

Thy Flesh Consumed
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This mini adventure started out as a minor encounter I put my players through quite some time ago. Since initially running it, I have expanded upon the idea. This adventure will introduce a new mutant race, and a new, deadly disease.

Please note that some of the information in this adventure comes from my own campaign. Feel free to use as little, or as much as you wish.

I would like to thank both Gary Gore, and Joseph Benedetto, for their comments, suggestions, criticism, and ideas. The changes have been made. Thanks Guys, this one's for you!

Also, this mini adventure works best if ran during the late spring. Please see the description of the Ghoul race at the end of the article.

Finally, it is best if you download the article I wrote up handling disease, as it will be useful for this adventure.

The Team has stopped in the small town of Higgins Lake, a town with a population of one hundred, twenty two. They have stopped to restock on fresh food and water, and to talk to the locals.

The town is a small farming community. They grow crops of grain and corn, and various types of vegetables. They also fish the nearby lake for food. As for livestock, the townsfolk have about seventy head of cattle, numerous sheep, pigs, chickens and goats. They also make and trade wooden items (such as furniture), tanned leathers, and, of course food. They will trade for just about anything, but they are more interested in ammunition for their weapons, or stock to make their own ammo.

The town is not walled, and is surrounded by both tilled fields and in some areas, well groomed clusters of trees. As for personal weapons, it will come as a surprise to the team that the townsfolk are armed with a number of old, but well maintained military rifles, of both American, and old Soviet make. On top of that, the townsfolk also have a number of black powder rifles. The town is located just a few short kilometers south of Camp Grayling, a national guard reservation. If pressed on where they got the weapons, the townsfolk will tell the team that they have been handed down from father to son since the war broke out.

Just in the past few days, the town had been attacked by a renegade biker gang numbering fifteen souls. The townsfolk managed to fight and kill the entire raiding party, suffering a loss of eleven defenders. Another twenty were wounded in the battle, seven of these quite seriously. The bikes have been confiscated, and the weapons distributed amongst the surviving relatives of those who died defending the ville.

The townsfolk will gladly accept any medical assistance the team is able to provide, and will also accept any assistance the team offers in repairing the bikes and weapons they got from the renegades. This alone should take several days game time.

On the second day the party is in town, they will be asked to attend a town meeting. If they agree to join, they will be led to the town square. Here the entire population of the town will have gathered. As the team approaches, they will hear shouts of anger and outrage. The towns major, Jeff Chark, will ask everyone to calm down. Once the crowd does so, he will explain to them that someone, or something has desecrated the graves of the brave folk who died defending the village. He will then ask for volunteers from the crowd to form a hunting party to track down who did this. About thirty men will raise their hands. If the party offers to help with this, the major will be most grateful.

After all the volunteers have been separated from the crowd, everyone

will be led off to the village's grave yard. For a town of its size, the grave yard is vast, containing several thousand grave markers. If the party has to ask, they will be told that the majority of the graves are those that didn't survive the first dark years just after the war.

The group of volunteers will be taken to a number of freshly dug graves. They will find that the graves were dug open, and the corpses have been removed. Human shaped, and sized foot prints can be found all around the fresh earth. If anyone with skill in tracking makes a successful roll, they will be able to follow the tracks to the north west for approximately five hundred meters before they are lost entirely.

After losing the trail, it will be decided that five men will stay behind to watch the remaining grave sites to make sure that they are not desecrated also. If asked, they will voice their suspicions that it is Ghouls who are responsible for this. If asked what Ghouls are, they will be told that they are mutants who feed off the dead.

If the party, or members of the party volunteer to help guard the site, they will not be disappointed. About three in the morning, a group of six humanoids will slip silently into the cemetery and head straight for the remaining freshly dug graves. It will be almost impossible to spot them, as they move incredibly quietly (see the description below). If the party is using either infrared, or light intensifying goggles, they will be able to see the mutants clearly enough. If they don't, they will have to rely on their Listen skill, which will be at a -25%. Consider the townsfolk to have a listen skill at 65%. Odds are that someone will notice the Ghouls and will open fire on them. The fight will be one sided, as the guards open up on the mutants with automatic fire. All the Ghouls will be killed., no exceptions.

Now, if both the party and the guards fail to spot the ghouls, they will instead be spotted by the ghouls and will be attacked via an ambush. Unless the players are totally incompetent, they should be able to fight off the ghouls with little difficulty.

