



the
BOOK of
SHADOWS

The
Whispering
Vault



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WELCOME

For gamemasters of *The Whispering Vault* who have subjected their players to the shadows found within the pages of the previously-released books, this collection of fifteen new shadows will help in the creation of new and different Hunts. All manner of sizes and temperments of shadows exist inside this short PDF release, each one just waiting for a chance to get its claws (or mandibles, or teeth, or tentacles) into the Stalkers of your campaign.

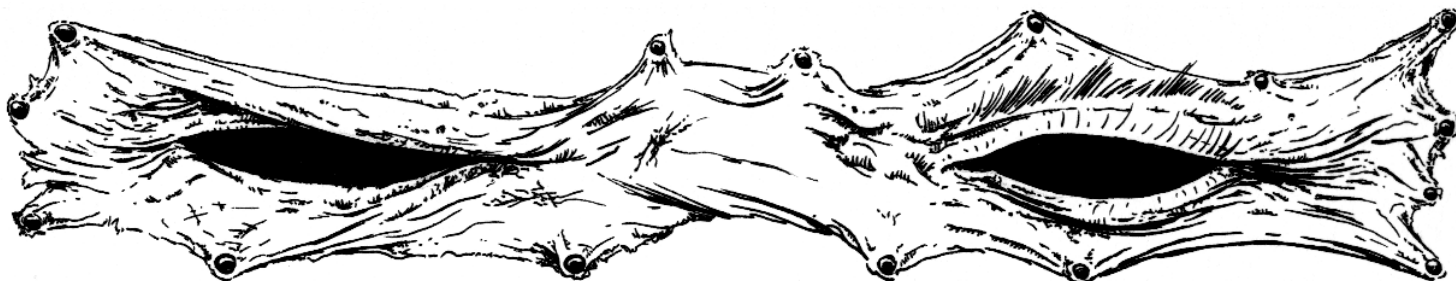
This marks Ronin Arts first newly-written material for *The Whispering Vault* and we owe a special thanks to the authors of the work for their time and creativity. The shadows in these pages should, eventually, find their way into the second edition rulebook of *The Whispering Vault*. Feedback is encouraged and appreciated so that once the second edition is released these shadows can be as terrifying and enjoyable as those found in the pages of *The Whispering Vault* and *Dangerous Prey*.

ALSO AVAILABLE FOR THE WHISPERING VAULT

The Book of Hunts: This PDF contains six complete and ready-to-run adventures for The Whispering Vault. It also introduces the Crossroads to the Realm of Essence for the first time, a taste of what's to come in the world of Vault. The Hunts span the Chronosphere and are sure to challenge even the most experienced of circles. **95-pages. \$7.95.**

Mastering the Vault: A short (24 page) guide for gamemasters of *The Whispering Vault*. Within this PDF GMs will find advice written by Nigel Findley (author for such popular game lines as *D&D*, *Vampire*, *Mage*, *Earthdawn*, *GURPS*, and *Shadowrun*), a timeline of events, a short hunt (also written by Findley), and a short piece on Unbidden as player characters. **24-pages. \$5.00.**

The Vault and Time: This 32-page supplement for gamemasters of *The Whispering Vault* goes into detail on the techniques necessary to running Hunts in historical settings. Written by Chad Brinkley, *The Vault and Time* includes a detailed timeline (much larger than the timeline found in *Mastering the Vault*) and five sample historical eras -- Ancient Rome, Medieval Japan, Colonial America, Victorian England, and WWII France. **32-pages. \$6.00.**



ZUKILLIK (CHATTERBUG)

Fortitude	8
Vitality	8
Initiative	15
Defend	15
Perceive	12
Resolve	12

These rare shadows are enchanted by human speech and conversation. They lurk in the Rift, listening to humans talk and parrotting nonsense back at them. Occasionally, they locate a particular human who seems to respond to their attempts at communication. This soul is usually either a sensitive who talks back to the voices in his head or a deranged person who is carrying on a conversation with nothing at all. Such a mortal is a great prize to the Zukilliks, and they will fight for the right to follow them.

Eventually one dominant Shadow will drive away all of the lessers and talk endlessly and mindlessly to their chosen "friend," following them everywhere. If that human suddenly goes silent for a long period of time, however, sheer frustration can cause the Zukillik to Awaken, entering the Flesh and attempting to resume their "conversation" in person.

Sometimes the victim is already dead. But if they aren't initially, they generally soon become so, because an enFleshed Zukillik takes the form of a monstrous insectoid creature larger than a man. If the victim reacts to it in anything other than a friendly manner, the Zukillik will become enraged and devour them, then look for another "companion". Eventually, they inevitably come to enjoy the agonized screams of the mortals who are both their meal and their entertainment. They have a selfish and sadistic streak that manifests very strongly when they enter the Flesh.

A Chatterbug likes to talk to its prey before killing and eating it. If someone talks back to it, the Zukillik will postpone their death for as long as the conversation lasts. It isn't actually necessary to speak the same language as the Shadow to keep it occupied; only the most experienced of Zukillik actually understand more than a smattering of what they are saying. They have no tolerance for breaks in the conversation, however, so a mortal who wants to postpone their death must reply with only the briefest of pauses. If their voice gives out, they will be torn limb from limb.

A Zukillik can be Husked in a human guise, but only at the cost of severing two of its four arms, which reduces its ability to inflict damage in combat. A better Husk involves strapping them into the carcass of a horse, but an equine Minion is often less useful. Even Bound, Zukillik constantly utter inane chatter about the weather, out-of-date news and similar topics. This can be prevented by tearing out the lower jaw, but that removes yet another of their attacks.

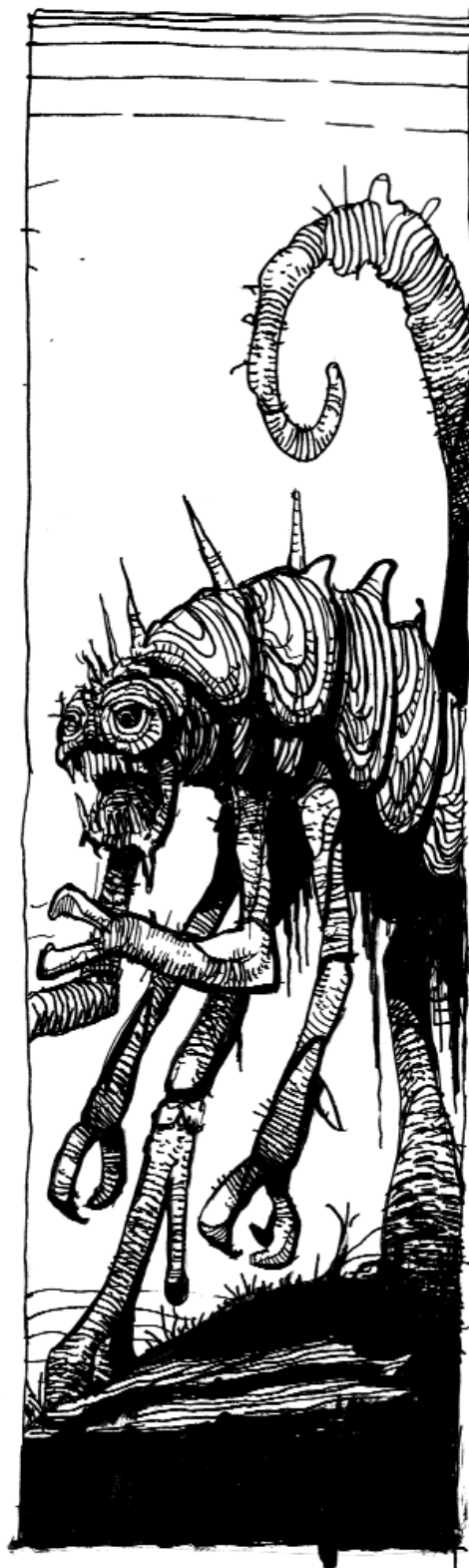
Chatterbugs are quite dangerous in close combat, and cunning enough to fight intelligently. Their tail is prehensile, and they often use it to dangle from a high location and wait for prey. They prefer isolated areas and always stalk one victim at a time.

COMBAT: 4 Claws (Attack 12, 3D Damage), 1 Bite (Attack 15, 4D Damage)

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Prehensile tail

VULNERABILITIES: Unless their mouth has been sealed or destroyed, a Bound Zukillik will constantly repeat snippets of mortal conversation, stringing them together in a fashion that almost makes sense. A free Shadow is a little cannier and only speaks when it finds someone to talk to, but still rarely makes sense.

Zukillik have been known to occasionally strike up a "friendship" with a human without harming them. The "friend" is usually blind and often quite deranged, but that matters little to the Shadow, which may become quite protective of them. Unless there are other victims readily available during the periods when their victim is silent, though, the Zukillik will probably eventually lose patience at some point and tear them apart. The longest running "friendship" known was between a Zukillik that stalked a sanitarium and an inmate who talked endlessly, even in his sleep.





GANGROST (MISHMASH)

Fortitude	6
Vitality	9
Initiative	10
Defend	15
Perceive	8
Resolve	11

Gangrost are created when an Architect Unbidden forcibly awakens two different shadows and merges them into one form through an incredibly painful ritual. Gangrost are in constant pain, but the ritual that binds them into one form also forces them into loyal servitude. They are more physically powerful than the shadows from which they were created, but the unending pain of their pathetic existence fractures their minds and makes them little more than mindlessly obedient minions.

