minerals in its place.

Those who go further down might encounter the kobolds on their home ground - perhaps a scouting party or even settlement.



They're very low on the monster food chain - kind of like subterranean goblins - but survive by working together in tribes. They farm fungus, hunt small or weakened prey, and defend their territory. Magic is pretty much confined to the occasional

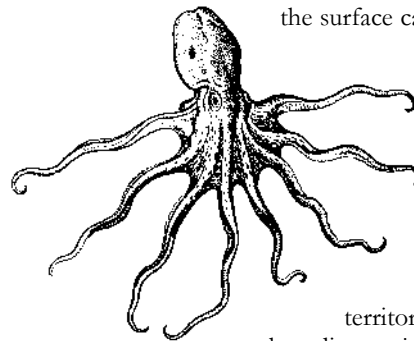
priest and individuals' pleas to the subterranean gods. They do have certain trading connections with the outside world; some underground resources have trade value. The kobolds of the Musty Mountains have found that their poetry, being about the endless dark spaces and the fear of being destroyed at any time, goes over rather well under a pseudonym in Groth.

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Good [+2] Cunning, Good [+2] Stealth, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Darksense, Good [+2] Pack Hunter

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Cowardly, Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Light

Kraken

This immense creature of the deep has features of octopus and squid. Its mighty tentacles can drag a ship to the bottom, and its body at rest on the surface can be mistaken for an island.



Kraken are both intelligent and cruel. Each rules a territory from a lair down in the darkness, and considers anything venturing into its

territory fair game for eating, hoarding, or just "playing" with. They communicate with sonic tones in a manner somewhat like a whale, and can form an approximation of human speech if they deign it worth the effort. They often have a small amount of innate magic (works like mysticism) to do with controlling the weather and other

aspects of the ocean environment (e.g. Summon Storm*, Call Current*, Water Breathing* for puny mortal servants, Seaweed Golem*). Kraken lairs are usually cave complexes, with lesser sea creatures as servants and sometimes even air-filled caverns for captured surface-dwellers.

In spite of the risks, some fishermen seek out kraken territory because the pickings are good. The waste products of the great beast make fertile waters for small fish, not to mention the marine traffic for diplomacy and tribute. In fact, a long-established kraken lair can be the equivalent of a town ruled by an evil overlord, and there are rumours of one in the southern ocean where the kraken has been killed or driven off and the inhabitants have continued as a thriving metropolis.

Strengths: Master [+6] Large, Expert [+4] Ocean Dweller, Expert [+4] Swimming, Master [+6] Tentacles, Good [+2] Bony Beak, Good [+2] Rubbery Hide, Expert [+4] Darksense, Good [+2] Malign Intelligence, Expert [+4] Willpower, Expert [+4] Jet, Expert [+4] Ink; possibly plus one or two Arcane Qualities

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Domineering

† *Tentacles:* can be used to grasp, crush or slam.

† *Jet:* it can squirt out a jet of water to propel itself (backwards) with extra speed. Kraken are smart enough to anchor themselves and use this to “blow away” groups of enemies (in which case the creature’s size also comes into play).

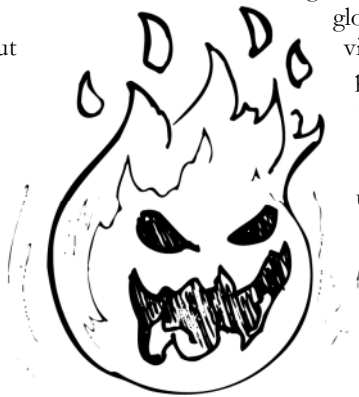
† *Ink:* the creature can squirt out a cloud of black ink that makes it hard to see in the water, but must Downshift this Quality to do so.

Lantern Man

Back in the history of Scata, an evil druid wanted a servant. He enchanted a pumpkin plant and bound a demon into it to create a spindly-limbed humanoid of great strength and agility, topped with a grinning pumpkin head glowing with the flame of the human souls that were its food. This creature, Heinous Samuel, served as the druid’s butler, but certain freelance activities of its own drew the attention of a group of adventurers, blah blah, and they caved its head in with an enchanted hammer and looted the druid’s wine cellar. However, they forgot something: seeds. The pumpkin head contained a small number of evil seeds, and each that fell into one of the bodies of those that

fell that day grew into a new creature, so its line continues to the present day.

Larval stage. A seed that falls or is planted in a corpse draws on the residual energy of that creature to grow quickly into a small carved pumpkin head, glowing gently from within, supported by a viny body. Sometimes they mimic little people, but often they grow multiple legs and scuttle about like a spider. They have animal-like intelligence, and are driven by the need to feed on life-energy, which they usually get by ambushing prey - leaping from a suitable vantage point and clinging on while they drain it.



Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Good [+2] Plant, Good [+2] Evil, Good [+2] Energy Drain*, Good [+2] Fire Spitting*, Good [+2] Agility, Good [+2] Scuttling, Good [+2] Darksense, Good [+2] Arcane Resistance - Fire, Good [+2] Damage Resistance*

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Evil, Poor [-2] Intellect

† *Fire Spitting*:* the larval stage has a special ability to use surplus life-force it’s gathered to spit out a gout of eldritch flame in an arc about 10ft long. Each use Downshifts the Quality.

