

# BEYOND THE WALL AND OTHER ADVENTURES

## ACROSS THE VEIL

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# ACROSS THE VEIL

This booklet gives you further rules for using the undead and the powers of necromancy in games of *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures*. The GM can use the information contained here to help run the 'Opened Barrow' Scenario Pack, or just to gain more ideas for a full campaign in which the undead feature prominently.

The undead are some of the most frightening adversaries in fantasy stories. They are implacable foes, often cannot be reasoned with, and remind even mighty heroes of their own mortality. The more powerful walking dead, like vampires, liches, and wight-kings, are memorable villains with complex agendas and a sense of the world alien to simple villagers. Living necromancers are perhaps the most compelling of all adversaries, often driven by very human desires, fears, and passions.

On this page we present a sample location: the Seat of the Wise. This ancient meeting place of sorcerers straddles the worlds of the living and the dead and offers a refuge to those in need. It can also serve as a gateway into the dark for the bravest heroes.

The small section on necromancy provides players and gamemasters with a new spell and two new rituals relating to the undead and the other rules presented here. Additionally, there are some notes on using the Summoning ritual to pull ghosts into the world of the living.

Next, we provide a list of monsters and NPCs for your campaign. This small bestiary will give the GM a more versatile set of undead with which to challenge the PCs.

There are rules for the Underworld itself, and for the veil which separates it from the land of the living. Using these rules, a group of adventurers could seek their fortunes and face their most dangerous foes within the very land of the dead, and the gamemaster can introduce powers which weaken the barrier between the worlds.

The last section gives gamemasters a new Threat Pack to use in longer campaigns. Full rules for using Threat Packs to run a campaign of *Beyond the Wall* are

provided the *Further Afield* supplement. This particular Threat Pack represents the rising or the return of a powerful ruler of the dead whose actions are causing the veil to weaken throughout the whole land.

## THE SEAT OF THE WISE

This circle of standing stones sits far away from civilized lands, deep in the wilderness where it is hidden from the unworthy. It has long been a place of power and a meeting place of sorcerers, witches, holy men, and mages of all sorts. It is unlikely that anyone in the village has ever visited it, save perhaps the witch.

The stones form a circle sixty feet across. Within are seven low seats of stone at which the wise may congregate and discuss matters of great import. When one of the wise has come to the Seat and wishes to call a meeting, all others will be guided to the Seat by dreams and portents.

The Seat has several magical properties, some subtle, some much more obvious. First, it is difficult to find unless one has been invited. If an interloper seeks the location, he must first pass a saving throw vs. magic item. Success means that he may find it by searching for the location as normal. Failure means that the place will be hidden from his eyes for a full week, at which time he may make a new saving throw and continue searching.

All those inside the Seat are completely protected from and oblivious to the happenings outside of the stone circle. Within, the skies are always slightly clouded, the weather always temperate. The proper way to enter the circle is through the northernmost gap in the stones. Anyone entering another way immediately takes 3d6 damage, but may make a saving throw vs. magic item to suffer only half damage.

The most significant property of the Seat of the Wise is its connection to the Underworld. Anyone within the circle who departs by the southernmost gap in the stones returns not to the normal lands, but to the Underworld. The Seat exists fully in the Underworld as well, so a character may return to the lands of the living by entering in the south and departing in the north.

# NECROMANCY

## NEW SPELL

### HOSTLY COMMANDMENT

**Range:** Near

**Duration:** 2 rounds/level

**Save:** yes

With solemn word and proud bearing, the mage exerts his will over an incorporeal spirit of the dead, like a phantom, wraith, or spectre. For the duration of the spell, the spirit must obey the caster's commands. Ghosts react in different ways after experiencing this spell; some become angry with the caster, others seek to hide, and some become quite fond of the mage and follow him. If the ghost makes a saving throw vs. spell it ignores the commands.

## LEVEL 3 RITUAL

### VEIL WEAVING (Intelligence)

**Range:** Far

**Duration:** 1 day/level

**Save:** no

By manipulating the veil between the lands of the living and the dead, the mage brings the worlds closer together or moves them further apart. When the mage casts this ritual, the veil rating within a five mile radius either rises or lowers by 1. The mage must specify whether he wishes to increase or decrease the rating at the time of the casting. A failed ritual roll often means that the opposite occurs, sometimes drastically.

The material components for this ritual include a newly woven shawl of fresh linen; preferably the mage has woven this shawl himself, but it is not strictly necessary. The mage must wrap within the shawl the fingerbone of a recently dead man and a silver needle, and then bury the components during the three hour casting process.