There are as many Gangrost forms as there are combinations of shadows, and the only trait which they all share is a hideous shape. Heads may be missing, or in abundance. Tentacles may thrash from open wounds, or weak limbs may support powerful claws. With such a freakishly bizarre shape, no husk will support a Gangrost. No analog to a mortal form can wrap itself around or disguise the beast's true nature. They will be instantly destroyed by the Forbiddance if they venture outside the Architect's lair in which they are created.

As minions, the Mishmash are used as muscle and soldiers, obediently fighting until they are destroyed. They are not intelligent opponents, but make up for their stupidity in strength and power. Stalkers facing these hideous minions are often taken aback by a Mishmash's tenacity, as though the creature has a death wish. Indeed, it is only through death that a Mishmash can find release, and it fights with reckless abandon.

As with other minions, destroyed Gangrost become shadows. Sadly, their forms remain merged, unable to revert to their original forms even after being destroyed. Their pain drives them to seek vengeance against the Unbidden responsible, hoping for the ultimate release of permanent destruction. Their attacks are still uncoordinated and tactically stupid, but they are just as stubborn and tenacious as shadows as they were as minions.

Mishmash shadows will often ally themselves with Stalkers if they believe that the alliance will help them punish their former minions. Sadly, they are little use as spies or informants, as their pain and insanity disrupts any ability to think clearly. They only wish to fight against their former master, and will awaken to fight again if they can be guided into their creator's lair.

The insanity and chaos that pervades the mind of a Gangrost, even in shadow form, permeates any area in which they reside. Their aura of chaos influences the Realm of Flesh, causing accidents and mishaps at an alarming rate. Plates will fall and crack, pipes will burst, and foundations will crack. The Gangrost are not aware of their chaotic influence.

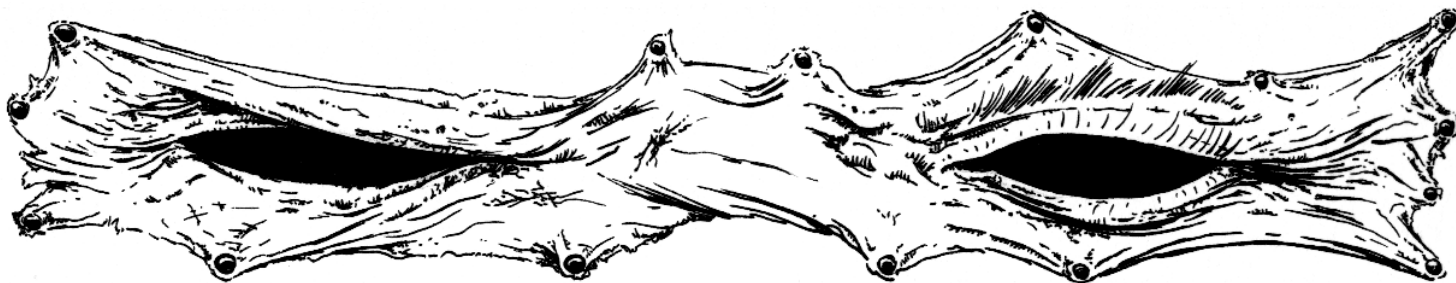
Because they are so freakishly hideous, even compared to other shadows, Gangrost are almost universally reviled. An interesting effect of this hatred is that they do not understand mercy or pity, and if shown so much as a kind word or gentle touch, they will literally fall apart, separating into their original forms. Of course, in the aftermath of the hideous ritual through which they were created, the original forms lack the cohesion to survive, and both halves will be permanently destroyed.

COMBAT: When in combat, a Mishmash will use whatever physical weapons are appropriate to its form, whether tooth, claw, or tentacle (2 Attacks, Attack 12, 5D damage).

SPECIAL ABILITIES: The Gangrost unwittingly release a chaos effect that causes mishaps and accidents wherever they go. Attacks that fail against them stand a high chance of critically failing. Roll a die – if the result is a '1,' the GM should pick a Stalker (possibly even the attacker) and the attack must be repeated against that character.

VULNERABILITIES: Any act of kindness toward a Gangrost will destroy it permanently.





ULLULLUK (BLOB)

These rare Shadows are obsessed with the act of eating. They cluster around mortal gluttons, watching every bite taken. On rare occasions, their desire to taste food will grow so great that they Awaken and Enflesh themselves as tiny insects mistaken for common houseflies. A manifested Ullulluk is little more than a pest, and most of them are quickly squashed. Even if they survive, they rarely remain in the Flesh for more than a few days before being pulled back into the Rift.

If the Ullulluk is swallowed whole by a living mortal, however, it will burrow into their gullet and live there. As the Ullulluk consume, but do not actually *digest*, it will grow rapidly. After about a month, it will undergo a dramatic transformation, consuming its entire host from the inside and becoming a full-fledged Blob. While its swollen head rarely becomes more than a few inches across, its gullet will expand endlessly, swiftly filling whatever area it happens to inhabit. Outdoors, an Ullulluk can grow to a ridiculous size, often covering an acre or more in folds and rolls of swollen, grotesque flesh. More often they are found inside a house or apartment, having filled the entire building to a height of several feet.

An Ullulluk lives to eat, but does not eat to live. Anything consumed simply sits inside its body, completely engulfed by folds of flesh. These Shadows actually think of the contents of their belly more as a prized collection of rare treasures than actual meals. One effect of this is that an Ullulluk can actually be bribed to disgorge some object it has already eaten by offering it a more interesting meal.

COMBAT: 1 Swallow (Attack 12). Any target swallowed can break free if they can inflict at least 30 points of damage in a single round. If they fail, they will be trapped helplessly inside it.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: It can disgorge any one object that it has previously eaten at will, but is loathe to do so.

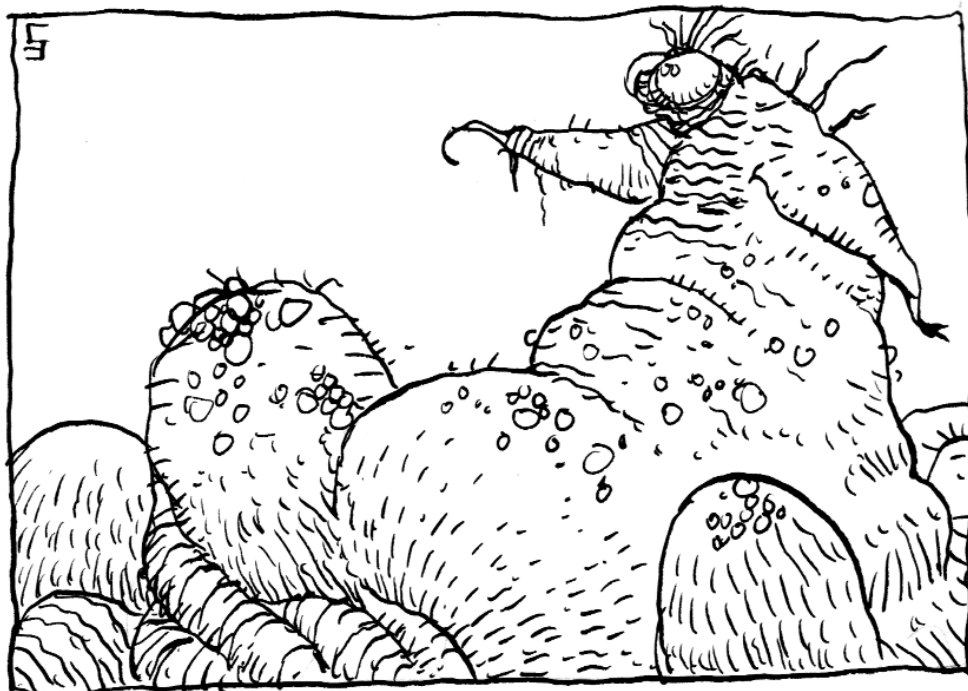
VULNERABILITIES: The head is quite fragile, if you can find it. The body itself is generally completely immobile.

Fortitude	1
Vitality (Head)	10 /
(Body)	100 to 10,000
Initiative	6
Defend	2
Perceive	12
Resolve	12

Living creatures engulfed by a Blob tend to fall unconscious immediately, but will not suffocate; the fluids in its belly preserve flesh and life rather than dissolving it. Creatures of Essence who are swallowed may be able to tear their way free if they are fast enough, but often they end up pinned down by the weight of its flesh and held immobile. The muscular action of its gut enables the Ullulluk to rapidly move any man-sized object swallowed to any part of its body that it wants, so if a Stalker wants to tear a swallowed comrade free, they must act quickly before the victim is sucked away.

Unbidden sometimes create Blobs deliberately by feeding newly-Awakened Ullulluk to helpless mortals. They can't be readily Husked, but a Bound one can be easily covered with garbage, giving it the appearance of a huge trash heap. They are generally used as living storage devices.

The Ullulluk's body generally has only two important features, both of which are quite mobile and independent. Its mouth, which can be almost as big as its whole body, can open in any location to gulp down new food, and the head can move quite rapidly, sliding along the surface of its flesh. It can sense movement through the tiny hairs covering its body, but it can only see through its head. Since its head is its most vulnerable spot, the Ullulluk usually keeps it hidden, well away from any possible attack. It will only bring it out into the open when it feels safe, or when its curiosity has gotten the better of it.