Adult stage. A larval creature that’s properly fed and cared for will eventually develop into an adult. Its head grows and its vines extend and intertwine to make a humanoid body about 7 feet tall and whip-thin. In this stage they have human-level intellect, and all seem to be polite and urbane by nature, though with a degree of sadism and mischief, and a liking for smart clothes. Of course, they still need to feed on life-energy. They’re sometimes used as staff by less ethical spellcasters, and serve well as long as they’re treated firmly but courteously. The flame burning in the pumpkin head makes them handy for lighting the way along dark corridors too - hence the name. However, there’s a certain risk associated with them, which some owners know of and some don’t...

Strengths: Good [+2] Plant, Good [+2] Evil, Expert [+4] Energy Drain*, Good [+2] Magic Theft*, Good [+2] Agility, Good [+2] Strength, Good [+2] Urbane, Good [+2] Contortion, Good [+2] Darksense, Good [+2] Arcane Resistance - Fire, Good [+2] Damage Resistance*

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Evil

† *Magic Theft**: linked with *Energy Drain** - if the creature drains a magical Quality it can keep some of it to use. However, its Rank cannot exceed this Quality's Rank; the creature can store no more than MOD powers at a time; each use Downshifts the power; and it only lasts a scene.

† *Contortion*: although it normally mimics the operation of human joints, it can move its limbs pretty much however it likes when necessary - catching things behind it, folding up into small spaces, etc.

Full stage. Given just the right conditions - usually involving a strong magical atmosphere or consumption of a powerfully magical life-force - an adult Lantern Man can evolve into a full incarnation of Heinous Samuel, allowing the demon's essence to walk the earth again. (This is a possibility for the Fortune option Fickle Finger of Fate.) Its faculties are enhanced, and it has the ability to produce seeds at its fingertips for the creation of new larvae (which will follow it as their master). It is the epitome of malevolent etiquette.

Strengths: as the adult stage plus 1 Rank across the board; Good [+2] Intelligence, Expert [+4] Willpower

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Evil

Manticore

This dangerous hybrid creature has the body of a great blood-coloured lion and a human-like head, framed by a mane of hair in the male. Some individuals have bat-like wings. It has powerful claws and three rows of sharp teeth along each jaw. The manticore's long tail bears venomous spines, which it can use to sting like a scorpion - and it can also shoot them at prey some distance away. Various accounts say it is fast, vigorous and able to leap great distances, but all agree that it loves the flesh of humans and other intelligent species.

Manticores are no dumb beasts. They are sometimes found in pairs and "pride" groups, and converse with each other in voices said to sound like a blend of pan-pipe and trumpet. They are most common in the forests and passes of southern Orthedia, but can be encountered down to northern Plap and Tek Wei. Scholars make a distinction between "cliff manticores", which have the wings and tend to lair in rocky canyons, and "forest manticores" which are wingless but with greater leaping ability - though sightings don't always fit this rule.



Strengths: Good [+2] Large, Expert [+4] Predator, Expert [+4] Fast, Good [+2] Agile, Good [+2] Cunning, Good [+2] Cruel, Expert [+4] Claws and Teeth, Good [+2] Tail Sting, Expert [+4] Hurl Spines, Good [+2] Spine Venom, Good [+2] Flight (cliff variety only), Good [+2] Leaping (forest variety only)

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Craves Flesh of Intelligent Species, Poor [-2] Clumsy Flier

† *Tail Sting*: for close quarters attacks.

† *Hurl Spines*: the creature can propel a volley of spines up to about 50 feet, but must Downshift this Quality to do it. (It soon grows more spines. A magical regeneration effect might be able to restore this within the scene.)

† *Spine Venom*: this separate Quality comes into play when an opponent is successfully struck by any spine attack. Failing to resist its TN causes the victim to be paralysed; any margin over 5 becomes Damage Ranks.

† *Craves Flesh of Intelligent Species*: the creature's greed might be used to fool or lure it.

Merfolk

These are, of course, water-dwellers with a human-like upper body merging into a powerful fishy tail. They use aquatic materials like shells and coral for body decoration, tools and weaponry (tridents being popular). It's fairly common for them to know a magical charm or two - any type is possible, but the only professional spellcasters are priests. Some groups tend toward the "noble savage" stereotype; others are more degenerate, possibly serving a kraken and with dubious religious practices.

Merfolk maintain small colonies all over the seabed. Airbreathers sometimes encounter a hunting party or an individual sunning itself on a rock. And there the problems begin, for the females are strangely attractive to human males, who sometimes attempt a relationship despite issues of drowning, walking and dehydration. Cross-breeding is possible, though, and offspring take after one parent or the other.

In places where a community of merfolk lies off the coast near a human village the bloodlines can become hopelessly intermingled. Many villagers manifest some degree of "the look" (pale skin with scaly patches, webbed fingers and toes, etc.); are unusually at home in

the water; and occasionally swim out to join their cousins in worship of their watery gods.

Strengths (female): Expert [+4] Allure, Good [+2] occupation, Good [+2] Amphibious, Expert [+4] Swimming, Good [+2] Powerful Tail

Weaknesses (female): Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Dryness, Poor [-2] Drawn to Human Males

Strengths (male): Good [+2] Strength, Good [+2] Endurance, Good [+2] occupation, Good [+2] Amphibious, Expert [+4] Swimming, Good [+2] Powerful Tail

Weaknesses (male): Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Dryness, Poor [-2] Warlike

Mildew Monster

These peculiar creatures are almost certainly the handiwork of some god, probably of decay, destruction or embarrassment. It's said that different variants exist. They're vaguely insectoid in appearance, about the size of a large dog but bulkier, with a thick, sackcloth-coloured hide of lumps and plates and a long tail. They're of animal intelligence. They can be found almost anywhere in Ludor, usually in temperate regions, often in wooded areas near to settlements, lairing underground and coming out to seek food.