## LEVEL 4 RITUAL

### ETERNAL WALKER (Intelligence)

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Permanent

**Save:** yes

By slicing off a small piece of her own soul and placing it within a human corpse, the necromancer animates it and binds it to her will. The newly made undead creature will follow all of the caster's commands, both spoken and unspoken, until it is destroyed or until the magic is dispelled. The creature will be an undead animal, a skeleton, a zombie, or a wight as appropriate to the target of the ritual; only a nobleman buried in state may be raised as a wight. The cost of this magic can be great: upon completion of the ritual, the caster must make a saving throw vs spell or lose a point of Charisma. Thus do many practitioners of necromancy become foul and isolated.

This ritual requires that the caster have access to the corpse, an offering to the gods of the dead worth at least 100 silvers, and a mystically prepared altar or bier. The corpse is placed upon the slab while the caster reaches a hand into the Underworld and seeks join the corpse's soul with a piece of her own.

### SUMMONING SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

*Using the level two ritual Summoning, a mage may call the ghost of a dead mortal back into the living world. The spirit may make a saving throw as usual. If the mage has the corpse of the deceased at the time of the casting, the caster gets a +2 bonus to the casting roll and the ghost suffers a -2 penalty to its saving throw to resist the call.*

*The type of spirit that comes across the veil depends upon who the deceased was in life. Phantoms are the least of the ghosts who cross into the lands of the living, and the most common. Wraiths are the spirits of more powerful men and enter the living world with a powerful will. Spectres represent the ghosts of the most hateful and cruel of mortals. The GM is, of course, encouraged to make specific, new stats for a particular ghost in her own campaigns.*

# THE DEAD AND THEIR ILK

Below are several monsters and NPCs to expand the gamemaster's repertoire of undead and related foes.

## CAPTAIN OF THE DEAD

This is a mighty warrior in the armies of the dead. It could represent the remains of someone who was a mighty champion in life, or a specially animated officer in an organized army of the dead. It leads not of its own volition, but by the will of its master.

**Hit Dice:** 3d8 (14 HP)

**AC:** 15

**Attack:** +3 to hit, 1d8 damage (sword)

**Alignment:** Neutral

**XP:** 90

**Notes:** *Dead and Mindless* (the captain is immune to sleep and charm effects)

## THE FOOLISH MORTAL

Whether with good intentions or drawn by dark designs, this foolish mortal is striding boldly down her own personal path to damnation. Either self-taught and overbold or, more often, misled by a dangerous spirit with dark designs, the foolish mortal knows just enough to get herself into trouble.

**Hit Dice:** 2d6 (7 HP)

**AC:** 10

**Attack:** +1 to hit, 1d4 damage (rusty dagger)

**Alignment:** Chaotic

**XP:** 110

**Notes:** *Spellcaster* (the foolish mortal casts cantrips, spells, and rituals as a 2nd level mage; she knows the Second Sight cantrip, the Spell Reanimation, and the rituals Circle of Protection and Summoning; assume she has an Intelligence of 14 and a Wisdom of 8 for the purposes of casting rolls)

## REVENANT

This walking corpse has returned to the lands of the living with a specific purpose. It is the animated remains of one wronged horribly in life and has a particular hatred of murderers, thieves, and liars.

**Hit Dice:** 4d8 (18 HP)

**AC:** 16

**Attack:** +4 to hit, 1d6+2 damage (clawing touch)

**Alignment:** Lawful

**XP:** 200

**Notes:** *Murderous Shriek* (once per day the revenant may let out a horrifying shriek; all living creatures in near range must pass a saving throw vs. spell or cower for 1d4 rounds), *Vengeful Senses* (the revenant immediately knows when it is within the presence of one who has committed murder in cold blood and will always attack such an opponent)

## WHISPERING SPIRIT

A sad ghost, the whispering spirit haunts lonely and secretive homes, slowly driving those within to madness. Sometimes, when a child hears noises in the dark corners of the house, it is not just a figment of the imagination. Some say that such a spirit may be banished when it finds even a small piece of happiness.