BURGHURAK (RAG MAN)

Burghurak are solitary shadows found primarily in remote forest and woodland areas. They are very territorial, and each Rag Man generally claims an area ranging from a large field to a small forest as their own. They constantly patrol that region, observing every event that occurs in the Flesh.

Fortitude	3
Vitality	10 +2 per head
Initiative	15
Defend	14
Perceive	15 + 1 per head
Resolve	10

Animals can sometimes sense the presence of a Rag Man and tend to find it disquieting. A region claimed by a Rag Man will have surprisingly little wildlife. Sensitives who enter the area will feel as though they are being watched. Mortals commonly describe such regions as being "too quiet."

A Burghurak is most likely to Awaken when a mortal is decapitated in their territory, particularly if the body is dragged away but the head left behind. The Shadow becomes intently fascinated with the discarded skull, recognizing that something of great value has been left behind. It may then enter the Flesh and claim the severed head as its own.

Physically, an Awakened Burghurak resembles a crude human figure made from sticks tied together with vines and scraps of torn and rotting cloth. When it first appears, a Rag Man will be headless, but it is quick to remedy this by affixing the skull to its neck. As it finds more skulls over time, it will add more, lashing them together.

Rag Men covet skulls but are reluctant to engage in direct combat. Whenever a group of mortals intrudes into its territory, it prefers to frighten them away with a power similar to the Terrify Discipline. Only Inspired or Driven mortals are likely to be able to resist this attack. If the Burghurak is able to catch a single human alone, however, it may instead follow and observe them, trying to decide if their head is worth taking. Humans with visible head injuries or deformities are particularly likely to be attacked. Rag Men can also be quite vengeful when it comes to their territory; humans who damage or destroy part of that territory may find that the Rag Man will pursue them for up to a day before giving up and returning home.

Each human skull added to its body grants the Rag Man 2 additional points of Vitality and a +1 bonus to their Attack and Perceive ratings. Most cannot "wear" more than five or six heads at once, but a Rag Man who finds a particularly "desirable" head may well be willing to discard one of its current skulls to make room. They are particularly sensitive to the deaths of mortals. A Rag Man can instantly sense whenever someone dies in their territory and will normally rush to investigate. If the Enigma manifests within the territory of a Rag Man, it will sense the disturbance and become extremely agitated. If Stalkers can persuade one that they are here to fix the problem rather than the cause of it, a Burghurak can be a powerful ally that knows every detail of the surrounding region.

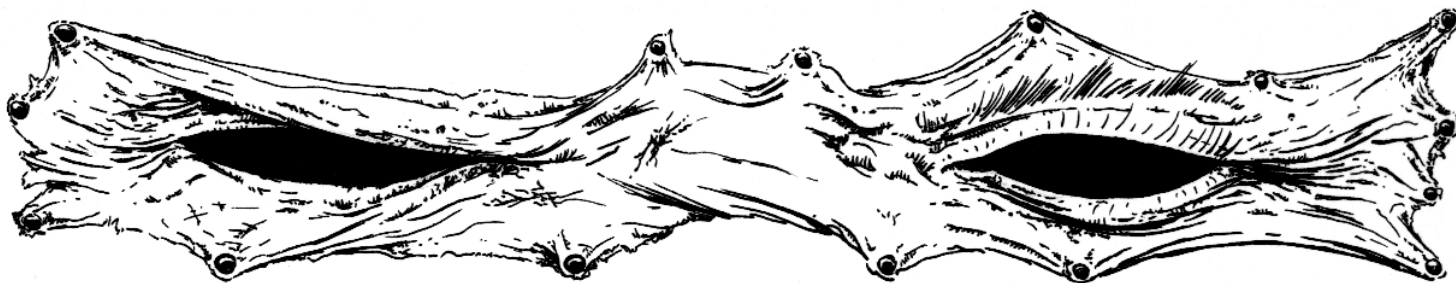
COMBAT: 2 ropy "hands" (Attack 10 + 1 per human skull, 3D Damage). They have been known to use mortal weapons if available, so it isn't unknown to find a Rag Man using a shotgun instead. They suffer Die Cap penalties as per normal.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Terrify mortals at will, extremely stealthy in its own territory (It requires an Awareness test against difficulty 15 to spot it).

VULNERABILITIES: Rag Men are vulnerable to fire. They take double damage from any flame-based attack, and will usually flee from opponents using fire as a weapon. Loses 1 Vitality per day spent outside of its home territory as its heads crumble and rot.

The Unbidden will generally only Bind a Burghurak if the Shadow's territory happens to overlap with the Unbidden's chosen domain or the Enigma. They can be Husked as humans, but only when they have just a single skull; any others must be removed first. While they will slowly perish outside of their territory, this can be forstalled indefinitely by keeping them supplied with fresh heads. Unbidden have been known to craft metal supports for the creature's body which enable it to hold up to ten heads at a time, but such a creature cannot be Husked and must be kept hidden.





MEK FLITH (BRAIN MITE)

These diminutive shadows swarm around areas of conflict, feeding on violence. They prefer to separate the violence from the emotion of the fight, and are generally disgusted by crimes of passion or other violent acts that are powered by anger or hatred. The calculated slaughter of war is delicious to them, but the emotionless and surgical murders carried out by serial killers are nectar.

Smaller than a cockroach, a Mek Flith starves if it cannot get its fill of violent acts. Rather than surrender to its imminent demise or a lifetime of hunger, a Mek Flith will sometimes Awaken in an otherwise peaceful area, seeking to inspire the violence it desires. A Mek Flith is unlikely to Awaken in an area torn with strife or conflict, since it can get enough violence without the effort of Awakening. Only in areas where violence is in short supply will the small but dangerous shadow force its way into the Realm of Flesh.

An Awakened Brain Mite looks very similar to a small insect, and is therefore able to hide in plain site in the homes of its victims. It selects a victim based on its perception of the mortal's innate willpower and its observation of the mortal's physical strength. Once it knows that the mortal cannot reject it, the Brain Mite crawls into the victim's head through its ear canal and burrows into its brain while the mortal sleeps.

Because the Brain Mite tends to select physically powerful hosts, most of its victims are male. These men wake up in the morning with terrible headaches, and usually attribute these pains to a poor night's sleep caused by awful nightmares. The nightmares, of course, are the Brain Mite's initial attempts to drive their victims to commit emotionless violence.

COMBAT: None. Mek Flith are too small to cause any damage at all except through their hosts.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: The ability to nest in a host and drive him to murder is the only ability possessed by the deadly Brain Mite.

VULNERABILITIES: Mek Flith will starve if they are not fed violence. If its host is locked in a cell, or otherwise unable to commit violent acts, the Mek Flith will leave the host, where it can be easily destroyed by a child with a fly-swatter.

Fortitude	1
Vitality	1
Initiative	18
Defend	10
Perceive	12
Resolve	19

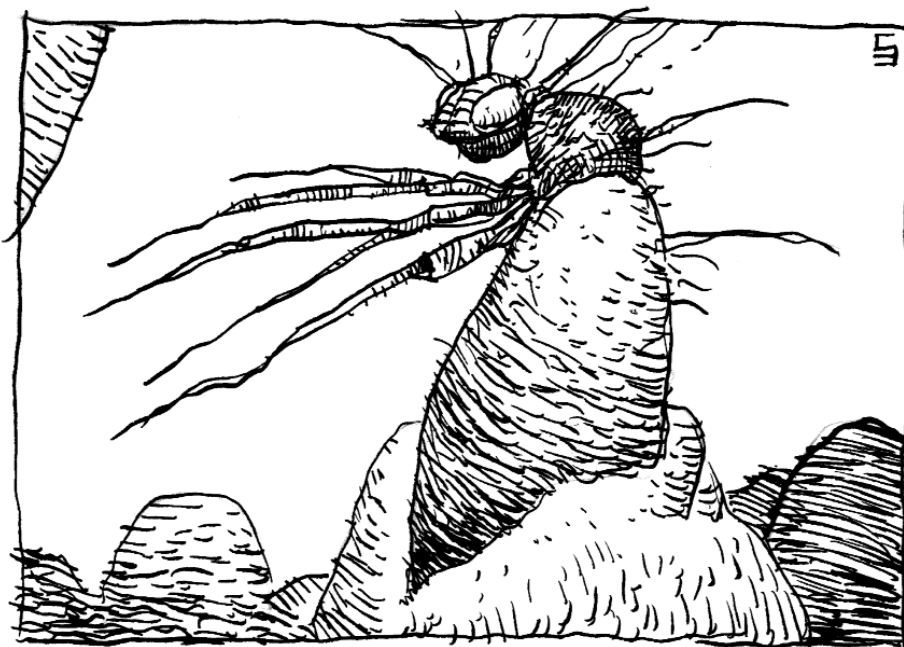
A mortal man who hosts a Mek Flith may begin to have strange visions or hear murderous voices. He will eventually begin to commit heinous murders to appease these visions or voices. The preservation instinct of the Mek Flith will force their hosts to be very careful about their crimes, taking the utmost precautions to avoid detection. Unsolved murders and serial killings will crop up around the host.