The monsters feed on dead organic matter, but in an unusual way: they strike it with their long antennae, causing it to rot and moulder away instantly, then they consume the remains. This would be ecologically useful, except for two things. First, they seem to much prefer worked materials to common stuff like leaf mould, attacking rope, sacks, clothing, tents, etc. Second, people seem to persist in placing them in dungeons and other locations where there's no organic material for them to feed on anyway and they become ravenous. If forced into straightforward combat they bite and whack opponents with their tail. (Tune the mildew monsters to the tone of your campaign. As a minimum, you probably want to borrow from the superhero genre and give underwear a mysterious immunity.)

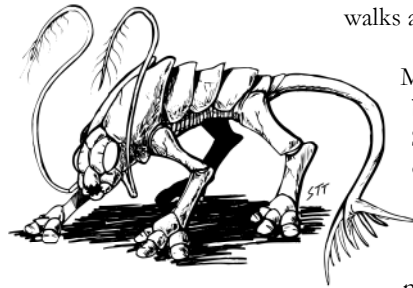
Strengths: Good [+2] Agility, Good [+2] Quick, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Tough Hide, Good [+2] Persistent, Expert [+4] Rot*, Expert [+4] Sense Organic Material, Good [+2] Arcane Resistance* - decay and disease effects

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Intelligence

† *Rot**: if a mildew monster touches an object made of dead organic material with its antennae, the object rots down instantly, becoming useless. (Size is irrelevant, except that it takes a bit longer for the rot to spread across big things.) The creature often takes an action to consume it. Items that have been treated to preserve them against decay might get some Rank of resistance (or could even be judged immune). Arcane Qualities definitely resist. If a susceptible object is used to do damage to the creature it's affected as if touched.

Mummy

In parts of Wochilat, and old places now claimed by the Ar-Karap Desert, dead bodies have sometimes been treated with a special process to stop them rotting. This usually involves removal of internal organs and wrapping with bandages treated with spices and other substances to dry the body and preserve it for the ages. Sometimes magic gets involved, either as a deliberate ritual or the actions of gods or spirits: then the mummy walks again as an undead guardian of its tomb.



Mummies appear as shuffling corpses swathed in bandages, but under the surface vary quite a bit. Some are creatures of crude instinct, acting out of single-minded indignation to destroy intruders. (The legal arguments about tomb-owners using posthumous deadly force to defend their property are a nice earner in northern Wochilat.) Other mummies retain more of their mental faculties, and might even be able to use magic (usually thaumaturgy, but sometimes they serve gods, and not often gods of sunshine and ponies at that). These adapt to modern life in different ways. One old gentleman has converted his trap-ridden desert-edge pyramid, added scrying devices, and now runs a very popular game show. Elsewhere, feuding dynasties lounge in front of their tombs and fire the occasional spell at each other. And of course some have gone the evil overlord route.

The baseline stats for a middle-of-the-road model are much like those of the Wizen in the rulebook: tool up or dumb down from here.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Dead*, Expert [+4] Strong, Good [+2] Single-Minded, Good [+2] occupation (specify one, dimly retained from when alive), Good [+2] personality trait (ditto), Good [+2] Darksense

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Dead (tends to colour social interactions), Poor [-2] Slow-moving, Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Fire

Night Rider

When these powerful undead ride out on a mission, wise folk stay inside and bolt their doors. It's said that once they were mortals corrupted by the service of evil; there are usually thought to be nine altogether. They appear as tall humans in black hooded robes, beneath which they wear mail armour and tight trousers. A glimpse beneath the hood shows no visible head supporting it, just a dark space with an eerie grin of perfect white teeth. Their true substance has long ago fallen away, replaced by willpower and sorcery.

Each Rider has a powerful black horse, with eyes of glowing red that continually sweep the scene. There's a strong mystical bond between them, rather like that between magus and familiar, allowing communication and awareness of each other's location. In fact the horse is a magical creature in its own right, and often serves as the brains of the outfit.

They serve the Night Foundation, an alliance of powerful evil interests in Arrganarr. Each has a code number, 6661 to 6669, giving them a Licence for Evil - that is, the Foundation is prepared to cope with any diplomatic consequences of their actions elsewhere in Ludor (whereas Arrganarrians are usually admonished to behave themselves abroad).

Strengths (Rider): Master [+6] Dead*, Good [+2] Strong, Good [+2] Willpower, Expert [+4] Evil, Expert [+4] Sword Fighting, Expert [+4] Enchanted Sword*, Expert [+4] Armour, Expert [+4] Darksense, Expert [+4] Aura of Fear*, Expert [+4] Foul Essence*, Expert [+4] Organisation - Night Foundation; often a couple of magical powers too

Weaknesses (Rider): Poor [-2] Mortal Senses, Poor [-2] Slow on the Uptake, Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Light

Strengths (horse): Good [+2] Large, Good [+2] Predator, Good [+2] Smart, Good [+2] Evil, Good [+2] Strong, Expert [+4] Stamina, Expert [+4] Galloping, Good [+2] Prodigious Leap*, Good [+2] Enchanted Horseshoes*, Expert [+4] Damage Resistance*, Good [+2] Darksense, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Organisation - Night Foundation, Good [+2] Get Rider Out Of Trouble Again

Weaknesses (horse): Poor [-2] Large

† *Aura of Fear**: anyone coming in sight of a Rider is afflicted by fear and unease. They must beat this TN with bravery and willpower to oppose it in any way. Seeing the eerie grin gives a Downshift.