**Hit Dice:** 3d6 (18 HP)

**AC:** 16

**Attack:** +2 to hit, 1d8 damage (chilling touch)

**Alignment:** Chaotic

**XP:** 160

**Notes:** *Clanks and Whispers* (always surrounded by ghostly noises, the whispering spirit may increase their volume, forcing those within near range to suffer a -1 penalty on all rolls), *Incorporeal* (the whispering spirit has no physical form, and is only affected by magic and silver weapons)

## UNDEAD BEASTS

*Men are not the only creatures who can return from the dead. Animals too can be raised as undead creatures. The game-master may represent such foul things by using the normal entries for the monster and adding to it the 'Dead and Mindless' rule as seen in the entries for skeletons and zombies.*

# THE UNDERWORLD

There is another world, just beyond ours, where the dead roam freely and the living are not welcome. This is the Underworld, a bleak and unforgiving place. Here the geography resembles that of the living lands in superficial ways, but all is covered in a pall of death and there is no rest or sustenance for the living. There is no day or night, but always a perpetual twilight.

## GETTING THERE

The living will only find themselves entering the Underworld if they pass through a gateway to this other plane.

There may be naturally occurring entrances to the Underworld within the campaign world. These are usually forsaken, lonely places, such as deep caves along rocky coasts, massive gnarled trees in the dark heart of the wood, or lone mountains or volcanoes surrounded by wasteland. Such entrances are inevitably far from civilized lands and ill-omened.

Sometimes entrances to the Underworld are intentionally made by hubristic mages, fanatical holy men, or foolish kings. These are very rare, and may require special commands or rituals in order to function. Naturally occurring entrances to the Underworld also appear at the confluences of other realms and planes; for instance, if you are using the Grey Prince in your campaign, his strange realm may border on the Underworld, as might a series of particularly deep goblin caves.

Very rarely, people may simply wander in an unfortunate direction under unfortunate circumstances and find themselves within the Underworld. This is so rare that it might only happen once in a generation. It is usually the result of a particularly low veil rating as described below.

## TRAVEL IN THE UNDERWORLD

The Underworld is a harsh place for the living, and they will feel the grim weight of the place almost immediately upon arrival. There are several ways in which traveling through the lands of the dead effect the living.

First, no living creature may regain hit points in any way while in the Underworld. Resting may make heroes feel a bit less tired, but they will not recover from their wounds. Healing magic simply fizzles and restores no hit points. Likewise, ordinary healing potions or magic items do not function at all. Characters with knowledge of *Forbidden Secrets* or *Folklore* may make an Intelligence check to know about these effects. There may be some very rare and hidden places within the Underworld where the living may recover hit points, like a spring which connects to the world of the living or a secret and holy grove, but such locations, if they exist at all, would be very difficult to find and are left to the GM's decision.

Anyone casting necromantic magic of any kind also receives a +2 bonus to any spellcasting rolls. Other magic may work strangely here. Certain cantrips, spells, and rituals may have unusual effects. For instance, a mage casting the *Storm's Wrath* ritual may produce a storm without rain, or only a sickly drizzle of oily drops. Rather than list every possible change to all spells, the gamemaster is encouraged to use her discretion. It is not necessary that every spell change in the same way with every casting.

Additionally, living heroes will find it very difficult to find sustenance within the Underworld. Any rations which they bring on the journey will still sustain them, but will taste like ash in their mouths. Water from the lands of the living will likewise still keep them hydrated. Finding new food in the Underworld is very difficult, as the landscape tends to be barren and lifeless.

If living characters do find a fruit tree or bit of sickly game in the Underworld, they will be wise not to partake, as a simple Intelligence check will remind them. Any time a character has food or drink from the Underworld, he must make a saving throw vs. poison; should he fail, he will be forever trapped in the lands of the dead. If there should be any way to return him to the lands of the living, it would involve a great and dangerous quest, and could make for a whole campaign.

The characters may find magical means which allow them to eat safely, such as the Feast's Blessing ritual on p.60 of *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures*.

## THE DEAD IN THE UNDERWORLD

Just as the living are changed while in the Underworld, so are the dead. The following rules affect all undead creatures while in the Underworld, which is, after all, their home.

All undead creatures gain in strength while in the Underworld, and have a vigor which they lack in the lands of the living. They often still shamble and envy those with life and warm blood, but they are closer to their full faculties here. Undead creatures regain a single hit point every hour while in the Underworld.

All incorporeal ghosts, phantoms, and spirits are fully visible and corporeal in the Underworld; this does mean that they can be harmed by normal weapons.

The greatest lords and ladies of undeath are particularly invigorated by the dark energies of the Underworld. While in the lands of the dead, any undead creature with 10 or more hit dice gains a +2 to all saving throws and to any spellcasting rolls they might make.

Finally, the lesser undead, like skeletons and zombies, are much more active here, remembering a bit of their former selves and having the hints of a personality. This means that they are no longer affected by the 'Dead and Mindless' special rules in their bestiary entries, and that the gamemaster is encouraged to play them with more intelligence and cunning.