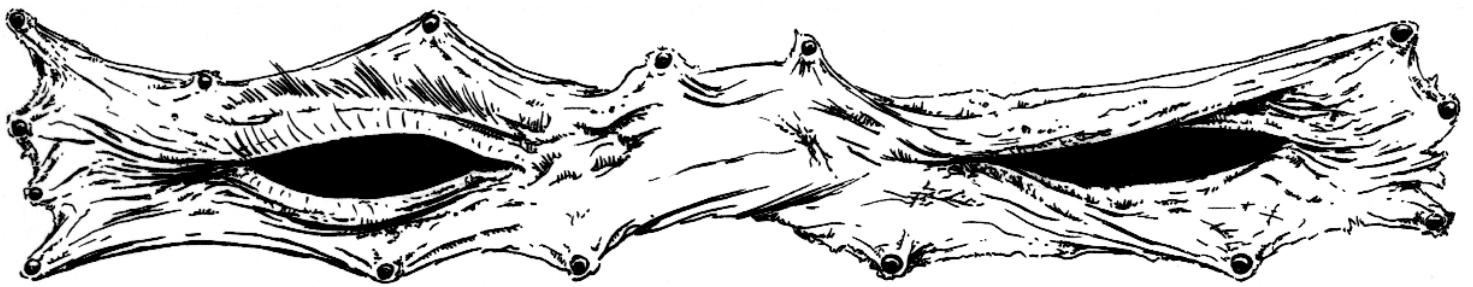
The host of a Brain Mite is rarely entirely willing to commit the horrible deeds to which he is driven. Some very clever murderers will attempt to leave clues behind to alert law enforcement of their identities. These clues are always very obscure, because if the Brain Mite detects their true intent, it will force the host to desist.

Because a Brain Mite only Awakens in areas that are calm and peaceful, neighbors are always surprised by the sudden spike in violent deaths. If the culprit is ever revealed to other mortals, their response is almost always the same. They can't believe that the host could commit such deeds. He always seemed like such a nice man!

The insidious power of a Mek Flith makes it an excellent minion. Unbidden will harness these insectoid shadows and send them throughout the Realm of Flesh to create mortal Thralls. These Thralls will follow the bidding of the Mek Flith embedded in their gray matter, which in turns takes orders from the Unbidden. The mortal Thralls thus created will generally be only vaguely aware of the supernatural nature of their drive to kill, but will nevertheless be dangerously loyal, thanks to the whispers of the minion in their skull.

Any small, wingless insect will serve as an excellent husk for a Brain Mite. They can be bound into beetles or roaches, or crammed into a large ant. They abandon these husks when they enter their victim's head, and the desiccated insect corpse will often be the only clue to their presence within a mortal.





MacDougall

KAL LUKEEL (INQUISITOR)

Fortitude	12
Vitality	10
Initiative	12
Defend	12
Perceive	15
Resolve	20

The Kal Lukeel adore mortal priests and churches. They lurk just outside the Flesh, listening to sermons and somehow drawing strength from the belief of the faithful. The more charismatic and devout the priest, the more the Kal Lukeel cling to their every utterance. They pick a single religion and follow it fanatically.

Occasionally, though, one will witness a beloved priest performing some heinous act which reveals them as a hypocrite and casts all of their words into doubt. Usually the Shadow flees in horror, abandoning that church and never returning again. Sometimes,

though, a Kal Lukeel will become so angry that they Awaken as an Inquisitor instead.

An Inquisitor considers itself an enforcer of its chosen faith's doctrine and punishes those who stray. The priest whose transgression Awakened it is almost always its first victim. It tears out the priest's spirit and captures it in a net of souls, intending to carry it to "judgement" at some future date. Unable to find God to present the guilty to Him, they instead wander the Flesh, seeking out other heretics and apostates and adding them to their collection. They rarely concern themselves with members of other faiths, only those who profess to be believers.

Inquisitors lurk in areas where members of their chosen faith can be found in large numbers. There they clothe themselves in heavy robes and keep watch over the believers. They are intelligent and very motivated; if a Kal Lukeel were to read a newspaper article about a heresy committed on the other side of the world, it would do whatever it took to get there and punish the transgressor. They have been known to stow away on airplanes or steal boats if necessary. Being Shadows, however, their understanding of their own faith is often lacking and they are capable of grievous misinterpretations of its doctrine. They try to attend appropriate church services and perform the appropriate rituals, but their inhuman appearance makes this difficult at best.

Their strong will makes Binding them dangerous. Even when successfully Bound, they have been known to break free if forced to perform an act which violates their beliefs. More often, Unbidden pose as priests or theologians and manipulate the Inquisitor into serving them by portraying their enemies as demons or heretics.

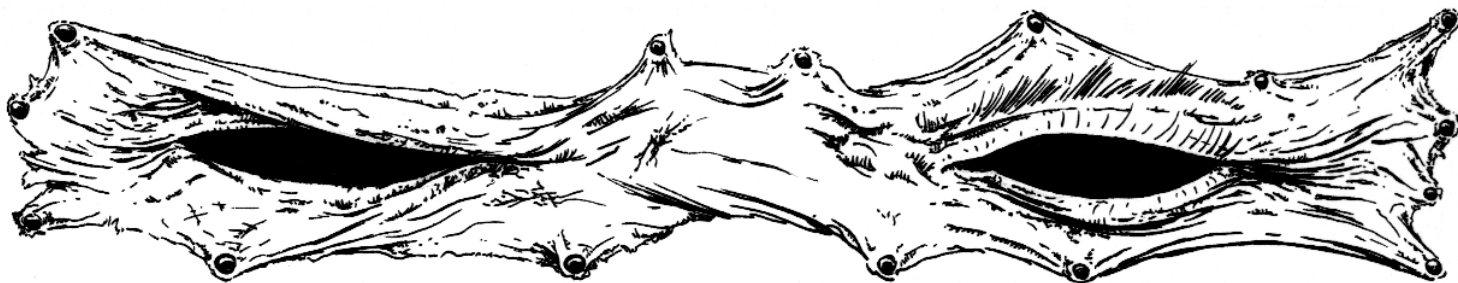
COMBAT: 2 Claws (Attack 12, 5D Damage) or 1 Soul Net (Attack 15).

SOUL NET: This weapon is woven out of the Shadow's own Essence and is actually part of its body. It has the ability to rip the Essence out of any creature struck, a process which is instantly lethal to mortals. A Stalker can resist this effect by succeeding in a Willpower Challenge against a difficulty of 15. Other creatures can resist if their Resolve equals or exceeds the Inquisitor's. If a Stalker is captured in this manner, their Vessel will collapse and begin to dissolve, losing 1 Vitality per hour. If their body runs out of Vitality before they can be freed, the Stalker will be cast back into the Rift and must acquire a new body before they can return. If an Unbidden still in a Vessel is struck, their Vessel is immediately destroyed, but there is no other effect. An Avatar is too powerful to be captured, but can be held immobilize by the Inquisitor at a cost of 1 Vitality per minute.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: A Kal Lukeel can appear as an angel or similar creature to mortal believers of the same religion by expending 1 Vitality. Only driven mortals will be able to resist its aura of authority; others will see it as a messenger of the divine and obey it accordingly. It can also expell a chosen spirit from its soul net at the cost of 1 Vitality.

VULNERABILITIES: Kal Lukeel *want* to follow the rules of their own religion. Someone familiar with that mortal faith can often coerce the Inquisitor into doing what they want by quoting the appropriate scripture.





VEDOR (BASILISK)

In the Rift, Vedor are peaceful shadows found only in the most vibrant and healthy of wilderness areas. They can be found near the nesting grounds of large flocks of birds, in lakes filled in fish and in forests teeming with wildlife. Their presence gives the area a feeling of peace and joy.

If a Vedor observes such a vibrant area being laid waste to with chemicals, radiation, or some other extremely unnatural source of destruction, it may Awaken in a rage. During the Vietnam War, many Basilisks were awakened as the jungles were destroyed with Agent Orange and napalm. They can also be found in regions where industrial development has utterly obliterated the once-lush greenery and poisoned the soil.

Fortitude	2
Vitality	10
Initiative	12
Defend	15
Perceive	15
Resolve	8

Physically, an Awakened Basilisk is a thin, almost emaciated figure with spines growing out of its back and a long, mask-like muzzle. Bitter and disgusted by the devastation around it, it stalks the ruins looking for anyone to blame. Its mood is

vile and poisonous and its body reflects this. Everything about a Basilisk is poisonous. Touching its skin, its saliva or even its blood can be deadly to mortals. This corrupting effect can even damage creatures of Essence. The venom seeps through physical objects with distressing ease. If a Basilisk is touched with a weapon or other inanimate object, the holder has only a single round to discard the item before its venom poisons them through it. Simply walking on ground poisoned by a Basilisk can easily be lethal.

Furthermore, its very breath is poisonous, creating a toxic fog around it that flows outward along the ground. This cloud sterilizes the soil and can cause sickness in the weak and vulnerable up to a kilometer away.

COMBAT: 1 Poisoned Claw (Attack 12, 4D Damage). If a Basilisk is struck by a melee attack, the attacker takes 3D damage as they contact its poisoned flesh. Most weapons that strike it will become poisonous to the touch after one round, then corrode into uselessness.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Toxic cloud. Any creature traveling through the same area where a Basilisk has passed will suffer 1D of damage per minute. If they are within the Shadow's immediate vicinity, the rate increases to 1D per combat round. If a Basilisk is killed with physical force, its body will rupture and release a toxic cloud that inflicts 3D damage on everyone in the vicinity.