If the party is somehow able to capture a ghoul alive, read the description to them that is at the end of this adventure. The Ghoul will be unable to answer any of their questions, as it has no spoken language. It is little more than an animal.

Now, if the party doesn't offer to stay and guard the grave yard, the will discover that the guards disappeared during the night. If they investigate, it will be quite obvious that a struggle took place. They will find the guards weapons lying on the ground, and they will also find a trail of blood that leads off to the north west yet again. If they are again successful with a tracking skill, they will be able to follow the trail left by the Ghouls all the way up to the trade road (what used to be Highway 27). Here the party will lose the trail in the deep ruts. But at least they now have an idea where to go.

Another possible way to find the Ghouls home is to let any survivors go, and then follow the survivors back to their lair.

This particular band of Ghouls have set up shop in what remains of Camp Grayling. They have found the collapsed entrance to the base's old bunker system. It is here that they have made their home. A number of Ghouls equal to three times the number of characters in the team now live here.

It is assumed that the party will stop here to inspect the ruins, as this would seem to be the most likely place that the Ghouls will stop.

The first thing the team will notice is the fact that the base wasn't destroyed by a nuke. As a matter of fact, the team will see the hulks of several destroyed American and Soviet built armored vehicles, such as the M-1, and T-80 Main battle tanks. The base buildings themselves are now nothing more than piles of rubble. It is obvious to the party that this base will have been picked over hundreds of times by scavengers and looters. If the party wishes to inspect the hulks, allow them to. They will find nothing of value. All that is left is the sold chassis, the engines, wires, weapons, and even the wheels and or tracks have been removed over the past years. The only

reason the chassis haven't been removed is the simple fact that none of the locals have heavy enough equipment to do so. See the notes at the end of the adventure for an explanation.

The Ghouls will be aware of the teams arrival if they are in a vehicle. However, they can be caught by surprise if the team travels by foot, or horse.

If the team searches the entire base, it will take several hours, to several days, depending on how hard they search. This is left up to the PD to decide. If the party is searching at night, the Ghouls will send out enough members to try and defeat the team (This will equal to 1.5 times the number of player characters).

After the battle, the characters will be able to follow the trail left by the Ghouls back to the entrance of their lair.

The lair is a bunker tunnel which is relatively intact. It is connected to several small rooms which are all that is left of the basements of several of the bases buildings. Here the Ghouls live and store their food until it is ripe enough to eat.

The entrance tunnel travels at a 50 degree angle down, for twenty meters. Here it enters the remains of the old bunker tunnels. The tunnels themselves are exactly two meters tall, and two meters wide. The tunnel runs north to south. The south tunnel travels for thirty six meters before being totally blocked off by rubble. There are a total of 3 cubby holes along this stretch.

The North tunnel travels sixty meters, and then comes to a tee intersection. Twenty meters down, part of the wall has collapsed revealing a small chamber (which used to be a storage room). Here, 15% of the surviving Ghouls will be encountered. It has a single, rotted wooden door which leads to a small hallway. This hall travels six meters and then is blocked off by rubble. Here the Ghouls store the ripening corpses they will consume at a later date.

A total of six small cubby holes will be found along this stretch of tunnel.

Now, the east intersection is blocked by rubble. The West intersection travels for fourteen meters, and then a side tunnel intersects the main tunnel. This tunnel is only one meter wide, by two meters tall. It travels for nine meters and ends at a blockage. The main tunnel then continues another eight meters. Here the wall has been smashed out to reveal a large five meter long, by four meter wide room. A total of 25% of the surviving Ghouls will be here. Of this total, half will be babies, or immature Ghouls. In other words, non combatants.

It is up to the individual PD and the players to decide what they should do in this situation. Do you really wish to kill children, even if they are mutants?

The tunnels then continues another sixty meters. Along this a total of eight cubby holes will be found. At the end of this sixty meters, the tunnel opens up into a large, underground reservoir. This chamber is twenty four meters long, by sixteen meters wide, and the ceiling is four meters high. The remaining Ghouls will be here.

The Ghouls will allow the team to enter, and then they will attack by coming from the front and rear of the team if at all possible. The only way the party will be ambushed from the rear is if they are stupid enough not to check any small cubby holes behind them. Each cubby hole has a 40% chance of 1-2 Ghouls hiding in it.