## THE LAY OF THE LAND

This section references the rules for travel, locations, encounters, and map generation presented with the supplement *Further Afield*.

A gamemaster running a campaign using the rules in *Further Afield* may wish to develop the Underworld more fully. As mentioned above, the Underworld is a dark mirror of the lands of the living, so the GM may create a map which resembles the geography of the regular campaign map. Feel free to change the course of rivers or the sites of forests somewhat, though, as the lands of the dead are never precise copies of those of the living.

The GM may also add locations to the Underworld just as with the normal campaign map. Many of the major locations created by the players may have dark counterparts in the lands of the dead, or they may be missing here entirely. If the group feels that the Underworld will feature heavily in their campaign, they may even wish to spend a round of location building for the Underworld in addition to the ordinary round for the main campaign map.

The Underworld counts as its own region, with its own dangerous encounter table. This does not mean that the gamemaster cannot make other regions with different encounter tables for the Underworld should she choose. However, the default assumption is that the entire place is haunted and uses the following encounter table. If the entire Underworld is a single region, parts of it may be difficult terrain and other parts not.

### THE UNDERWORLD REGION

This is the very land of the dead. Water is scarce and game almost unheard of. Finding sustenance here is difficult and very unwise. All foraging rolls suffer a -5 penalty.

**Encounter Chance:** 4 in 6

#### 1d8      The Underworld Encounters

- 1 **Lost!** Make a Wisdom check to find the way or lose a day wandering aimlessly.
- 2 **Turned around.** Make a Wisdom check or exit from a random hex edge instead of where you thought you were going.
- 3 **Disaster!** Make a Dexterity check or lose half the party's water supply while traversing some difficult terrain.
- 4 **Violent Storm.** Make a Constitution check or lose a day seeking shelter from the buffeting winds and dangerous lightning of a rainless thunderstorm.
- 5 **Attacked!** Make a Wisdom check or be surprised by a pack of 2d6 undead animals.
- 6 **Hunted!** Make a Wisdom check or be surprised by a pack of 2d8 skeletons or zombies.
- 7 **Trapped!** Make a Wisdom check or be caught in a dead end by a single hungry wraith.
- 8 **Stalked.** A spectre, wraith, or other ghost stalks the party, hoping to follow them back to the land of the living.

# THE VEIL

There is, between the lands of the living and the dead, a veil. Under ordinary circumstances, this is enough to keep the dead at bay and maintain the ordinary functions of the living world. Lost ghosts may still find their way into our world, and necromancers may still be able to work dark magics and cause the dead to walk, but the veil protects men from the worst depredations of those who have passed.

In some places, however, and at some times, the veil weakens. When this happens, our world slowly begins to resemble the lands of the dead more and more, and they find it easier to reach the living.

Using this optional system, the gamemaster may assign veil ratings to various places in the world. The default assumption is that the veil rating is at 10, which means that there are no special effects. If the gamemaster decides that a particular location or building within the world is closer to the lands of the dead, she may give it a lower veil rating. Here are some sample veil ratings for different locations:

- a very haunted house: 9
- a cursed graveyard: 7
- deep in the great catacombs: 5

Additionally, the veil may weaken at certain times or under certain circumstances. Here is a list of sample conditions which the gamemaster may use to change the veil ratings of a location within the campaign.

- the midnight hour -1
- the equinox -1
- Winter Solstice -2
- immediately after the casting of necromantic magic -2

There are certain holy or wholesome places in which the veil is much stronger than elsewhere, such as a temple to the god of light, a faerie grove, or even the common room of a cheery inn filled with good fellowship. In these areas the veil is always considered to be at a rating of 10, and ghosts are loathe to tread.

## THE VEIL TABLE

Rating	Effect
10	At this level, the veil is at full strength. No special rules are in effect.
9	The living and the dead see each other. Even the incorporeal dead are visible. Hauntings are more likely.
8	All undead creatures of 10 or more hit dice have a +2 to saving throws and spellcasting rolls. Anyone casting any necromantic magic has a +2 bonus to any associated rolls.
7	Plants begin to sicken, and food tastes like ash and spoils quickly. Living characters may not regain hit points from rest.
6	Healing magics begin to fail. Any hit points restored by spells or magic items is cut in half, rounding down.
5	All incorporeal spirits are fully corporeal and may be harmed by ordinary attacks.
4	Skeletons and zombies lose the 'Dead and Mindless' special rule.
3	Healing magics no longer function. Characters may still be tended to with an ability score check.
2	All undead creatures regenerate a single hit point every hour.
1	Living characters may not regain hit points in any way, magical or otherwise.
0	The two worlds are one. Anyone in a location with this veil rating is effectively within the Underworld. When characters leave this location, they are just as likely to wander into the Underworld as they are to return to the lands of the living.