VULNERABILITIES: Vedor are *not* immune to the poison cloud of other Vedor, with the result that these Shadows are always found alone, even when Bound.

The Unbidden often Bind Basilisks, but prefer to keep them far away from their actual lair, because of the damaging effects of their poison. They may force a Basilisk to poison a particular patch of soil in order to ward it against intrusion, but this effect will have to be renewed periodically. Vedor cannot be Husked; their venomous touch will destroy any Husk mere moments after it is applied.





FIR DARRIG (RED MAN)

The industrious Fir Darrig is the source of many fire-side tales and rural folklore. These short, shy shadows lurk in rural areas, delighting in physical labor. They are very rarely found in cities, as the work done by city-dwellers is rarely as physical as that done by rural folk.

The Fir Darrig take great pleasure in watching mortals earn their keep with sweat and effort. They take an almost surrogate pride in the successes of the mortals they observe, and become emotionally attached to mortals who seem to be particularly honest and industrious. Their pride tends to wear off on the mortals they haunt, leading to even greater productivity and hard work.

A Fir Darrig will often stay with one family for years, rejoicing in their successes and mourning their losses. When the farmers, blacksmiths or herders they watch over are threatened from other mortals, the darker side of the Fir Darrig emerges.

The Red Men are well-known among mortals for their penchant for mischief and cruel pranks. Those who threaten a family protected by a Red Man will find themselves the butt of supernatural pranks. Most of these pranks may be relatively harmless, but now and then a loosened lug nut or severed brake line is a Red Man's preferred revenge.

Despite the protection of the Fir Darrig, farms or ranches can suffer losses. When the work to be done is too much for the mortals responsible, a loyal Fir Darrig will often Awaken to help out.

Farmers will often find cows milked, butter churned, or chickens fed. Blacksmiths will find furnaces cleaned or tools sharpened. The Red Man will do his best to help out with small chores, working under the cover of darkness to ease the workload on their charges. Incredibly shy, the Red Man will do everything in his power to avoid being spotted by mortals, always working with ears wary of danger and eyes scanning for any sign of detection.

In return for its services, the Red Man is delighted to accept bowls of warm milk, small fruits, or other scraps. They do not need to appease their

Fortitude	4
Vitality	8
Initiative	20
Defend	18
Perceive	18
Resolve	15

hunger, but they like to be appreciated. They will empty the bowls or cups, leaving daintily chewed apple cores or drops of milk, and go about their chores.

Of course, not all mortals are willing to accept help, especially from supernatural sources. As it is especially difficult to catch sight of a Red Man, they may never believe that supernatural creatures are doing the work, and refuse to leave a reward. When unrewarded, Red Men may get vindictive, pulling harmless but annoying pranks on the mortals instead of helping out with chores.

Mortals who attempt to stop a Red Man may find that these pranks become even meaner. Locked doors or guard dogs will inspire the Red Man's mean streak, and the tricks they play will become ever more cruel. They will usually stop short of taking a life - but not always. A truly angry Red Man is a dangerous foe.

The Unbidden love to bind a Fir Darrig as a minion, because they are very hard workers. They are still prone to tricks and pranks, and will be very angry if they ever escape their slavery. The pranks played by a Fir Darrig against a former Unbidden master are as destructive as the shadow can be.

A Red Man's husk generally resembles a small man, and when husked as mortals, the Red Men love to dress in garish red suits.

The best way to be rid of a Red Man is to let him know you've seen him. This is much harder than it sounds. A mortal would have to hide out incredibly well to avoid the cautious searching of a Red Man, and would never be capable of sneaking up on one. The instant a Red Man knows he is being watched, he will leap away with amazing speed, never to reappear.

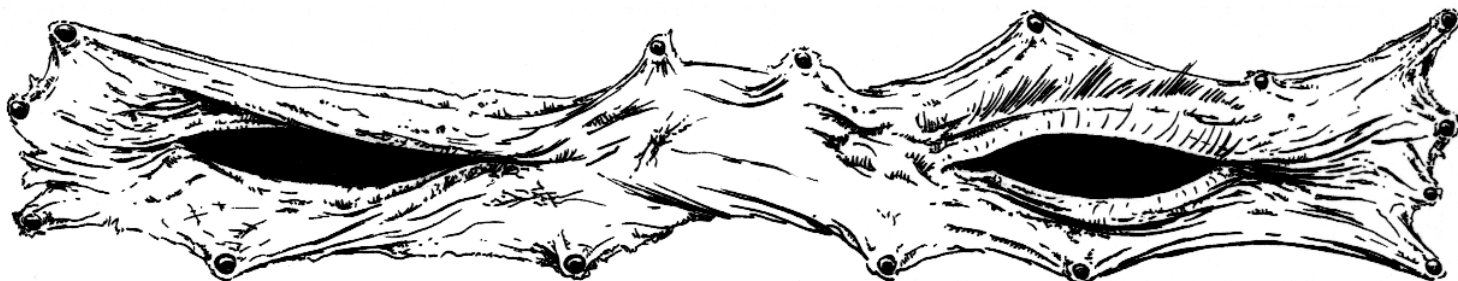
COMBAT: The Fir Darrig rarely fight, but when cornered will strike with sharp claws (Attack 14, 2D damage).

SPECIAL ABILITIES: The Fir Darrig can summon pranks at a whim to slow pursuit or dissuade persistent enemies. Opponents may find their foot glued to the ground, or sharp tacks in their clothing. Persistent foes may be victims of even crueler pranks.

The Fir Darrig are also incredibly shy and miraculously quick. A Stalker wishing to capture one must beat first beat it on an initiative roll, and then successfully strike it with the stated intent to grab it. If either roll fails, the Fir Darrig leaps through the nearest exit and escapes.

VULNERABILITIES: Their shyness is their mortal failing. If a Fir Darrig knows that a mortal has seen it, usually because a mortal announces his presence, it will be banished from that mortal's lands. If the Unbidden's lair is on the mortal's lands, the Fir Darrig will be freed from its service.





SHARAZEL (TEMPTRESS)

Fortitude	5
Vitality	9
Initiative	12
Defend	12
Perceive	15
Resolve	12

The Sharazel are beings of passion, thrilled and excited by the release of emotion. They are voyeurs, watching from the Realm of Essence as mortals succumb to their lust. The Sharazel are particularly aroused by crimes of passion, when the raw energy of sexual passion leads to the flame of jealous rage. A mortal who kills another while in the full grip of fiery lust and anger can give off enough raw passion to cause a Sharazel to Awaken.

When she first enters the Realm of Flesh, a Temptress knows only that she must feed her insatiable hunger for sex. She will seek out a partner as quickly as possible, male or female, and seduce them with supernatural sex appeal. As long as her partner does not excite the Temptress too much, they are completely safe. However, when her partner is particularly skilled, and rouses uncontrollable passion within the Temptress herself, her ecstasy pours forth in physical flame, consuming her partner from the inside.

The first time a Temptress takes a mortal life through her fiery passion, she will be overcome with a heady mixture of emotion. She will be guilty over having destroyed her partner, but the incredible rush of taking a life in the midst of her lust will be addictive. She will hate herself for her unquenchable hunger, but she will be driven to seek out another partner. She will discard immediately any partner that does not completely satisfy her, breaking hearts everywhere she goes. Her all-consuming goal is to find another mortal who can rouse her to ecstasy, and who will then feed her soul with his fiery death.

Eventually, a Temptress will learn to control her power, and be able to summon fiery death without physical intercourse. She will still hunger for the fire of physical satisfaction, and will continue to hunt for mortal partners.

Unawakened Sharazel are splendid informants, as long as the Stalkers wish to know about sexual trysts. They are not entirely reliable, however, as they may describe the mortals they view in terms of their naked bodies. It may not be much help to a circle to know that the Thrall they seek has dark nipples or a mole on his inner thigh.

Since they are Awakened in the form of beautiful women, Temptresses require no husk. However, the fire inside them burns constantly, and their bodies will always be extraordinarily warm to the touch.

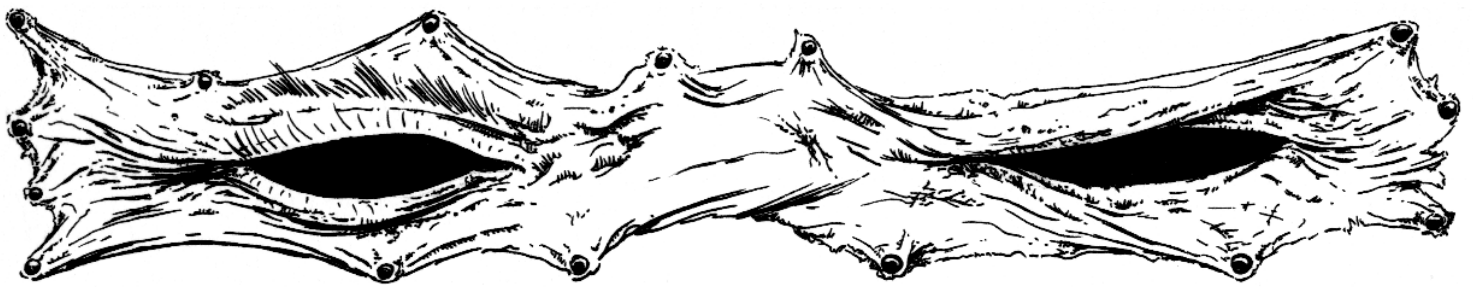
The Unbidden may use Temptresses as warriors, as they are quite dangerous once they have enough experience to wield their inner flame as a weapon. Their hatred for their master may cause them to manifest their fiery abilities unintentionally, and many Temptress minions have flames curling from their eyes or leaping from their hair. If destroyed, they are not likely to seek revenge, as their attention is usually diverted to watching mortals have sex.