Now, the party will be at both an advantage and a disadvantage. They will have superior firepower, but the Ghouls will have the advantage of home turf, and lighting will most definitely be a problem for the team, as the Ghouls are able to see in the dark.

Another factor will be footing. All movement will be reduced by 25% because of slippery puddles of stagnant water and loose rubble. If the party is trying to run, they must make a Dexterity check every ten meters, or suffer a fall (potentially taking damage, depending on the PD's mood).

Another factor against the team is the horrifying stench that perpetuates the tunnels. Even though the Ghouls have only been here a short time, the stench of rotting flesh is nearly overpowering. The Barf Factor rule should be used here. If the Team is not using Gas Masks, or any sort of protection, they must roll their Con or less on 1D20. If they fail, they are overcome by the stench and will become violently sick. While sick, the players will be incapable of any action. They will be sick for a number of turns equal to 30 - the characters CON. This check will have to be made every 5 minutes the team is in the Ghoul lair.

However, if the team is using powerful lights (such as a campers floodlight), the Ghouls will be at a -20% to all skill and attack rolls. Odds are the only source of light the team will have access to are small, hand held flash lights (which will not bother the Ghouls), or their illumination grenades (see TMP 1-1 pg. 20 for details). Because of the power of the Grenades, the Ghouls will be totally incapacitated, as the powerful light will blind them, possibly permanently.

Once the ghouls are destroyed, the mission is over. However, if the PD is feeling generous, he/she can allow the team to search the rooms. Considering they have been sealed off from the world for at least one hundred years, they may just find some useful goodies.

Now, what makes the Ghouls so dangerous, is the fact that they have a symbiotic link to the Flesh eating disease. It doesn't harm the ghouls, but it can infect someone if they are bitten or clawed by a Ghoul. See the Stats below.

Name: Ghoul

Type: Mutated Human

Locations: All areas

Size: 1.8 meters tall

ST/CN: 8-14

DX/ACC: 12-16

SP/BP: Based on ST/CN

Armor Class: A

H&M: 0-6

Attacks: 2 claws, or a bite

Special Attributes: Symbiotic relationship with Necrotising Fasciitis, Hide and move silent skills at 70%

Description: This mutated humanoid is fairly rare. Physically, it appears to be a hairless human. Their skin is totally black, caused by a skin discoloration mutation. Their eyes are large and white giving this mutant a natural low light vision, much like a cats. Because of this, the Ghouls are very sensitive to light. Bright light is painful to them, and they suffer a -20% to their accuracy and skill rolls. The pure white eyes and jet black skin making for a very unusual contrast. They have simple slits where the nose should be, and their mouths are filled with dozens of tiny, fine teeth. Their ears are nothing more than large holes on the side of their heads. It is unusual that they can hear as well as they do.

These creatures survive by feeding off the dead. Any type of dead, be it animal or human. The 'riper' the corpse, the better they like it. Thus, the name Ghoul.

This mutated race has lost all but the most basic intellect, relying mostly upon raw instinct. They have no true language, and communicate mainly through grunts and gestures. They still feel emotions like any normal human would. A mated pair still care for each other, a parent still loves its child and will do what ever is necessary to protect it, and of course, they feel fear, hate and anger.

They live together in small tribes, mainly live near human or humanoid communities. These tribes range in size from a couple of mated pairs, up to around three dozen individuals, depending on the size of the community they live near (the larger the community, the more dead, thus the ability to

support more ghouls).

They do not use clothing. So, when the winter comes around, entire tribes of Ghouls will travel at night, migrating to the southern portion of the country. Depending on where the tribes settle, some Ghouls leave to join smaller tribes, thus increasing the gene pool, and giving the larger tribes a better chance of survival, and to remain undetected.

For the most part, Ghouls are not dangerous. They prefer to be left alone, and will only attack if hungry, or if someone has invaded their home. Sometimes, a ghoul hunting party will attack solitary travelers, or small groups of travelers if they think they have any chance of defeating their target. The other reason they will attack is if they have just moved into a new area, and are famished due to traveling and lack of food. If this is the case, they will go out of their way to get fresh meat.

Strangely enough, it has been discovered that this race has developed a symbiotic relationship with Necrotising Fasciitis, the dreaded flesh eating disease. They are in no way affected by this disease, but if someone is either bitten, or clawed by a Ghoul, the bacteria is introduced into the victims body. They must immediately make a save, or begin to suffer from this horrid disease. Also, anyone with open wounds that are in close proximity to a Ghoul have a chance of contracting the disease.