## VEIL AND THE OPENED BARROW

*You may want to use the veil mechanics when running the Opened Barrow Scenario Pack. If you do, assume that the disturbances have caused the veil within the entire village to be lowered to 9, and the rating within the barrow itself to be at 7.*

# THE RISEN DEAD

Once, the dead slept easy in your lands. Now a dark ruler is causing them to rise and gather in a great necropolis. Worse still, the veil between the lands of the dead and the lands of the living is weakening. Can the characters discover who is leading these fell warriors and spirits? Can they stop it before all the lands of men are as dark and still as the mighty necropolis of the undead warriors?

This Threat Pack will place a supernatural and frightening Threat in your campaign. The Risen Dead will present powerful foes and martial challenges, as well as supernatural problems, and is a good choice of villain for players who enjoy horrific enemies and magical problems.

## DURING CHARACTER CREATION

The fourth NPC named by the players during character creation is currently haunted by a powerful spirit. This spirit was put to rest in or near the village in ages past and is one of the lieutenants of the ruler of the dead, but is trapped in the village because of a powerful warding

rune. This is a very dangerous ghost; use the stats for a wraith found on p.99 of *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures*.

Secretly pick one of the locations on the village map. This is the location of the ward which holds the spirit in place. So long as the ward is undisturbed, the wraith cannot directly harm anyone in the village, nor may it leave. Unfortunately, it is slowly driving the poor villager it haunts to madness, and this villager may yet discover the location of the ward and break it.

The GM should also place, along with the players, the location within or just outside of the village where the dead are buried. Talk about the burial customs of the characters' home village and use this information throughout the campaign when you think about how and where the dead might rise.

Finally, at least one character should make a roll on the following table as their fourth roll during character creation.

1d6 How did the Risen Dead affect your childhood?		Gain
1	When you were small, you stumbled upon a hidden warding rune somewhere in the village. Even being near the thing made you feel weak and frightened.	-1 Str, +1 Int
2	Two years ago, foolishly, you packed a sack with food and set out to the Barrow Downs. While there you ate lunch upon the barrow of king Osred before being scared off by a ghost.	-1 Wis, Skill: Direction Sense
3	Last winter, the ruler of the dead sent an emissary to the village to announce its master's rising. A lock of your hair turned white at the passing of the dead.	-1 Con, +1 Wis
4	When the dead began to rise, one of your family members told you a terrible secret: you are related to the ruler of the dead.	-1 Cha, +1 Int
5	When you were small, someone else took you to the Barrow Downs. You don't talk about what happened that day, and do everything you can to forget the experience.	-1 Int, +1 Con
6	You were a sickly child, but were able to spend a harsh winter listening to Grandmother Weaver tell you ghost stories.	-1 Dex, Skill: Forbidden Secrets

## ON THE CAMPAIGN MAP

The GM will need to place the ancient necropolis on the map herself. The second time that a player places a ‘far’ location on the campaign map, the GM should place the necropolis even farther past that location, saying something like: “Yes, the Grove of the Druids is there, and past that is the ancient city of the dead!”

The PCs will undoubtedly have heard of this place in whispered legends. It was made by a forgotten and long fallen culture of men and was the burial place of their ruling elite, an empty city filled only with tombs and the remains of the dead. No one that the characters have ever met has traveled there, and everyone is afraid of the place.

Finally, the GM should place the Barrow Downs within two days’ travel of the characters’ home village. As with the necropolis, this is a place of terrible rumor and legend for the characters.

## THE RULER OF THE DEAD

The gamemaster will need to decide just who is responsible for the dead rising and congregating within the necropolis. We present four different options from which the GM may choose to represent the ruler of the dead. However, she could just as easily come up with her own villain.

The vampire, presented on p.97 of *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures*, might have decided to raise an army of the dead. Of all possible adversaries, the vampire is most likely to be interested in temporal power, and so her motivation could be as simple of wishing to rule the lands around the characters’ village. Perhaps in the distant past, in her mortal days, she was a noble from the region and wishes a return to the trappings of her former life.

The lich lord, presented on p.87 of *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures*, is probably the most terrifying of all possible rulers of the dead. His motivations are likely simple and entirely unreasonable; consumed with a hatred of all living things, his desire is probably to end all life in the region and rule over a perfect and immutable land of the dead. His magical powers are great, and he is a foe who will likely last for a long-term campaign.