† *Foul Essence**: a successful injury to a Rider causes some of its foul essence to attack the weapon and its wielder. Any non-magical prop is simply withered and destroyed. A magical prop rolls its Arcane Quality against this TN and is destroyed if it fails. Additionally, the attacking character must resist TN Damage Ranks with their constitution and any Arcane Quality of a character weapon used - at least one Rank of any damage taken must go on the weapon.

Plap Strider

This large flightless bird is one of the top predators on the Plains of Plap. It stands 5 feet tall at the shoulder, with a powerful, compact body, two long, taloned legs, and a long neck and strong, sharp beak. The feathers are a smoky grey, with black and green bands. There are stubby remnants of wings, but they're only useful for body language.

The Striders roam the plains looking for food. This is not often in plentiful supply, so they'll have a go at more or less anything that moves, as well as carrion. They are excellent runners, able to pace a horse for short distances, and the beak and talons are formidable weapons. Sometimes a lone individual is encountered, and sometimes a group will hunt together (in which case, woe betide the ill-prepared traveller).

They have one particular adaptation to the peculiar environment of Plap: a third eye in the top of the head, allowing them to see falling objects and get out of the way with their excellent reflexes. In normal use this renders them immune to surprise attacks from above - a rare event in the flat terrain, but they have also learned to lower their heads for excellent 270-degree vision for spotting potential prey or danger.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Predator, Good [+2] Scavenger, Good [+2] Beak and Talons, Expert [+4] Run Fast, Expert [+4] Third Eye, Good [+2] Reflexes

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Intellect

† *Third Eye*: used for spotting things above (if any roll is needed), or for visual perception when the head is lowered for scanning, which should definitely help in preventing surprise attacks.

Roc

These are frickin' huge birds. They can carry off elephants when hungry (though cattle and horses are more usual) and destroy ships when angered). Rocs are somewhat eagle-like in appearance, with a wingspan of over 100 feet, equipped with a powerful beak and talons. Their plumage is white, pale brown or golden.



Rocs live in the Godsmile Mountains, constructing nests from trees, bits of ships, people's huts, and the like. They hunt in the Ar-Karap and the plains of northern Wochilat, and are occasionally seen out over the Snaggles and the western ocean (there might be some nesting on isolated islands). They're pretty much forces of nature, to whom the intelligent species are light snacks that sometimes have an annoying sting. A typical attack is a swoop and snatch (adding Flight to an attack) to carry off prey. Anything that proves troublesome may simply be dropped from a great height to convert it into roc pizza.

Occasionally someone steals a roc egg: this rarely ends well. There is an upside for enterprising souls though, because these beasts produce enormous quantities of dung. Some tribes collect it from where it lands, or brave the mountain heights to reach favourite spots. It makes great fertiliser and commands a good price from the citizens of Veribah.

Strengths: Master [+6] Large, Expert [+4] Predator, Expert [+4] Flight, Good [+2] Beak and Talons, Good [+2] Strong, Expert [+4] Keen Sight

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Intellect

Sensorius

This bizarre creature is a dangerous opponent for adventurers, presumably created by a drunk god or mad wizard. Its body is roughly spherical, about 6 feet across, able to move about by floating through the air at walking speed. The front bears a single large eye and a fanged mouth. Sprouting from the top are a number of tentacle-like stalks - usually ten, but this varies with age and other factors. At the end of each stalk is an eye or other sense organ: ears, noses, tongues, and even structures like a human finger.

A sensorius is very aware of its surroundings and hard to surprise. Worse, it is possessed of a powerful intellect and will, and a malevolent nature: hateful, greedy and contemptuous of other creatures, seeking to dominate or kill them and, indeed, take their stuff. Worst of all, each of its sensory organs is equipped with some Arcane power, which makes encounters both hazardous and chaotic.

Strengths: Master [+6] Multiplied Senses, Average [0] Flight, Expert [+4] Intelligence, Expert [+4] Will, Expert [+4] Malevolent, Good [+2] Bite, Good [+2] Tough Hide; pile of magic Qualities as below at Rank according to creature power

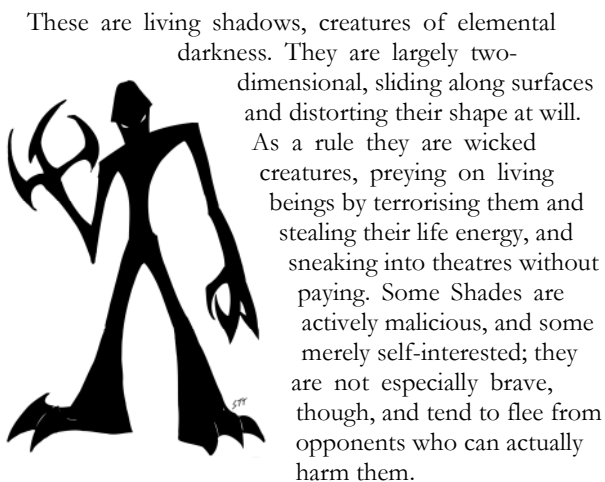
Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Arrogant, Poor [-2] Too Much Magic Crap

Here's a standard set of Arcane abilities. You can probably make some up yourself; they don't necessarily make a lot of sense.