COMBAT: Fiery Fist (Attack 13, 1D to 7D damage) The longer a Temptress has been Awakened, the more control she has over her inner flame, and the greater the damage caused by her attack. Temptresses used as minions will have a minimum 3D damage.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Seduce. Any character (mortal or Stalker) who wishes to harm the Temptress must defeat its resolve in a Willpower-based Challenge Roll.

VULNERABILITIES: Ice water or other cold-based attacks will quench a Temptress's inner flame, reducing her damage to 0D until for three rounds.





HEBRIAL (MARSH-STALKER)

Fortitude	4
Vitality	12
Initiative	8
Defend	15
Perceive	15
Resolve	18

(10 in a peaceful situation)

These Shadows are drawn to placid, undisturbed pools of water and are commonly found in the most isolated parts of a desolate swamp, marshland or sheltered pond. There they are content to simply watch the occasional ripple across the water's surface. The more placid and serene the area is, the more Hebrials it is liable to attract. They are Awakened only when the tranquility of the area is broken by a violent murder and the corpse left in the water. As time passes, the Hebrials will become more and more disturbed by the presence of the rotting corpse and one of them will eventually enter the Flesh to remove it.

Physically, an Awakened Hebrial resembles a tiny mass of algae about a foot across. In this form, they are almost helpless and quite vulnerable, but they rarely remain that way. Their first task is to slowly draw enough reeds and algae about the body to conceal it as best it can. Then it crawls into the rotting corpse and takes possession of the mass. The stats given for a Hebrial assume that it has already constructed a body for itself; without a body a Hebrial has no effective attacks, and a Vitality of 2. Once the process is complete, it staggers away from the original pool, seeking another quiet, placid spot to deposit the body. Unfortunately, having entered the Flesh, a Hebrial is always unable to leave again and remains trapped inside its new form.

Marsh-stalkers are generally found in an isolated, overgrown pool of water, lying mostly submerged beneath the murky surface. They crave only solitude and silence. Anything that disturbs the serenity of the area is liable to find itself a victim of a sudden, murderous attack by the resident Hebrial. Once the intruder has escaped or been slain, the Hebrial will seek out yet another placid, watery area, still trying to recover the peace that it lost by entering the Flesh. Their existence is a dreary one and they are generally filled with anger and frustration.

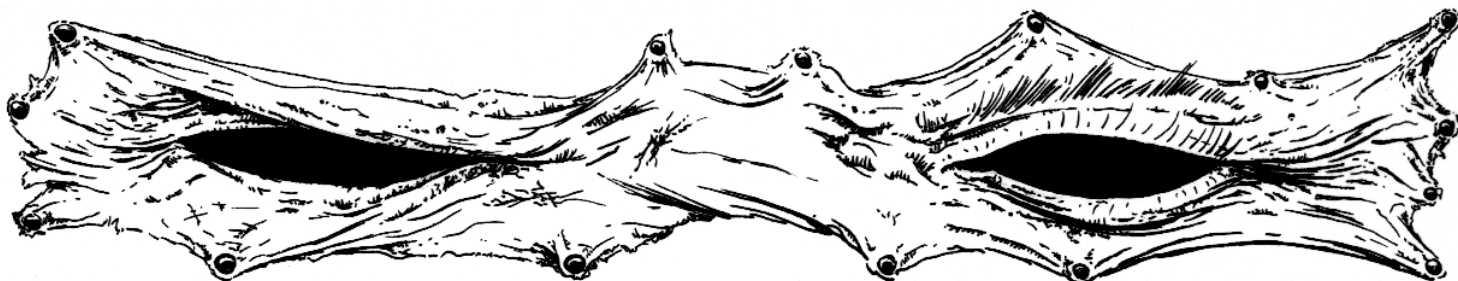
The Unbidden rarely bother to seek out Awakened Hebrial, and instead create them by scattering mortal corpses around a likely spot and then waiting for an appropriate number of Hebrial to Awaken. They can be Husked in any humanoid shape, but it's often simpler to simply install them in a pool or marshy area and let their natural camouflage take care of it. They are surprisingly intelligent but usually consider silence preferable to speech.

COMBAT: 2 claws (Attack 14, 4D Damage each)

SPECIAL ABILITIES: When submerged and motionless, a Hebrial is almost indistinguishable from any other mass of plant life (Awareness 18 to spot a quiescent Hebrial).

VULNERABILITIES: Even when Bound, a Hebrial still craves peace and serenity. If faced with particularly peaceful and still location, it will invariably hesitate for at least one round before resuming its duties. A Hebrial also needs a source of fresh water; if it dries out, it loses 1 Vitality per day. When in a serene state, a Hebrial is much easier to Banish, as it wishes to abandon the Flesh; when angered, it is very difficult to cast out.





BECHTHUM (GRUB)

Fortitude	5	The Bechthum are miserable creatures bound to hover around forests and jungles. While these natural habitats may be their homes, the Bechthum hate the vibrancy and vitality of the woods. Their hatred can spawn lightning storms, forest fires or swarms of locusts in attempts to destroy their homes and free themselves of the bond they share with nature.
Vitality	6	
Initiative	12	
Defend	12	
Perceive	14	
Resolve	12	

Bechthum long to Awaken and use their hideous forms to wreak deadly havoc on their forests. However, they require considerable sustenance in order to Awaken, and their only food is the waste created by the devastation of their home. Fires or insect plagues may feed them temporarily, but without the intervention of mortals, they are doomed to spend their existences cursing their forest homes.

When mortals assault a forest, they are far more capable of destruction. Mortals can plow forests into dirt, burn the trees, and poison the land with spilled fuels and ashes. To a Bechthum, this destruction is an orgy of food. In the face of such devastation, a Bechthum can Awaken and begin its vengeance against the forest that holds it captive.

Grubs Awaken as pasty-fleshed, corpulent worms only a little larger than a house cat. Their stubby legs are ill-equipped for speed, but can drag a Grub's bloated body from one tree to the next, stabbing deep into the vegetation with a barbed and poisoned tongue. Their skin oozes disease, fouling the soil across which they crawl. They may not be quick, but Grubs are more than capable of destroying acres of woodlands in a month's time.

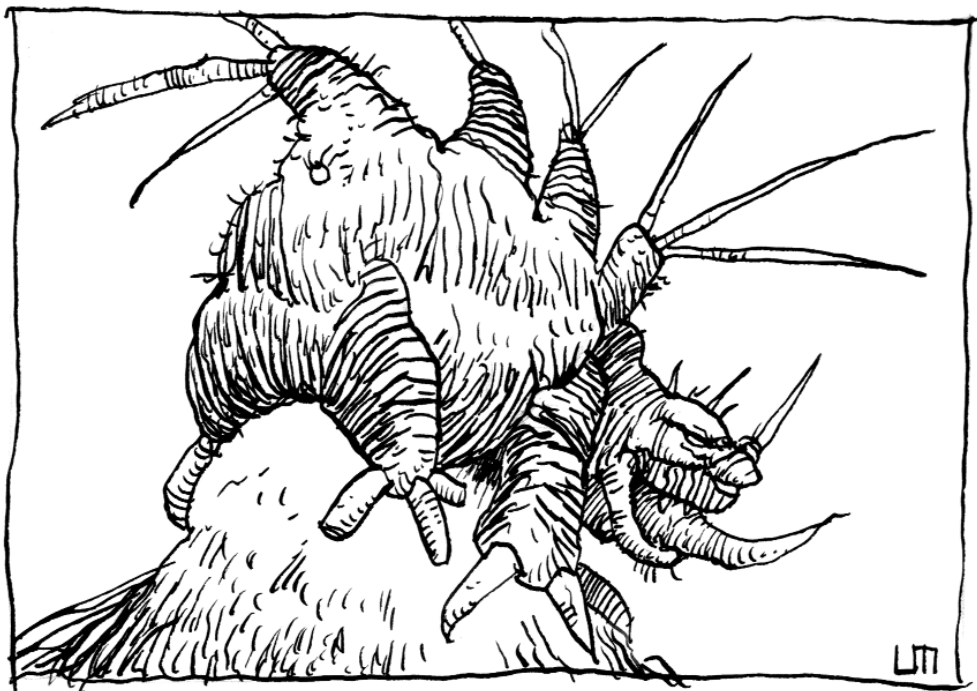
The Unbidden sometimes use Grubs to clear land, since the hideous little creatures exist to destroy. They are also somewhat capable guards, as long as they can stay hidden long enough to strike a victim with their long tongue.