The skilled necromancer, presented at the end of this Threat Pack, would be the weakest ruler of the dead, though still formidable. He might be motivated by the desire for more magical knowledge, particularly the knowledge of how to become a lich and thus cheat death entirely. He likely has ties to one of the mortal settlements in the region, and so learning about his past and his drives can present social challenges to the players.

The risen king, presented at the end of this Threat Pack, is the most martial of the rulers of the dead. He was once a great king, and he likely sees no difference between ruling his lands now and ruling as he did in life. The characters might even be able to negotiate with him, though this would be incredibly difficult; not only would the characters have to get him to see them as worthy, they would also have to figure out what they could possibly have to offer to an ancient and reanimated king.

## THE VEIL BETWEEN WORLDS

Use the rules presented on p.7 to represent the veil between the lands of the living and the dead. Because of the great awakening of the dead, the veil across the entire campaign map is failing. Any reference in this Threat Pack to changing veil ratings affects the rating for the entire land. If the gamemaster would like to keep notes of different veil rating for specific places on the map, she is encouraged to.

## THE NECROPOLIS

This is the home of the Risen Dead, and entering is almost a sure death for any but the mightiest of heroes. The veil rating within the necropolis is always zero; there is no distinction here between the lands of the living and those of the dead. Additionally, the place is always swarming with the armies of its dark ruler, and no living thing may pass unnoticed. Only powerful magic, a special invitation, or a complete invasion will allow the characters to survive this location.

## THE BARROW DOWNS

This is the site of numerous tombs and burials. The inhabitants have never rested entirely easily, and now that the dead are rising, the place has become even more dangerous. However, the Barrow Downs may also contain clues, magic, or weapons which will aid the

characters in their fight with the risen. For this reason, it can be a location for the PCs to return to again and again for adventure.

The veil rating of this area is 10 only during its sunlit hours. At night, the veil weakens to 7, though it may be lower due to other factors, like time of year or the effects of the Risen Dead on the veil rating of the whole campaign map.

The gamemaster may place any number of small dungeons and adventure locations within the Barrow Downs. It is a very dangerous place, and each tomb presents its own challenges. However, there are rewards to be had here as well. As an example, we present a sample two-room dungeon, which contains a special reward that might help the characters combat the Risen Dead.

### KING OSRED'S TOMB

Osred was a minor king during days of barbarism and turbulence. Nonetheless, he was beloved by many of his subjects, and they placed him in this small barrow centuries ago.

This nondescript tomb is located near the edges of the Downs. A brief and faded inscription on a small standing stone directly in front of the barrow is the only indication that the tomb is that of Osred. A character with a knowledge of ancient languages may decipher this inscription with an Intelligence test. A further Intelligence check using a skill like Ancient History will remind a character that Osred was particularly fond of the daylily and would decorate his keep with them; this is a very obscure bit of knowledge, and so a character receives a -5 penalty to remember it.

A large stone was rolled in front of the barrow when Osred was put to rest. Two men can just manage to move it with difficulty, while a single actor would require a Strength check to do so.

Directly within the tomb is a small circular chamber with earthen walls. The air is chill and dank. This room contains Osred's guardian, a much more dangerous foe than the king himself. The guardian is the angry spirit of a wizard put to death by the king in the latter days of his reign and bound to serve him in death. Use the stats for a spectre found on p.91 of *Beyond the Wall and*

*Other Adventures*. This is a foe likely beyond the characters' abilities. However, the spectre is unable to leave this chamber, and a large shaft of sunlight pours in from the entrance during daylight hours. Clever players can put this to their use. Very clever players may even decide to use their own manual labor to remove the top of the barrow and fully expose the chamber to sunlight.

A small hallway connects the chambers. The workmen who made the tomb placed here a simple trap: one of the stones in the floor will depress when stepped upon and trigger a small cave-in. Should any character step on the stone, all within the hallway immediately suffer 1d10 damage; characters who make a saving throw vs. breath weapon take half damage. The hallway will be partially blocked by this cave-in, and the characters will have to spend an hour or so digging their way through.

Beyond lies the burial chamber of king Osred himself. The king is laid out in state upon a bier in the center of the chamber, but begins to rise as soon as the characters approach the chamber. Use the stats for a wight found on p.97 of *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures* to represent Osred. The king is angry that intruders have awakened him from his slumber and will attack any in the chamber. However, his wrath can be appeased with a presentation of daylilies. If the characters present the king with these flowers, he will return to his rest and allow them to take what they wish.