- † *Antimagic** (central Eye): while open, continuously projects a cone-shaped invisible field in which any magical effect of lower Rank simply stops working, and others subtract this Quality's MOD. (Once this effect finishes, enchantments regain their normal properties.)
- † *Hypnosis** (Eye): gazing into a creature's eyes can put it into a trance in which it obeys any reasonable-sounding commands given by the sensorius. Pain might give another chance to break free.
- † *Move Object** (Eye): manipulate items at a distance using [Rank-1] as strength and dexterity.
- † *Ray of Destruction** (Ear): straightforward magical damage. (No, nobody understands why. But it makes as much sense as eyes being artillery.)
- † *Waxy Casing** (Ear): target is encased in a hard shell of wax; TN to break out.
- † *Mucus Trap** (Nose): projects a glob of sticky mucus that hinders movement. An Average-sized creature must overcome the TN if they want to make any sort of vigorous motion. Smaller creatures might be engulfed altogether. If the victim or friends devote their attention to doing damage Ranks to the glob with blades, fire, etc. they can break free. The first time they see this in use everyone must resist the TN or take a Failure Rank of revulsion.
- † *Gust of Wind** (Nose): a powerful exhalation blows targets in an arc back and down - resist TN Failure Ranks.
- † *Acid Saliva** (Tongue): this appendage secretes an acid that can eat away living flesh and even stone (allowing it to excavate underground lairs).

- † *Analysis* (Tongue)*: licking something gives a detailed and accurate sense of its composition, even down to pheromones secreted by living creatures.
- † *Taunt* (Finger)*: by use of arcane gestures (ahem), drives opponent into a state of frothing rage. If they fail to resist the TN they'll attack the closest target, friend or foe.
- † *Kung Fu Pressure Points* (Finger)*: an unarmed attack with this appendage does Damage Ranks (unarmed is usually Failure), and MOD extra damage if successful.

Shade



Strengths: Expert [+4] Incorporeal*, Good [+2] Energy Drain*, Master [+6] Darksense, Good [+2] Shadow Morphing, Good [+2] Awareness

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Aversion to Bright Light*

- † *Incorporeal**: as QMR, but a Shade cannot pass through solid objects; it can slide through tiny cracks.
- † *Energy Drain**: the touch attack of a Shade brings a feeling of cold and emptiness.
- † *Shadow Morphing*: the creature can alter its shape, from a formless pool of black with just its eyes showing somewhere to the silhouette of a particular individual. The Rank is used when it wants to appear as something specific, for instance to avoid detection or frighten someone. Looking like a non-humanoid brings a Downshift.

Shark

They might not have funky special abilities, but these superb marine predators maintain a place near the top of the food chain by being very good at what they do. These stats are for a fairly substantial one; bigger and smaller versions exist.

Strengths: Good [+2] Large, Expert [+4] Predator, Expert [+4] Sharp Teeth, Expert [+4] Swimming, Expert [+4] Detect Scent

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Single-minded

Spriggan

These are of the fey kind, related to the faeries of Logrin - who, indeed, they sometimes work for as treasure guards, bodyguards and bouncers. Spriggans are around 2ft tall and grotesquely ugly. Among mortals they have a reputation as thieves, seeing no reason to respect the property rights of such crude and short-lived creatures. They have the particular ability of swelling up to giant size for a brief period, for fighting or intimidation. Spriggans are most common in Logrin, but also found in Orthedia and Scata, often around old ruins and burial mounds.

Spriggans sometimes know a bit of fey magic (works with the basic rules, like mysticism). This usually takes the form of small natural disasters or other forms of misfortune: one popular one is a small whirlwind that throws things into disarray.

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Good [+2] Agile, Good [+2] Thief, Good [+2] Brawling, Good [+2] Attitude, Good [+2] Night Vision, Good [+2] Sizeshifting*, Average [0] Shocking Appearance; possibly plus one or two fey magic Qualities (mostly Average)

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small, Poor [-2] Ugly, Poor [-2] Aversion to Iron*

- † *Sizeshifting**: they have the ability to grow from Good Small to Good Large (about 10ft tall). This simply switches both Small Qualities into Large, retaining any damage ranks. Growing takes an action, and the Rank shows how long it can be maintained. On ending the effect or losing concentration the creature returns to normal.

Terror Lizard

These are predatory reptiles that run on two legs, balanced by a long tail. Their front legs have become small clawed “hands”. Some scholars say they are relics of an earlier age. There are two varieties.

Great Terror Lizards are mercifully rare. They are ferocious killing machines about 40ft long and standing over 15ft tall. Their oversized heads have massive jaws filled with teeth as long as your hand. They’ll hunt almost anything. Only a few places have them, notably: Challenger Hold, where they’ve come through from the strange subterranean realm the dwarves broke into; some isolated islands in The Swarm; and maybe a couple of secluded valleys in the Godsmile Mountains and Wochilat. They’re strongly territorial and only tolerate each other’s presence for mating.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Large, Master [+6] Predator, Expert [+4] Bite, Good [+2] Clawed Feet, Good [+2] Strong Tail, Good [+2] Running, Good [+2] Scaly Skin, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Powerful Meaty Breath

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Intellect

Small Terror Lizards are a little smaller than a man, leaner and less fearsome than their cousins but with a tendency to hunt in packs. They’re more common too, found in numbers on some of the Swarm islands and in certain parts of Wochilat, stretching up into the southern Snaggles. If a sufficient number are together they’ll be quite ambitious about prey. Occasionally



someone raises a young one as a guard or even a pet - they are quite smart, even cute, but liable to take a finger when you least expect it.

Strengths: Good [+2] Predator, Good [+2] Teeth and Talons, Good [+2] Running, Good [+2] Scaly Skin, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Quick Reactions, Good [+2] Pack Hunter

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Intellect

Tremor Worm

These enormous creatures burrow through the earth consuming anything organic in their path. They’re known for erupting from the ground and swallowing people whole. Experienced and perceptive travellers can sometimes detect their approach by a faint vibration - hence the name.

A tremor worm is of the order of 100 feet long and 5-10 feet across, with a gaping multi-part jaw arrangement and no other visible facial features. Skin colour ranges from pale beige to dull purple. Their main sense is an ability to detect vibrations, which they use to locate prey walking on the ground. They travel through loose-packed earth like swimming through water, and are found in areas where the going is easy like the Ar-Karap Desert and the snowy lowlands of Valharia. Temperatures don’t bother them much, but they dislike water and are stopped by solid rock. Faced with prey or opponents, they sometimes bite (especially against Large creatures) but usually slam or crush using the mass of their body or just swallow the target whole.

As they go, the worms may ingest mineral-rich earth or, indeed, mineral-rich adventurers. Therefore the man-sized “casts” they leave behind sometimes contain valuable residue. The outside tends to bake, dry or freeze to a stonelike consistency, while the inside remains sticky and... fragrant.

These stats are for a full-grown adult - younger ones might be encountered, smaller and less sure in their abilities.

Strengths: Master [+6] Large, Good [+2] Predator, Good [+2] Scavenger, Good [+2] Tough Hide, Expert [+4] Swallow, Master [+6] Burrow, Expert [+4] Vibration Sense

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Vibration Sensitive

† *Swallow:* the creature can attempt to engulf a target at least two size levels smaller than itself, swallowing them whole. If the target loses the

contest they are now inside the creature, and will be attacked by its Swallow each round automatically (without needing an action by the creature) - an attack that can't be avoided, only resisted. Hopefully they can get themselves out or be rescued before they are digested!

† *Burrow*: this Quality could be used to disappear below ground to escape from attack (taking an action), or to emerge from the ground in a devastating ambush.

† *Vibration Sensitive*: if characters can find a way to produce unpleasant vibrations, they might drive the worm off. Your group's least favourite type of music might be an amusing option.

Troll

These are large, tough, brutish humanoids with a tendency to eat people. An average troll is about 9 feet tall, with a greyish skin somewhat reminiscent of stone, sometimes mottled with greenish patches. (Some



scholars think their toughness originates from the earth a bit like a dwarf's, though trolls are known to reproduce in the normal way.) Some are broad and stocky; others are lean and lanky. They have long, muscular arms with clawed fingers, and a crudely formed face. They also have some regenerative ability, and have even been seen to reattach recently severed limbs.

Trolls live all over the Realms. They like dark places, such as caves and under bridges - sunlight hurts their eyes and seems to reduce all their other abilities too. They sometimes get used as evil forces' heavy infantry, though keeping them under control requires a firm hand and lots of "treats". They have a rudimentary understanding of languages, but most do not speak - though some of particularly stubborn bent are known for starting and perpetuating completely pointless arguments.

Strengths: Good [+2] Large, Expert [+4] Strong, Expert [+4] Tough, Good [+2] Claws, Good [+2] Fierce, Expert [+4] Darksense, Good [+2] Regeneration (not fire damage, not in daylight)

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Not Very Bright, Poor [-2] Ugly, Poor [-2] Hampered By Daylight

† *Hampered By Daylight*: under the sun, pretty much everything a troll does gets penalised. It even interferes with their regenerative ability. They can manage alright outside on a very cloudy day. Other forms of bright light might give the penalty momentarily, but are not as potent.

Vampire

These are the undead that people want to be. They've managed to get the cool tricks without all the icky bits-falling-off stuff. In Groth they're celebrities; in Scata they're nobility; in Ko-Sha they're lawyers. The only downside, really, is that powerful urge to drink blood, but there are always more peasants. Oh, and the bursting into flame in sunlight, but you've probably always been a night person anyway. And being hunted down with pitchforks in less enlightened places.

Vampirism's exact origins are lost in the mists of time, though many accounts claim it started as a punishment by the gods on wicked people. (Most don't make a big deal of this idea, on the basis that if true it arguably worked very badly and the gods don't take criticism well.) It is passed on through the bite: someone killed by a vampire often comes back as one.

The gods Shamutu and Nansin, the sun and moon, take a dim view of this undead nonsense, and are particularly irked when people make it look sexy. They have instructed their sub-gods and daemons to cooperate as little as possible with vampires. Nansin's edicts are subtle, causing light to play tricks around them: mirrors give nothing back, light bends around them to avoid making shadows, and sometimes a little aura of darkness follows them around. Shamutu is more direct: if vampires are caught under the sun its power is focused to burn them. A number of other minor deities have joined in as well, so there are various things that repulse or harm vampires, and these vary confusingly from place to place.

The following stats are separated into those for experienced/established vampires and a reduced set for lesser vampires, those that are newly created or minions of a more competent one. Because a vampire is created from a normal person, there's a template element that modifies existing Qualities, then a set of new fixed Qualities. (Ranks can't be raised higher than Master.) Most also have at least a basic occupation Quality, and possibly other skills from their former life; and as they're basically immortal skills could get quite high.

Strengths (established): Strong (+2 Ranks), Quick (+2 Ranks), Keen Senses (+1 Rank), Dramatic (+1 Rank); Expert [+4] Dead*, Expert [+4] Energy Drain* (drinking blood), Good [+2] Sire*, Expert [+4] Night Vision, Average [0] Shapeshift*, Good [+2] Dominate*

Strengths (lesser): Strong (+1 Rank), Quick (+1 Rank), Willpower (+1 Rank), Keen Senses (+1 Rank); Good [+2] Dead*, Good [+2] Energy Drain* (drinking blood), Average [0] Sire*, Expert [+4] Night Vision

Weaknesses (all): Poor [-2] Light Intolerant*, Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Folklore*, Poor [-2] Blood Hunger

- † *Dramatic*: you have a flair for hitting the right pose, making an entrance at just the right time, producing cryptic but meaningful utterances, etc.
- † *Sire**: someone killed by a vampire is likely to turn into a vampire themselves, rising again in 3 days as a lesser vampire unless the right precautions are taken. Some divine magic Qualities might be capable of resisting this; and it's very uncommon for non-humans to be infected. Lesser vampires have a powerful instinct to obey the commands of their sire (who can also beat them up if necessary).
- † *Shapeshift**: some experienced vampires can take specific animal forms at will (as an action). The most well known is the Scatan type, which can become a bat or wolf. They can't turn into mist - that's just silly.
- † *Dominate**: some experienced vampires can induce a state like hypnosis through eye contact. If the target fails to resist with mental strength they are controlled for the rest of the scene, remaining motionless or moving or acting very slowly to carry out commands. It might be possible for other people to help them break the trance by doing stuff in opposition to this Quality.
- † *Light Intolerant**: the creature casts no shadow, has no reflection and, if anyone comes up with one, is invisible to recording devices. This is a Weakness for remaining unnoticed and getting your tie straight. Under direct sunlight a vampire takes one Damage Rank per round, bypassing its special abilities.
- † *Vulnerable to Folklore**: this is basically variable *Aversion** - the things that affect the creature vary from place to place. A player can either use one that's already established or spend a Fortune Point to establish one that holds in the current locality - but each player can only do this once per place. The GM can choose to preset one or two in local rumours etc. Maybe the creature can't stand garlic (traditional!) or the holy symbol of Shamutu; maybe it can be destroyed with an iron frying pan.

Water Leaper

This is an uncommon monster reported in Logrin, Kadink and Scata. It is like a gigantic toad with no legs but wings and a tail. It breaks fishermen's lines and devours sheep that fall into rivers - and fishermen too if it can. The creature can emit a fearful shriek to unnerve its victims. It seems likely that the wings don't provide true flight, but are more like flippers that allow it to propel itself strongly out of the water to grab targets, the tail providing extra propulsion and stability. It seeks to get victims into the water or crashes into them to knock them down so it can use its bite effectively.

Strengths: Good [+2] Amphibious, Good [+2] Strong, Good [+2] Agile, Good [+2] Rubbery Skin, Expert [+4] Leaping, Good [+2] Bite, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Stealth, Good [+2] Fearful Shriek

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Intellect, Poor [-2] Mobility on Land

- † *Fearful Shriek*: a sound that causes fear - TN Failure Ranks opposed by mental fortitude.



Wendigo

This terrible denizen of Valharia and the Norwast appears as a giant figure, deformed and gaunt to the point of being skeletal, with pale, bloodless skin and missing lips and toes. It haunts the forests and hills, looking for people to slay and eat. The legend says that a wendigo is created when someone becomes a cannibal to survive the harsh northern conditions, as a result of a divine curse: their heart freezes to ice and they transform into the creature. The identity of the god responsible seems ill-defined; and wry scholars (admittedly safe before fires in southern cities) have noted that punishing cannibalism by creating a monster that eats people as a matter of course is a little... ill-considered.

It's often said that the wendigo hunts by following a lone wanderer for a long time, always managing to keep out of sight when they become suspicious, driving them into a state of panic and hysteria - then the creature attacks. (In PDQ one might simulate this with a conflict using stealth and survival skills to attack.) But the stories agree that the only way to kill a wendigo is to melt its heart of ice.

Strengths: Good [+2] Large, Good [+2] Predator, Good [+2] Claws, Expert [+4] Stealth, Expert [+4] Ice Survivor, Good [+2] Scary, Good [+2] Darksense, Master [+6] Damage Resistance* (not vs heat or called shots to the heart), Master [+6] Arcane Resistance - Cold, Master [+6] Wendigo Fever*

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Aversion to Fire* (see box p4)

† *Wendigo Fever:* someone surviving an attack by the creature is afflicted the next night by nightmares and pain in the legs. Run it as a conflict between the fever and the victim's mental and spiritual resilience. Damage targets mobility and mental stability. Victims zeroed out by this tend to rip their clothes off (extent appropriate to your campaign's certificate) and run into the forest screaming - possibly to encounter lurking Things.

Werealbatross

Sailors dread the death that comes on silent wings. Those cursed by this lycanthropy grow feathers all over their body; their face lengthens into a sharp, hooked bill; and wings sprout from their back to a span of 15 feet and more. They roam the oceans, gliding for miles on the air currents, or come to rest on cliffs and isolated islands. Unfortunately their affliction makes

them crave a broader diet than just fish, and they take people from ships and the seashore. Those who know the lore face a poor choice when attacked by this creature: being killed; being injured and possibly becoming the beast (see QMR); or attempting to kill it, which produces a terrible magical curse of bad luck.

Strengths: Good [+2] Predator, Good [+2] Strong, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Flight, Expert [+4] Gliding, Good [+2] Sharp Bill, Expert [+4] Damage Resistance* (not vs silver), Expert [+4] Death Curse*

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Lured by Fish, Poor [-2] Aversion to Silver*

† *Death Curse*:* anyone killing the creature is afflicted by bad luck. Whenever you make a roll use one extra die and discard the die with the best result. If you end up with all 1s, things go wrong in some way that inconveniences you. Rank shows how long the curse runs unopposed - make a roll against it at the end of that period and each Rank period thereafter until you manage to throw it off.

Widderwight

These unquiet spirits haunt burial mounds and old battlefields, mainly in Helongor. They possess the bodies of living folk who wander too near at night, controlling their actions and gradually devouring them from the inside out until they are little more than a shell. They act to cause fear and suffering for their own purposes, or in the service of some dark power. In its own form the widderwight is like a human figure made of shadow and smoke.

Strengths: Good [+2] Incorporeal, Expert [+4] Dead, Expert [+4] Willpower, Expert [+4] Possession*

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Light (in own form only)

† *Possession*:* there's a contest (complicated or conflict) with the victim's willpower. If the creature succeeds it can lurk within their body, occasionally surfacing to direct their actions and gradually increasing its control. It devours its host's Qualities, one Rank a day, starting with mental ones and later the physical until all is gone - then it can briefly exist as a dark shape filling their clothing, before becoming a lurking spirit again. Up to a certain point the victim can be rescued by driving the spirit out magically, after which they'll recover normally.

Yeti

This creature appears to be a sort of ape-person: humanoid, but around 7 feet tall and covered in hair (brownish in summer but turning to white in winter or with age). They live in the snowy realms of Valharia and the north, where humans cannot survive. Yeti are usually found in family groups or larger communities, living in mountain caves. They are as intelligent as humans, and probably wiser overall, content with a simple life of hunting, gathering and tribal ritual, making only the tools they need.

As a species with a culture, yeti have different occupations. That includes priests (but not, generally, magi or mystics), mainly of the sky god Elal and the deity of ice and snow. (If you already have a suitable snow deity on your Roll, use that - otherwise when you introduce yetis you'll have to introduce the god too.) These individuals are usually the lorekeepers of their tribe. Some possible Arcane Qualities: Ice Darts*; Snow Golem* (crude humanoid creature at the caster's command, hard to damage with physical force, attacks with bludgeoning and suffocation); Call Wind*; Concealing Flurry*.

These are baseline stats, and should be expanded with occupation and personality traits for individual yeti.

Strengths: Expert [+4] Strong, Good [+2] Tough, Good [+2] Strong-willed, Good [+2] Snow Dweller, Good [+2] Arcane Resistance (Cold), Good [+2] Light Adaptation, Good [+2] Safe Footing

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Vulnerable to Heat, Poor [-2] Bestial Nature

† *Light Adaptation:* Having to cope with both snow glare and the gloomy days of winter, the yeti's eyes are adapted to cope with a wide range of light intensity, though not full night or total darkness.

† *Safe Footing:* getting about on fragile or slippery surfaces.

† *Bestial Nature:* most of the time yeti are quite placid, but their animal side is stronger than in many other species and under stress can surface in bursts of aggression that may target friend as well as foe.

Zerigoz

Inspired by V Shane's picture below. If that's not a Questers critter I don't know what is!

These small creatures are widespread in a band across the southern lands - Ar-Karap, Plap and the Snaggles. Anybody who sees one develops a strong suspicion of divine or magical intervention back in the creature's murky past. It's basically like a rabbit with long rear legs like a bird's, on which it can hop at speed in a bipedal stance. It stands about 2ft tall. Other notable features include nasty claws on the feet; a long, somewhat peacock-like tail used for balance and mating displays; and bony plates on the lower spine (of limited use for protection).

Zerigoz have become very successful, mainly through their attitude. They're quite happy to go about their business with larger creatures or potential threats in the vicinity, and if one approaches too close they favour it with a "Something I can help you with, bub?" look.

They don't burrow like rabbits do, but tend to scratch out a hollow for shelter and protection. They're aggressively omnivorous, sometimes eating plants but mainly subsisting on insects and other small creatures, and carrion when it presents itself. Food supplies from travel rations to granaries are firmly on the list.

Strengths: Good [+2] Small, Good [+2] Scavenger, Expert [+4] Attitude, Expert [+4] Hopping, Good [+2] Keen Senses, Good [+2] Sensitive Hearing, Good [+2] Claws, Average [0] Armour

Weaknesses: Poor [-2] Small



Whether you're a *Questers of the Middle Realms* GM or an aficionado of another fantasy game looking for interesting ideas, *The Book of Bewildering Beasts* has something for you!

It's a compilation of 44 creatures originally released in the mini-supplements *Ten Bewildering Beasts* vols 1-4, with write-ups and PDQ system stats in the QMR style, blending danger, humour and downright weirdness.

Extras include:

- † new common creature Qualities;
- † gazetteer indicating which monsters are noted in each region;
- † Creature Types - analogues of racial Qualities, with write-ups for Dread, Empyrean and Nether creatures.



Questers of the Middle Realms

SILVER
BRANCH
GAMES

**PDQ
SYSTEM**

www.silverbranch.co.uk