Ghouls are universally feared and hated because of both their eating habits, and their relationship with the disease. If a community discovers that a pack of Ghouls are near by, they usually send out search and destroy parties. Usually, Ghouls only get careless during their migration period (Spring and Fall), and have a chance to be discovered.

Necrotising Fasciitis (Flesh Eating Disease)

A-(SU, AE)-CON-24 hours-3-30 minutes

Weakness, Pain, Nausea, Lesions

Once a lesion has occurred, determine its location. The lesion is incredibly painful and it causes actual damage (4 Dp). At the end of the cycle time, the lesion will spread to a randomly determined location right beside the original lesion. This will cause another 4 Dp, and unless the lesion is bandaged, the victim will lose 1 BP every 5 minutes.

The only way to stop the spread of the lesions, is to amputate the infected area. This will require a successful medical roll. If it is successful, the amputation will cause 10 Dp - the doctors skill level. Example. A doctor with a medical skill of 60% will reduce the damage the victim suffers to four points. The damage cannot be reduced below four points.

Now, if the doctor is unsuccessful, he was unable to remove all the infected flesh, and the infection will return at the end of the cycle time.

Now, once all the lesions have been removed, the victim will get another chance to throw off the disease. If successful, the victim can begin recovering. If the roll fails, at the end of the cycle time, a new lesion will occur.

Now, the victim gets a bonus of +1 for every 5% (round to nearest) the doctor made his skill roll by. Example. A doctor with a medical skill of 60% rolls 24%. This gives the victim a +7 bonus to try and throw off the infection. Remember, this bonus is reduced by the virulence factor. So, in this case, the victim has a +4 to his save throw. Odds are, they will survive the infection.

As you can plainly see, the only way to catch this disease is by getting clawed or bitten by a Ghoul, or to be near someone who is suffering from it. In that case, if the victim has any open wounds and touches the lesions, they have a chance of getting infected. At physical contact range, the disease is airborne, but only if the unaffected individual has an open wound.

Finally, if lesions develop on the face, head, or neck, the victim is dead.

Now, onto an explanation. In my campaign, just days after the war, two entire soviet divisions was flown into Canada. It managed to make it this far after landing in Alaska, and soundly defeating the American forces based at the naval refueling depot. From here, they split up into two divisions, one staying in Alaska with the intentions of heading south into British Columbia, and the other flew straight into the heart of Canada. Using refuelers, and a fighter/bomber escort, they were able to fly across the Country, and make it all the way to Ontario.

This division landed near Red Rock, just to the north east of Thunder bay and immediately set out to hunt down and destroy any surviving Canadian military forces or armed civilians, In the resulting battles, the soviet forces soundly defeated the poorly organized and under armed soldiers and civilians.

Over the next few months they sent out expeditionary forces to inspect and neutralize any possible military threats in Both Canada and the United States. This included the Military reservation Camp Grayling. The military personnel were overwhelmed by the influx of survivors looking for both help and a authority figure. Unknown to the soldiers and the survivors, several survivors brought Bio plagues with them. Within days the entire camp was infected and the population was dying off.

Soon, the soviet forces entered the scene. With this arrival of the soviet force, a battle broke out between them and a combined force of still healthy armed survivors, and soldiers. It was a massacre. The better armed soviet soldiers wiped out most of the civilians and soldiers within a matter of hours. They did take losses of their own though, and to make matters worse, they contracted the same disease that was beginning to take its toll on the base.

The soviets began to strip the base of any useful equipment. This took several days, as they were being harassed by survivors using guerrilla tactics. It was then they discovered their mistake. Being good soldiers, they contacted their head quarters in Canada and informed them of their situation. They were told they could not return to the main camp, and were ordered to stay put, and wait out the disease. Within three days, every soldier on the base died.

It was several years before any of the locals ventured into the ruins of the base. Fear of the disease was still strong, but they realized that without a host, the disease will have died out. Or so they hoped. To their surprise, it had died off. They now had a treasure trove of weaponry, equipment, and even a few vehicles. All they had to do was refurbish some of the equipment and weapons, as they had been stored in the intact buildings on the base.

That is how the locals came in possession of both US and Soviet weapons. As for the soviet force in Canada, that is another story.