Lying at Osred's feet is a small, plain iron cap. All undead creatures must pass a saving throw versus magic item to see any person wearing the cap.

### IMMINENCE AND SCHEMES

The dead are only now beginning to rise and congregate in the necropolis. However, this process will accelerate dramatically as the veil between the living and dead weakens. The Risen Dead's Imminence rating starts at one and increases by one on each equinox, in addition to the ways presented below.

### PLAYER ACTIONS

The characters are likely to begin the campaign without any great fears of this Threat. It has a low Imminence rating and characters will not notice the weakening of the veil for some time. Nonetheless, the Risen Dead can quickly become very dangerous. The roving bands of dead are incredibly dangerous to low level characters,

1d6

### Threat Effects

- 1 The dead are wandering the lands! If the characters have an encounter this week, it will be with 2d6 skeletons and a captain of the dead. If it is winter, a wraith joins the patrol as well.
- 2 A pack of mindless dead roam. If the characters have an encounter this week it will be with 3d12 confused and unorganized zombies.
- 3 Hauntings abound. An NPC in the characters' home village or another settlement on the map suffers from disturbing and frequent hauntings. The NPC will be unable to deal with the characters in any meaningful way for the next month (no trading, no offer of help, etc). If you get this result twice in a row, the poor fellow has died of fright.
- 4 There is an organized attack by a warband of undead warriors. Randomly determine which human settlement (but not a city) is attacked. The warband consists of  $50 + 2d20$  skeletons or zombies, two captains of the dead, and one wight. If the characters are present in the attacked settlement during this week, they may try to mount a defense. Otherwise, when they return to the settlement, they will find it badly damaged. Should a settlement be attacked twice in the same year without significant repairs taking place between the attacks, it is wiped out.
- 5-6 The veil weakens. Decrease the veil rating for the land by one. If the veil is already at zero, increase the Risen Dead's Imminence by one instead.

who would be wise to run if they encounter them, and the warbands are capable of destroying whole settlements on the map.

When characters do decide to work against the Risen Dead, they have several options. If the characters find creative, supernatural means of slowing the Threat, raise the veil rating. If they do something particularly significant, decrease the Risen Dead's Imminence rating too. Examples of supernatural means which might counter the Threat include special and difficult rituals in the village during the Solstices, cleansing various tombs and burial places throughout the lands, or spreading the worship of deities of life and light. Martial actions against the Risen Dead are ultimately futile, but they can buy the characters some

time. Fighting off one of the patrols about the land does nothing, but completely destroying one of the warbands will lower the Threat's Imminence by one.

To end the danger posed by the Risen Dead for good, the characters must rid the land of the ruler of the dead. This will be difficult, as the ruler is not only a powerful foe in its own right, it is also surrounded by minions and is loathe to leave the necropolis. Clever players will need to lure out the ruler, find a way to negotiate, or attack the necropolis in force with many friends and allies.

## NPCS AND MONSTERS

### THE RISEN KING

Once a famous high king or emperor, this mightiest of wights holds great sway in the lands beyond the veil. All lesser undead bend knee to this great warrior-king, and it conducts the movements of its troops effortlessly.

**Hit Dice:** 12d10 (66 HP)

**AC:** 21

**Attack:** +12 to hit, 2d4 (touch)

**Alignment:** any

**XP:** 4,000

**Notes:** *Drain Strength* (anyone touched by a wight must make a saving throw vs. polymorph or lose a point of Strength), *Ensorcelled Blade* (instead of using its touch, the king may strike with its sword, causing 1d8+4 damage), *Lead Troops* (instead of attacking, the risen king may grant all other undead in near range a +1 bonus to hit for the round), *Swift* (if there are enough foes in its immediate range, the king may attack twice per round)

### THE SKILLED NECROMANCER

Driven by a foolish lust for power or a personal tragedy, this sorcerer has mastered the dark arts and now seeks to exert his power over the dead and living alike.

**Hit Dice:** 7d6 (30 HP)

**AC:** 19

**Attack:** +3 to hit, 1d4 damage (ceremonial dagger)

**Alignment:** Lawful

**XP:** 1,000

**Notes:** *Spellcaster* (the necromancer casts cantrips, spells, and rituals as a 7th level mage; he knows the Hexing and Second Sight cantrips and any spells or rituals the GM sees fit; assume he has an Intelligence of 18 and a Wisdom of 12 for the purposes of casting rolls)

# THE RISEN DEAD

## IMMINENCE

## VEIL RATING

### THREAT EFFECTS:

**1** The dead are wandering the lands! If the characters have an encounter this week, it will be with 2d6 skeletons and a captain of the dead. If it is winter, a wraith wanders with the patrol as well.