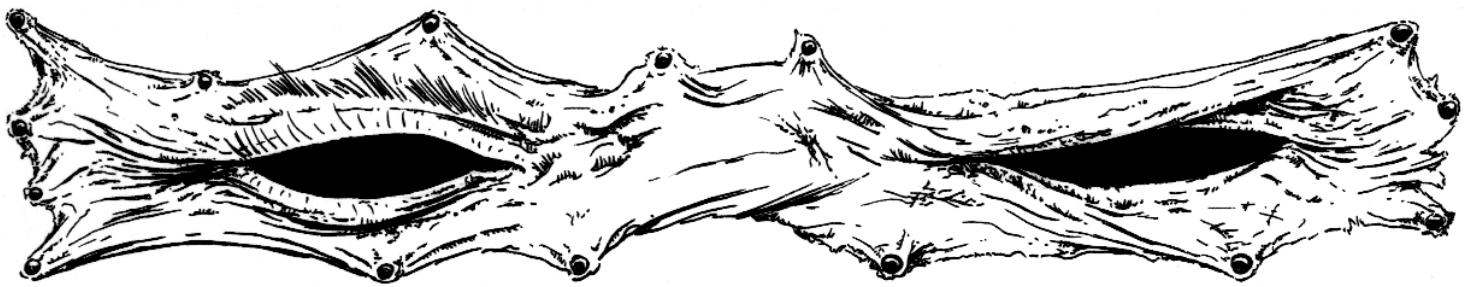
Fitting a Grub into a husk is an exercise in futility. They can be crammed into the body of a large toad, but the poison in their skin will erode and decay the husk within days. They can also be stuffed into the body of a large snake, but anyone watching the creature move will notice that it drags most of its long body behind it.

COMBAT: Poisonous Tongue (Attack: 10, Damage 7D) The Grub will usually hide until it gets an opportunity to strike, since it rarely gets to attack twice.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Poisonous Skin. Any creature of Flesh that touches a Grub, even inside a husk, will break out in painful boils within the hour. Until these sores heal, all challenges performed with the hands are increased in difficulty by 2.

VULNERABILITIES: Clean Water. If a Grub is washed in pure water, it loses 1 Vitality. If it is immersed, it dies immediately.





BILIBOOL (PENTATE)

Fortitude	6	Bilibool are small Shadows which lurk around the
Vitality	1	Flesh in great numbers, particularly in coastal regions.
Initiative	12	They lust after the taste of physical flesh and are drawn to
Defend	10	places that are littered with wasted meat. Sometimes if
Perceive	15	they find the corpse of an animal which was killed by a
Resolve	10	supernatural creature, they will Awaken and enter the
		Flesh to feed upon the remains. They are skittish, howev-
		er, and will only do so when everything is peaceful and
		still; most never muster the courage to enter the Flesh at all. The larger and fresher the
		remains, the more bilibool are likely to Awaken.

Once Awakened, bilibool behave much like cockroaches. They hide themselves in tiny cracks and crevices (their bodies are extremely compressible) and emerge at night to seek carrion. At the slightest noise, light, or other disturbance, they scamper with surprising speed and disappear back into the nearest hiding spot. They have numerous small, sticky tendrils with which they collect bits of food and deposit them in the primitive mouth in the center of their underbelly. They are equally at home on dry land or in the water and their sticky legs can cling to almost any surface.

Physically, the typical bilibool is quite small, barely a foot across. This, combined with its cowardly nature, means that a normal bilibool is no threat to anyone. Unfortunately, Unbidden sometimes Bind together into swarms, which can be quite dangerous. A swarm can consist of up to thirty bilibool, and they are treated as a single minion for purposes of Binding.

A swarm is bound to the will of the Unbidden, and it attacks on sight. When an intruder is detected, the bilibool squeeze out of their hiding places and rush upon them en masse. They cannot jump, but will readily climb walls or even electrical cables to reach their prey. Once they latch onto a victim, they adhere themselves to its flesh then begin tearing at their flesh and spraying them with digestive juices.

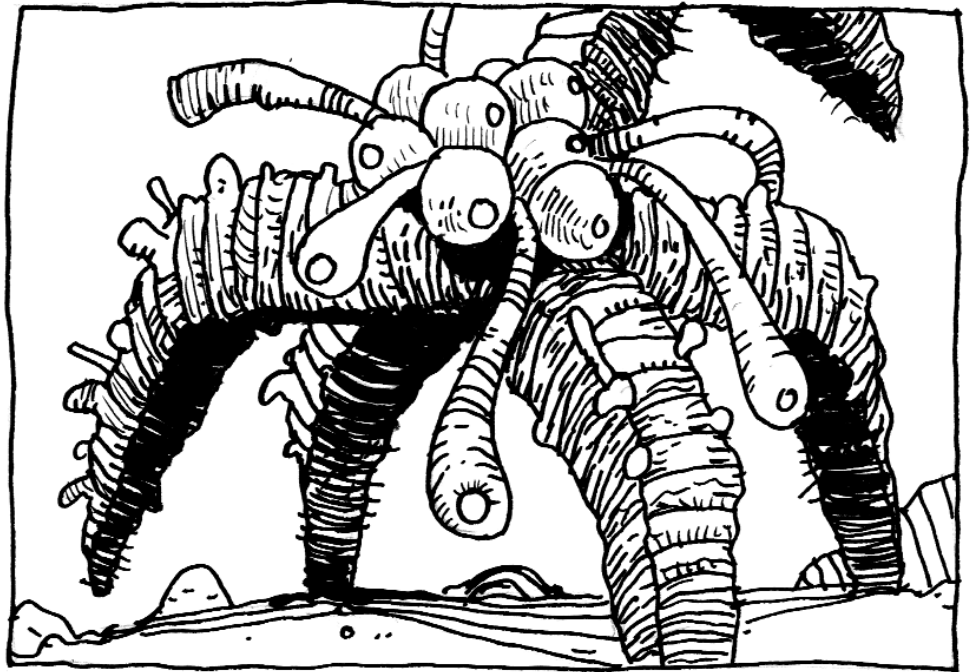
Bilibool are still practically mindless even when bound. Unless the Unbidden is present to direct them personally, they can only follow the simplest of commands. They are usually told to hide in a particular area and attack any intruders; anything more complex than that is beyond their capabilities. Bilibool can be husked as starfish or small animals such as rats, but this is rarely worth the bother.

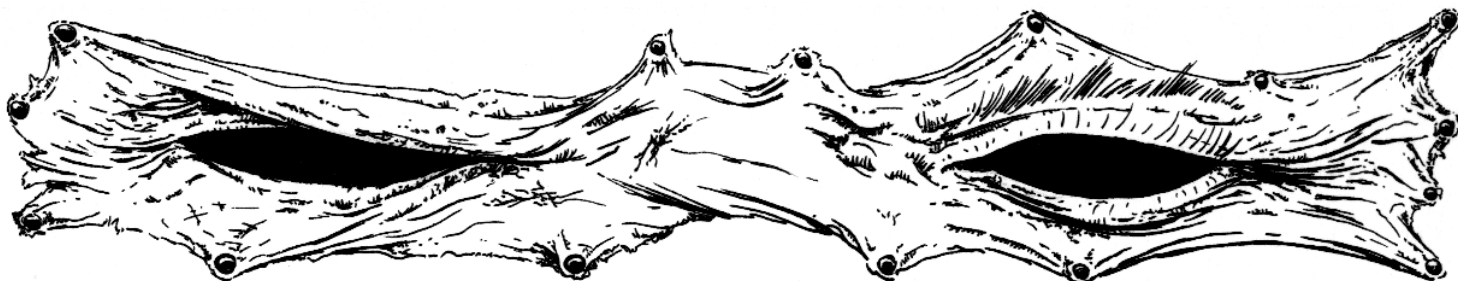
COMBAT: A swarm makes 1 attack against every foe in the area (Attack 12). Anyone struck is covered by 1D bilibool. Each round thereafter, their victim takes as many dice of damage as the number of bilibool on them. Any attack which inflicts damage on a bilibool will destroy it, but a single attack can only kill one bilibool unless it affects a large area.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Can hide in small crevices and climb sheer surfaces.

VULNERABILITIES: Each successful Banishing of a swarm destroys 2D bilibool. If Slashers are summoned, they will destroy 4D bilibool.

If the corpse of a Stalker or the Unbidden is left to rot in a quiet, undisturbed area, there is a small chance that a bilibool the size of a car will be drawn across into the Flesh. These enormous creatures have Fortitude 9, Vitality 9, Initiative 10, Defend 10, Perceive 15 and Resolve 10. They can make up to 3 attacks per round (Attack 15, 4D Damage) and count as a single Minion for purposes of binding and banishing.





ASKERAL (BONEGALLOWS)

Fortitude	8
Vitality	20
Initiative	12
Defend	12
Perceive	15
Resolve	12

Askeral are serpentine Shadows that wander quite randomly. They can be Awakened if a mortal is hanged and perishes in their vicinity, whether deliberately or due to some accident. They can taste the departing Essence when a human dies by this method, and they enter the Flesh to repeat the experience. They most commonly Awaken in trees used for lynchings, in rafters where people committed suicide, or in an actual gallows.

Physically, an Awakened Bonegallows is a long, ropelike creature. Their bodies are quite extensible and compressible, and they can strength themselves up to 100 feet long if they need to. The Veil causes most mortals to see them as strands of rope or vines, or as slithering snakes if they are seen moving. A Bonegallows is driven by hunger. They lurk in high places and hunt by ambush, dropping coils around the throat of prey passing underneath. Such victims are drawn up into the air and quickly asphyxiate. Once they perish, granting the Askeral one more taste of the delicious Essence being released, it will tow their body into a concealed area and slowly devour it in its entirety, leaving no remains to be found. They prefer to strike only at lone prey, and will usually remain concealed when a group of mortals pass by.

The very tail-tip of a Bonegallows is always anchored to part of the structure in which they Awakened. They can stretch themselves over a great distance, but can never actually detach themselves from that point. If the connection is somehow broken (perhaps by destroying the structure entirely), the Bonegallows will be banished back to the Rift. If their home seems confiningly small, the Askeral will start using the remains of its victims to construct extensions to it, rather than devouring them completely. This nest generally takes the form of a macabre jungle gym, made out of bone and sinew. The Veil generally protects this as well, causing mortals to see it as loose cabling, vines, or normal construction.

COMBAT: 1 Constriction (Attack 15, 5D Damage). The target further suffers a 4D strangulation attack each round thereafter until they break free. A Strength contest against difficulty 15 can free a victim, or if the Bonegallows loses 3 or more points of Vitality from a single attack it will drop its current victim. Pinned creatures can usually continue to fight (though not with a bite attack) but cannot escape until they are freed.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Immune to normal Banishment attempts.

VULNERABILITIES: The Bonegallows is physically tied to the spot where it Awakened, and if the structure to which it is adhered is destroyed, the Bonegallows will automatically be Banished.

The Unbidden have been known to Bind Askeral, but their limited mobility makes them less useful than they would otherwise be. They are also very simple-minded creatures, and have difficulty with any sort of complicated command. They are best suited to guarding a particular area, strangling the life out of any intruders.





OMNIFURA (VIVISECTOR)

Fortitude	6
Vitality	14
Initiative	10
Defend	12
Perceive	10
Resolve	18

Omnifura are extremely intelligent Shadows and are obsessed with human knowledge and discovery. They are rarely found before the Renaissance period. They watch human researchers at work and spend most of their time observing events in universities, corporate laboratories and research institutes. They commonly whisper secrets to their favorite scientists, helping inspire them towards new lines of inquiry. This can enable a researcher to make sudden, dramatic discoveries but generally has a deleterious effect upon their sanity.

Omnifura cannot stand to see a project fail. If a favored researcher suddenly abandons their work (quite possibly due to the stress of hearing strange voices whispering in their head), the Omnifura will either seek out a new scientist or will Awaken to do the work itself.

An Awakened Omnifura is commonly referred to as a Vivisector. Physically, they resemble a humanoid automaton, constructed out of whatever machinery and equipment is most appropriate to the time period. Their first act is generally to murder their chosen subject and construct a Husk for themselves out of the researcher's body. Now disguised as their first victim, the Vivisector resumes the mortal's research, but at a much more frantic and dangerous pace.

The Vivisector can mimic its Husk's voice and mannerisms well enough to invoke the Veil, but it quickly abandons their family and friends. It will devote all of its time to its work, often forgetting to even pretend to eat or sleep. Their research project invariably starts to take a disturbing and dangerous turn. Using its knowledge of the true nature of reality, the Vivisector will start extracting Essence from living creatures to use in its work, and may even construct Essence-powered machines. This extraction process is extremely slow and painful and basically requires the complete vivisection of the "donor".

While the alien knowledge of an Omnifura can enable it to make great technological advances in a short period, the nature of those advances generally prevents their results from being reliably reproduced by other researchers. The Veil prevents its devices from working without a constant supply of Essence, a flaw that a Vivisector invariably attempts to compensate for by using more and more Essence in its machines.

Vivisectors never retain their original posts for very long. Their obsessiveness, recklessness and lack of reproducible results cause them to be cast out and ostracized. Then they become truly dangerous. On its own, a Vivisector will establish a private laboratory and continue its "work," which usually bears little resemblance to the original project. It has no morals and no concept of safety; only the research is important. People in the area disappear to power its machines. Strange lights will be seen in the night, and caustic chemicals may bubble up through cracks in the pavement. If the locals start inquiring into its business too closely, it will eliminate them. If that proves impractical, it will move to a new location and start over.

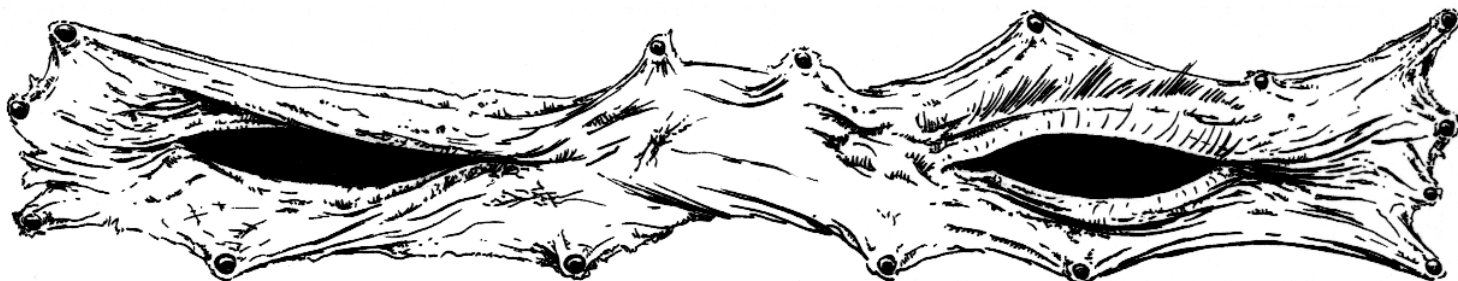
COMBAT: 1 piece of built-in weaponry (Attack 12, damage varies). As the Vivisector becomes more familiar with the technology of its era and makes new discoveries, it will graft more and more powerful weapons onto itself. In a primitive time period, such attacks will be comparatively weak (typically 3D Damage from slashing blades) but the more advanced the technology available, the more powerful they become. It's not unknown for a Vivisector to build Essence-based versions of weapons such as assault rifles or even railguns into its own body. Such weapons do not incur Die Cap penalties, but any use of them will destroy the Vivisector's Husk.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Vivisectors who have had time to establish a research facility of their own will often build robotic constructs or create genetically altered monsters to guard it. Typical stats for a such defenders are Fortitude:5, Vitality:10, Initiative:10, Defend:12, Perceive:10, Resolve:10, Attack:12, and Damage: 3D.

VULNERABILITIES: Gremlin Servitors do 8D damage to Vivisectors. Voidoid Servitors slow a Vivisector, reducing its Attack, Defend and Initiative by 4.

While the Unbidden can Bind Omnifura, once Bound the creature can no longer perform research or construct weapons or creatures. Because of this, it is common for an Unbidden to bargain with a Vivisector rather than Binding it. Such an alliance can last for many years, as long as the Vivisector does not see an opportunity to "research" the Unbidden itself.





CIVICORUS (MAW)

Fortitude	10
Vitality	40
Initiative	2
Defend	2
Perceive	10
Resolve	15

Civicorus are common Shadows that are fascinated with the act of constructing buildings. They can be found in great numbers around construction sites and housing projects. The exact impetus that causes one of these Shadows to Awaken is unknown, but if one Awakens while observing such a site, it will enter the Flesh and become part of the building.

Once a Maw has taken residence in a structure, it ever-so-slowly absorbs more and more of the building into its own flesh. Over a period of many years, the entire building will become part of the Maw, after which it will finally become aware of its surroundings.

A fully-Awakened Maw's flesh fills the structure it inhabits. The building becomes an enormous Husk hiding the bulk of its body. If the husk is destroyed, the doors become great vertical mouths filled with sharp teeth. Windows are revealed as eyes, ears or nostrils, and the interior rooms can be seen as pulsating organs.

The attitude of a given Maw towards the inhabitants of its host-building may vary greatly. Sometimes it will like and feel protective towards them. At other times it will regard them like some sort of parasitic infestation and work to drive them out. Sensitives will be able to tell whether or not the building "likes" them and will usually move out if it does not.

When a Civicorus decides that it doesn't like one of its residents or someone who regularly comes to the building, it has several ways to rid itself of them. It can subtly influence the actions of long-term inhabitants, using them to kill or drive away the undesirable. It can also physically manipulate its interior structures in subtle ways that will not break the Veil, such as causing elevator accidents or shaking a stairwell while its victim is on it. Balconies can become suddenly fluid and hurl people down to the streets below, or a window might suddenly pop out of its frame while someone was leaning against it. A house containing a Maw eventually gains a reputation for murders, accidents and assaults.

If the Husk is sundered in a spot it can be fixed as though the Maw were a normal building, using mortar and plaster to repair the damage. The Maw will generally force those inhabitants most under its control to perform such repairs, rather than trusting to the Veil to keep repairmen from seeing its true nature.

COMBAT: It can Bite a single target passing through an interior doorway (Attack 12, 3D Damage) or make a Crush attack by compressing one of its interior rooms to crush the inhabitants (Attack 15, 4D Damage to everyone who fails to dodge). Using the Crush attack will sunder its Husk in that area and cost the Maw 5 Vitality, so this attack will only be used in desperation.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Can exert control over long-term inhabitants, forcing them to act as it wills, including attacking its enemies. Only Driven or Inspired mortals will be able to resist this effect. Can also cause accidents by minor manipulations of its Husk.

VULNERABILITIES: Immobile. Due to the extremely long time required for a Maw to fully awaken, the Unbidden rarely try to create them, but may Bind one if they find it. Using a Maw's building as a lair is a calculated risk; the first time that a Bound Maw is successfully Banished, it will instead be freed from the Unbidden's control. If this happens, it can become a powerful ally to the Stalkers. If a Maw is truly Banished, its host building will become unstable and collapse over the next few minutes.