**2** A pack of mindless dead roam about. If the characters have an encounter this week it will be with 3d12 confused and unorganized zombies.

**3** Hauntings abound. An NPC in the characters' home village or another settlement on the map suffers from disturbing and frequent hauntings. The NPC will be unable to deal with the characters in any meaningful way for the next month (no trading, no offer of help, etc). If you get this result twice in a row, the poor fellow has died of fright.

**4** There is an organized attack by a warband of undead warriors. Randomly determine which human settlement (but not a city) is attacked. The warband consists of 50 + 2d20 skeletons or zombies, two captains of the dead, and one wight. If the characters are present in the attacked settlement during this week, they may try to mount a defense. Otherwise, when they return to the settlement, they will find it badly damaged. Should a settlement be attacked twice in the same year without significant repairs taking place between the attacks, it is wiped out.

**5-6** The veil weakens. Decrease the veil rating for the land by one. If the veil is already at zero, increase the Risen Dead's Imminence by one instead.

### THE DEAD

#### SKELETON

**Hit Dice:** 1d8 (4 HP)

**AC:** 13

**Attack:** +1 to hit, 1d8 damage

**Alignment:** Neutral **XP:** 20

**Notes:** Dead and Mindless

#### WRAITH

**Hit Dice:** 5d8 (22 HP)

**AC:** 15

**Attack:** +6 to hit, 1d8 damage

**Alignment:** Chaotic **XP:** 550

**Notes:** Drain Will (on touch: save vs. Polymorph or lose 1 Cha), Incorporeal (no physical form; only magic and silver weapons)

#### WHISPERING SPIRIT

**Hit Dice:** 3d6 (18 HP)

**AC:** 16

**Attack:** +2 to hit, 1d8 damage

**Alignment:** Chaotic **XP:** 160

**Notes:** Clanks and Whispers (-1 to those in near range), Incorporeal (no physical form; only magic and silver weapons)

#### ZOMBIE

**Hit Dice:** 1d6 (4 HP)

**AC:** 10

**Attack:** +0 to hit, 1d6 damage

**Alignment:** Neutral **XP:** 15

**Notes:** Dead and Mindless

#### CAPTAIN OF THE DEAD

**Hit Dice:** 3d8 (14 HP)

**AC:** 15

**Attack:** +3 to hit, 1d8 damage

**Alignment:** Neutral **XP:** 90

**Notes:** Dead and Mindless

#### THE FOOLISH MORTAL

**Hit Dice:** 2d6 (7 HP)

**AC:** 10

**Attack:** +1 to hit, 1d4 damage

**Alignment:** Chaotic **XP:** 110

**Notes:** Spellcaster (2nd level); Cantrip: Second Sight, Spell: Reanimation, Rituals: Circle of Protection and Summoning; Int 14 and Wis 8

### THE VEIL:

**10** At this level, the veil is at full strength. No special rules are in effect.

**9** The living and the dead see each other. Even the incorporeal dead are visible. Hauntings are more likely.

**8** All undead creatures of 10 hit dice or greater have a +2 to saving throws and spellcasting rolls. Anyone casting any necromantic magic has a +2 bonus to any associated rolls.

**7** Plants begin to sicken, and food tastes like ash and spoils quickly. Living characters may not regain hit points from rest.

**6** Healing magics begin to fail. Any hit points restored by spells or magic items is cut in half, rounding down.

**5** All incorporeal spirits are fully corporeal and may be harmed by ordinary weapons and attacks.

**4** Skeletons and zombies lose the 'Dead and Mindless' special rule.

**3** Healing magics no longer function. Characters may still be tended to with an ability score check.

**2** All undead creatures regenerate a single hit point every hour.

**1** Living characters may not regain hit points in any way, magical or otherwise.

**0** The two worlds are one. Anyone in a location with this veil rating is effectively within the Underworld. When characters leave this location, they are just as likely to wander into the Underworld as they are to return to the lands of the living.

### VEIL RATINGS AND INFLUENCES

#### LOCATION

a very haunted house: 9

a cursed graveyard: 7

deep in the great catacombs: 5

#### TIME

the midnight hour -1

the equinox -1

the winter solstice -2

following the casting of necromantic magic -2

### THE RULER OF THE DEAD

NAME:

SYMBOL:

NOTES: