

The Wandering Dead

The Wandering Dead are a sub-category of the Obedient Dead, those zombies and skeletons that are animated through the force of necromancy. While they are similar to the zombies and skeletons most are familiar with, they have some distinct differences. For one, they are more intelligent.

In order to find out more information about his obscure category of Walking Dead, I have conducted no less than three years of intensive research. And yet, in order to find the answers that I needed, I found that I had to look up a single source – the being known as Toben the Many.

Before the time of this writing, I had discovered that Toben was being imprisoned in Dementlieu. Apparently, Toben had run afoul of the Great Detective – Alanik Ray himself. Alanik was able to conquer his foe, but ultimately did not destroy him, by order of the gendarmerie.

Instead, Toben was condemned to a very special prison specifically designed for him. Below is an account of my encounter with him, and the knowledge that I gleaned from our meeting. I hope, whomever reads this, that you are able to exploit this knowledge. Gods know – that I shall not.

Toben's prison is known simply as Le Chambre.

It is a sealed stone room, buried outside on the Chateaufaux prison grounds. There are no windows to the underground chamber. There are no holes for air. The walls have been warded by cleric and wizard alike.

At all times there are guards watching over the ground where Le Chambre is buried. Two of the guards are trained clerics. Each guard is given special training, and all are interviewed directly by the warden who appoints the commission based on loyalty and a strong willpower.

Once a season, Le Chambre is opened. The ground above the stone sepulcher is dug up. The mystical wards guarding the tomb are repealed with a magical password known only by the warden himself. Once the password is uttered, the door is then lifted out with a winch which requires five men to operate.

When at last, the door is lifted away, the warden spends the next five minutes with Toben. Apparently, Toben has a unique insight to crime and violence. The warden usually speaks with Toben on a variety of subjects, asking questions and getting leads on crimes that have yet to have been solved. After all, the Great Detective can only take on so many cases himself.

But on this particular day, it was all different. For on this particular day, I was to interview Toben the Many.

As I was lowered down into the Chamber, all light was swallowed by the deepness of the earth. The air became damp, and a heavy chill set in. I could see my breath for a moment, curling around my body. It drifted away curling into the dark like fingers grasping at the walls.

And then, even that faded from my vision. And I was covered in darkness. I could see nothing. The only sound was that of my breathing. And of my heart.

I struck a match and lit a candle which had been given to me. I found myself in a cramped, low ceiling chamber, made from heavy stone blocks. I perceived a long, black sarcophagus stretched out upon a cold, stone bench. I looked up at the small portal of light above me, and called out to the warden.

"Is this some sort of joke?" I asked. "I see nothing here but a sarcophagus. Where is Toben?"

From above, I heard a chorus of coarse laughter.

"It's not a sarcophagus," said the warden. His voice seemed so distant, so far away. "It's an iron maiden. Toben lies within."

I reached out with my hand and pushed at the veil of dust that had settled upon it. It gave away, revealing the engraved image of a mourning lady, the likeness of tears

running down her frozen face.

"Open the hatch," called the warden.

I looked down and saw that the hatch upon the torture device was indeed the very face of the woman-figure depicted on the iron casing. I drew in a deep breath and stepped away. Reaching out carefully, I pulled the hatch towards me. The lady's face turned up to look at me, as if rising up from a long sleep.

And from that hole, that pit of a place where the maiden's face once was...I heard that voice. I heard that voice which I will carry to my grave.

"Hello," said a strange and rasping voice. It had a dry, solitary tone. Like the leaves one hears behind him as he walks home at night, mistaking them for the sound of something lurking.

I said nothing, merely staring at the face of the iron maiden, still tilted to the side.

"Who is it?" The voice almost sang its question, as if it were playing with a child.

"I-I am Alari V-viller," I replied. I looked down to see that my hand was shaking. Wax trembled off my candle onto my hand, burning it. While the pain was sharp, I made no reaction. I did not cry out.

"I see..."

There was a dead silence for a while. Then, it spoke again. "Why do you try to cover up that melodic voice of yours? It's so pretty. Wait. I see, now. You're half-elven. Interesting."

"I am here to interview you," I said, steeling myself. "I am told that you know much about the Walking Dead." I could feel my heart racing. My skin grew a thousand needles upon its surface.

There was a snuffling sound, as if there was some kind of animal trapped in there. "I do know much about the Walking Dead. I do, I do. You know...you must have pulled a lot of strings to be able to come all the way down here. For an entire year, I've only gotten to speak to the warden. It's so nice to hear a different voice. How on earth did you ever get such access? What favors did you have to call in?"

"Toben the Many. I am Alari Viller. I have been sent to interview you. You may respond to my interview, or I may leave. Normally, you have a visitor for five minutes each year. I offer you the chance to speak with someone for more than five minutes...we might spend even an hour, if you are so inclined."

Silence. After a long moment, "Let's play a game. I will answer all of your questions if you answer just two of mine."

I thought on this for a moment. I thought about what had been told to me. About how he would try to twist the situation upon me. "I am the interviewer here," I said with some resolve.

"Alari. You know what? Right now, there are other evils out there. Evils that you could be stopping. But you aren't, are you? And why? Because you're in here. Talking to me. Hoping I will tell you how to stop them.

You can leave if you want. But you won't have gained any knowledge. The evil that you seek will continue to roam. And me? I'll be stuck here either way. So which will it be, Alari?"

The voice had lost all gentility. All pretense of civilization. Now, it sounded savage, feral, and filled with murder. My very breath caught within my throat. I wanted desperately to yank upon my hoisting rope. To travel back up into the light. And yet, I felt compelled. Rooted to the spot.

"T-two questions," I said quietly.

"Oh, good," said the voice, returned now to its mocking tones. It was so frightening the change in that voice. It was if two separate beings were housed within the iron maiden.

"Why are you searching for information about the Walking Dead, Alari?"

“Well, I actually, I have a specific question. A recent publication spoke of three categories of Walking Dead – the Obedient Dead, the Hungry Dead, and the Restless Dead. But there is a fourth category, isn’t there? The Wandering Dead.”

“Ah. Well read, I see. You haven’t really answered the question.”

“I seek knowledge about the Wandering Dead. What are they and how do they rise?”

“But you already know that, Alari. I sense that you already know the answer to your own question. And you still haven’t answered my question.”

“I have. I am seeking information about how the Wandering Dead rise. As to why...it is archival and research purposes.”

“How interesting. Now. Question two.”

By now, I realized that Toben had received the answers for more than just two questions, I had been foolish in trying to be evasive.

“Why are you seeking knowledge of how the Wandering Dead rise? Why have you come all the way here to a place that is open but once a year...only to ask such a simple question?”

“That is two questions. You have but one remaining.”

“Forgive me. Why have you troubled yourself to come here, when the answer you seek might so easily be found? There. Is that simple enough for you?”

I pursed my lips. There was no turning back now. Toben had sensed my purpose. He suspected, now, why I had come. If I was evasive, I might tip my hand. It was best to be direct at this point, but not give too much ground, either. “I have come here...because I know that the Wandering Dead are really a sub-category of the Obedient Dead. They are zombies or skeletons that have risen on their own, not through any force of magic. I wish to know more about this. For my, ah, research. It is a very obscure topic.”

“Usually, zombies and skeletons rise through magic. Usually. But it isn’t the only way.”

“I wish to learn of the other ways these creatures may rise. I wish to learn of the Wandering Dead.”

“Very well...”

Burial

In provincial areas, where clerics are hard to come by, people are often forced to bury their dead without the blessings of the divine. In such cases, small communities will perform rituals. These are attempts to assure the soul’s eternal rest. While such rituals help to appease the spirits, it doesn’t always work. Occasionally a darkling spirit will find its way into the body of a deceased loved one. Just to have a bit of fun.

So, whenever a cleric comes into a community where the dead have been buried without blessing, the villagers are sure to beg the visiting clergy to bless their dead. They’re hoping that the cleric will allow their ancestors to rest easily within their graves.

Improper Burial

The proper burial ritual assures the restful sleep of the dead and protects the body from unwanted habitation of dark spirits. If a body is blessed by a priest, or even better, buried on hallowed ground, the chances of the body rising again are greatly reduced.

But...whenever a deceased is not properly buried, it opens a doorway to the next world. And through that doorway, a darkling spirit might find purchase.

Improper burial may take place when mistakes are made in the burial ritual. An important phrase is left out, or an improper offering to the gods is made. Sometimes, people

are buried thoughtlessly. Their bodies are thrown in mass graves without rituals or blessings. Criminals are the kind of people who receive such treatment. Then, there are occasions where bodies are simply not buried because of inconvenience. Battlefields are an example of a place where bodies will often lay without burial.

Burial Location

Ideally, a body should be buried on hallowed ground. But as we have said before, it is not always possible to bury a loved one on hallowed or even blessed ground. This is why the Walking Dead are so common in this land.

Should a body ever be buried on *unhallowed* ground – land that has been actively corrupted by a dark priest – then the chances of it rising again increase dramatically. You will know unhallowed ground by the active defilement of the land.

Dark cultists like to truss up unhallowed ground with pretty trinkets. They often leave the hanging bodies of skinned animals in the trees. They will have burned barbed and unholy symbols into the earth. Blood will be sprinkled to the ground. Most of all, you will feel the defilement. A disturbing shift in the air.

Finally, there are the dark places of the land in which the spirits of evil and corruption make their home. You will know these places by the length of their shadows. The sudden chill that you feel in your skin when you walk near. It will be a place whispered by the local folk, and avoided by all animal life. In these places, the cold corners of the earth, darkling spirits flourish and thrive. Burying a body here or even leaving it upon the ground is an open invitation for a darkling spirit to inhabit it.

Animus Rex

And now we come to the most dire reasons for animation of the Obedient Dead. As you well know, there are spirits that drive the natural world. While most spirits are minor entities, like the spirit of a tree or stone, there are greater spirits in the world as well. The spirit of a forest or mountain is indeed a powerful force of ancient power.

Are there such counterparts in the *un*-natural world? Of course. These ancient entities are powerful forces that inhabit the hidden corners of the world. A haunted hill. A lonely mountain top. A ghostly forest. Or even...a sickly green fog.

These mysterious forces can cause the dead to rise at their behest. Those Obedient Dead that are wrought forth from such entities possess a frightening intellect. And you know what's worse? They are often extensions of a single, driving force. Because they are merely the hands and eyes of this dark power, they share a common awareness that most Obedient Dead do not have.

They often co-ordinate their attacks, striking at the weaker opponents first. They will wait for opportune times, such as when their victims have gone to sleep. What makes these undead even more dangerous is that they are singularly motivated to spread destruction in any way possible.

The most common example of this are the undead that rise because of a Zombie Fog. The fog itself is a massive entity, and the bodies it animates are merely extensions of its will.

Beware those Obedient Dead raised by Animus Rex, for they are truly awesome opponents to behold. Besides, it may very well be *me* that you are facing. And I assure you, should I chose to confront you, you shall lose.

"As you will lose now, Alari," said that rasping, snide voice. There was a slight change in its tone that caught my attention. I was suddenly aware of a change in the air. The temperature had dropped. It was colder, somehow.

"What? What are you speaking of?"

"You lose. I've discovered why you're here."

"We are not quite done with the interview yet. I wish to know about variant forms of the Obedient Dead. For instance, the Skeletal Archer...."

"You're here...because someone close to you is roaming around. Did you confront him Alari? Did you have to put him to rest - again? Is that why you're here? So that you can make sense of it all?"

"You've...you've asked your two questions."

"It all fits together. Half-elven. Ashamed of his heritage. You are obviously not of a noble house. No, a half-breed like yourself could not be from a privileged background. Nor do your questions or your bearing show signs of such a background. No, you sound like a scholar. A poor unconfident scholar. So how does such a scholar pull enough strings, call in enough favors to get this interview, hm?"

"Stop it!" I felt my throat swell. My vision blurred. Cold, sterile sweat broke out over my body. But try as I might....

"And then there is your desperation. You actually participated in my little game. Actually answered my silly questions. A true investigator would have never played, Alari. A real scholar would have scoffed at me. This all tells me one thing. You were desperate to get your answer. You've gone to great personal expense to come here.

But why does he have that specific question? Why would he come to the most obscure source in Dementileu to find it? Why would such a poor, unrefined scholar come all the way here to ask such an inane question?"

"Stop it!" I thrust my fist into my mouth. I was vaguely aware of shouting from above. The warden and his men were calling down to me.

"Of course! Because one of his own was walking about! With no explanation! And now the scholar seeks an explanation! He seeks the answer!"

"No!" I trust my books and pens into my bag. I groped blindly for the rope that would pull me up. Pull me up back into the light. Back into the world of the living.

"Who are you looking for, Alari? Is it your mother? Father? Sister? Brother? No? Perhaps it is... Yes. A son."

My hand froze. I tried to reach for the pull rope, but my own muscles failed me. My mind burned.

"I can tell you where your son, is Alari. Just give me time. I can find him."

"Be silent!" My voice roared in fury and horror. He rushed over to the iron maiden and glared right down into the black abyss that was the only opening into the metal cowl. "Listen here, you inhuman monster! Soon I shall be free. But you. You! You will rot in here forever!"

I grabbed the iron face that was the lid to the iron maiden. I slammed it shut. There was a loud clang. Out from the black abyss that was the hatch of the torture device came a black cloud of dust and grime.

I pulled on the rope. I was hoisted into the sunlight.

And now...now I write these words in hopes that someone will be able to use them. For even now, I feel my strength failing. Even now, I feel my mind fading, as if I were falling asleep here at my desk. But I can feel him. I can feel Toben within me. He is mocking me. Telling me that soon he will be here.

Toben the Many has infected me. But how? Of course. Disease. He has filled me with some sort of disease. The disease that was Toben. He drew me towards him. Drew me towards the hatch in the iron maiden. So that he could breathe his pestilence upon me.

Even now, I am slipping away. I am slipping into darkness. My darkness. What? Who writes this? My thoughts are not my own. They are mine. They belong to something much more ancient. Much more twisted than any being might imagine. I am....

I AM AWAKE.

I No! No! I am asleep! But I must awaken I must

I HAVE AWAKENED.

WELL, WELL. THE PRICE SOME PEOPLE WILL PAY FOR KNOWLEDGE. I HOPE YOU FIND THESE LITTLE SCRAWLINGS USEFUL. BECAUSE ALARI CERTAINLY PAID A STEEP PRICE FOR THEM. AH, YES. I THINK THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE OUTSIDE MY DOOR. THEY ARE POUNDING ON IT. ASKING IF I AM ALL RIGHT. I THINK I WILL INVITE THEM IN. BESIDES. IT'S TIME TO START MY COLLECTION AGAIN.

Should the Dead Walk

In Ravenloft, there is a sub-category of the Obedient Dead called the Wandering Dead. Wandering Dead are zombies or skeletons that rise of their own accord, not because of the machinations of a spellcaster.

When burying someone in Ravenloft, there is a chance that an evil spirit will inhabit the body and cause it to walk again. These zombies or skeletons, then, are not the animate servants of a necromancer, but rather roaming undead who seek destruction. It should be noted that this form of undead is extremely rare. Most zombies or skeletons are servants of spellcasters.

Because this form of Obedient Dead is animated by a spirit, and not by Negative Energy (see the Obedient Dead chapter in Van Richten's Guide to the Walking Dead) they possess a small amount of intelligence (see below). See the Guide to the Walking Dead for the behavior of the varying levels of intelligence for undead.

Also, since these Obedient Dead are animated by spirits, they are not beholden to any spellcaster. They do not follow the commands of anyone, unless influenced through magic, such as an evil cleric's command undead ability.

The table below indicates the chance of a body rising from its grave according to the type of burial, place of burial, and reason for arising. It should be noted that these percentages are only a guideline. The DM should not roll each time there is a burial or graveyard spotted in the game. Instead, these percentages are meant to give DMs an idea of how frequent such profane risings from the dead occur in the Dread Realms.

Contributing Factors Chance of Rising Intelligence Powers Check

Burial Type

Ritual Burial	+0%	Nil	Nil
Improper Burial	+2%	Nil	+1%

Thoughtless Burial	+3%	+1	+1%
Unburied	+4%	+2	Nil
Inverted Ceremony	+15%	+4	+5%
<i>Blessed</i> Burial	-3%	Nil	-1%

Burial Place

Normal Earth	+0%	Nil	0%
Unhallowed Ground	+3%	+2	+2%
Sinkhole of Evil	+5%	+3	+3%
Hallowed Ground*	-5%	Nil	0%

Reason for Arising

None	0%	Nil
Summoned	n/a	Nil
Grief	+3%	+4
Cursed	+5%	+3
Animus Rex**	+7%	+5

A rising check should be made one week after death and every year thereafter.

* Should hallowed ground ever become defiled or *unhallowed*, it loses all benefits and becomes normal earth.

*Animus Rex zombies and skeletons automatically receive the *Hive of Bodies* or *Mind of Many* salient abilities.

Contributing Factors

Each contributing factor may stack with the others. For instance, look at a body that was buried thoughtlessly on unhallowed ground. It would have a +3% burial type bonus to rise and a +3% burial place bonus to rise for a total of a 6% chance of rising again. Circumstances of the same type do not stack. In these cases, use the higher percentage. Thus a body buried on unhallowed ground that is also a sinkhole of evil only has a 5% chance of rising.

Starting Intelligence

Certain circumstances on the table above will cause an Obedient Dead to be more intelligent than normal. Each of these contributing factors stack. Thus, cursed bodies buried in a sinkhole of evil get a +3 reason bonus and a +3 burial place bonus to their Intelligence for a total of 6 for their Intelligence score. Again, circumstances of the same type do not stack.

Powers Checks

Whenever someone buries a body improperly or on profane land, they must make a Dark Powers check. Again, the percent chances for the Powers Check stack. So, someone performing an inverted ceremony at a sinkhole of evil must make an 8% Powers Check. Only those who take an active part in the funeral ceremony must make the powers check, witnesses or mourners at a funeral need not make the same check.

New Obedient Dead

Skeleton, Archer

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 2d12 (13 hp)
Initiative: +6
Speed: 30ft. (6 squares)
AC: 14 (+2 Dex, +2 Natural), flat-footed 12, touch 12
BAB/Grapple: +1/+3
Attack: Bow +4 melee (1d4+4); or Claw +3 melee (1d3+2);
or bow +5 ranged (1d8+3)
Full Attack: Bow +4 melee (1d4+4); or Claw +3 melee; or
Bow +5 ranged (1d8+3)
Space/Reach: 5ft. / 5 ft.
Special Att: Spontaneous spawn
Special Qual: Enchanted weapons, retained skill, stitching, undead
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +4
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 16, Con -, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 1
Skills: Craft (Bowmaking) +4, Hide +6, Move Silently +5
Feats: Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground
Organization: Any
Challenge Rating: 2
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 7-12 HD (medium sized)

Skeleton, Warlock

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 6d12 (39 hp)
Initiative: +5
Speed: 30ft. (6 squares)
AC: 13 (+1 Dex, +2 Natural), flat-footed 12, touch 11
BAB/Grapple: +3/+3
Attack: Claw +3 melee (1d6)
Full Attack: 2 claws +3 melee (1d6)
Space/Reach: 5ft./ 5 ft.
Special Att: Magic missile
Special Qual: Shield, disjointed body
Saves: Fort Ref Will ***
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 12, Con -, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 14
Skills: Iron Will, Dodge. Combat Casting

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground
Organization: Solitary or squad (3-5)
Challenge Rating: 7
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always lawful evil
Advancement: 13-18 HD (medium-sized)

Archer Skeleton

Archer skeletons are the mystical creations of dread wizards and foul clerics. In order to create archer skeletons, the caster must place an enchanted (+1 or greater) arrowhead onto the skeletons' foreheads. Then, the caster casts *animate dead*. As the skeletons rise, the arrowheads are bonded to their skulls. Enchanted arrowheads from a *magic weapon* spell or *greater magic weapon* spell may be used. The archer skeleton falls apart once the weapon enchantment wears out.

Archer skeletons appear to be normal animate skeletons except for an arrow-shaped black mark on the front of their skull. Archer skeletons typically carry longbows made from ash wood and human sinew. They use human hide quivers to hold their arrows, which are always bear arrow heads of bone. Archer skeletons only carry 40 arrows with them at any time.

Combat

Archer skeletons can use their composite longbows in combat as large two-handed melee weapons doing 1d4 points of damage per hit. Should they lose their bows, they may use their claws doing 1d3 points of damage.

Archer skeletons cannot speak and are utterly silent. They can understand any languages they did in life. They are capable of following limited instructions given to them.

Spontaneous Spawn (Su): Archer skeletons are frightening for one ability that they possess – to create a vast horde of spawn in a short period of time. When firing missiles in combat, archer skeletons have a chance to spontaneously create other skeletons.

Should an archer skeleton's arrow miss its target, the arrow must make a break check (DC 10). If the check succeeds, the arrow breaks and it becomes inert. If the arrow remains intact, the

bone arrowhead shakes, rattles and begins to multiply, turning into a medium-sized skeleton (see MM p. 165). This process takes one full round, beginning on the initiative the arrow misses. The forming skeleton may be attacked at this time and is considered stunned.

Arrows that are caught or deflected remain intact and are not broken. A person holding an archer skeleton arrow may be brake it as a move-equivalent action. They must pass the break check of the bone arrow to successfully snap it in half. Bone arrows have a hardness of 5 with 1 hit point.

Enchanted Weapons (Su): The composite longbow and arrows of an archer skeleton are both considered to be +1 weapons. Should the archer skeleton loose possession of either its bow or arrows, they become mundane weapons.

Stitching (Ex): Archer may repair damage done to it by scavenging body parts from graves. For each dead body the undead uses, it may restore up to half of its original hit points.

Archer skeletons must scavenge bodies to create new arrows as well. One body supplies an archer skeleton with a set of 40 bone arrows.

Both processes take a full 4 hours to complete.

Skills: An archer skeleton has a +8 racial bonus to the Craft (Bowmaking) skill.

Feats: Archer skeletons gain the Point-Blank Shot and Rapid Shot feats as a racial bonus.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Warlock Skeleton

There are many in the Dread Realms who are willing to serve a dark master in order to learn the secrets of magic. But sometimes, these necromantic apprentices fail their dark masters. Their fate is to become undead servants of their dark lord. This form of punishment is popular in the land of Hazlan.

The creation of a warlock skeleton can only be performed by the most perverse of minds. A young wizard or sorcerer must be ritually cooked alive within a cauldron of blood. The ritual keeps the apprentice alive, while the meat is literally cooked from her bones. When the process is complete, all flesh has been cooked from the apprentice, and their bones rise from the cauldron – eternal servants of their master.

Warlock skeletons do not walk, but hover above the ground. Their bones are not connected, but instead float in position forming the shape of a skeletal body. The floating bones constantly emit an eerie purplish light that spills out into the air around them.

Warlock skeletons can send out a spectral whisper when they choose to speak with the living. However, they rarely speak except to express some violent emotion like rage or psychotic delight. Warlock skeletons can speak any language they did in life.

Combat

Spells (Sp): All warlock skeletons can cast each of the following spells three times per day: *ray of enfeeblement*, *fog cloud*, and *shield*. They may cast a *magic missile* spell at will. These spells are cast as if by a 6th level sorcerer.

Disjointed body (Ex): As stated before, a warlock skeleton's body parts are not connected. The levitating bones may float apart or reassemble themselves. Warlock skeletons may use floating limbs to such things as reach things that are far away, unlock a door from a distance, or hide itself better in the dark.

Hands or arms can still attack if separated from the body. They have but one attack, with the base to hit bonus of their host. They do not get additional attacks due to a high attack bonus

or feats possessed by the host. Arms and hands always do damage as indicated on the chart below, plus half the strength bonus of their original host. An arm or hand may float at the speed of 30ft., with poor maneuverability.

A head may float out and bite opponents. It has but one attack, with the base to hit bonus of their host. They do not get additional attacks due to a high attack bonus or feats possessed by the host. Heads do damage according to the table below, plus half the strength bonus of their original host.

All body parts have a quarter of their host's maximum hit points. They cease to function if brought to 0 hit points or less.

Host's Size	Damage
Tiny	1d2
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	1d10

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

New Restless Dead

Skeletal Guardian

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 9d12 (59 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: 40ft.
AC: 25 (+3 Dex,+1 dodge, +4 Natural, +4 chain shirt +3 shield)
BAB/Grapple: +4/+10
Attack: Longsword +12 melee (1d8+9 + 1d6 cold / 19-20x2)
Full Attack: Longsword +12/+12 melee (1d8+9 + 1d6 cold / 19-20x2)
Face/Reach: 5ft. by 5ft./ 5 ft.
Special Att: Frost damage
Special Qual: Fearsome speed, enchanted weapons, turn immunity, awesome aura undead
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +9
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 16, Con -, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12
Skills: Ride +10, Climb +8, Jump +7, Spot +6
Feats: Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)
Mounted Combat

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: 10-15 HD (medium sized)

Skeletal Guardian

While most skeletons are animated through a spellcaster's magic, skeletal guardians are the animated from a sheer force of will. These are the lost and forlorn souls of warriors who failed in some duty. Some skeletal guardians seek the fulfillment of an unfinished task. In cases where the fulfillment of their task is impossible, the skeletal guardian simply roams the land, seeking to fulfill similar duties for all eternity.

Skeletal guardians appear to be animate skeletons at first glance. But looking upon them for any length of time reveals them to be exceptional. They wear the tattered, yet proud, armor that they once wore in life. They possess weapons and shields that glow with a spectral light.

Those who linger about a skeletal guardian are able to feel a sensation of sadness and loss. It is this supernatural regret that keeps the spirit of the skeletal warrior bound upon the earth.

Skeletal guardians are able to speak any language they did in life, though they possess no vocal chords. Their booming voices simply emanate from the air around them.

Combat

Skeletal guardians are proud warriors who prefer to fight their foes up front. They hold onto a lingering sense of chivalry and honor, granting quarter to those who they deem worthy. Occasionally, skeletal guardians will be seen atop ghostly mounts, which these beings ride with deft skill. Ghostly mounts should be given the stats of a normal war-trained mount, with the ethereal quality.

Fearsome Speed (Su): Skeletal guardians get an extra attack with their full base attack bonus when attack a full-attack action. In addition, they gain a +1 dodge bonus to their AC, and +10 to their base speed.

Enchanted Weapons (Su): The weapons of a skeletal guardian are enchanted through the power of their immense will. Their weapons are +1 frost, ghost touch longswords. Their shields are +1 ghost touch shields that reflect all ray spells back at their caster. Should someone else possess one of these items, they must make a Will save (DC 25) each night, or be possessed by the spirit of the skeleton warrior, who will then use the body to carry out their compulsions. The Will save is Charisma-based. Possessed characters possess all the same stats, abilities, and skills as they normally do, but their body is utterly controlled by the skeletal warrior. Should the original skeletal warrior still be animate, then both the possessed character and the skeletal warrior will work together towards their mutual goal. Separation from the item removes the possession.

Turn immunity (Su): Skeletal warriors are animated through their force of will, not by magic or the negative energy plane. They are thus immune to turning, rebuking, or commands from a cleric.

Awesome aura (Su): When in combat, skeletal warriors project an aura of awe and might within a 60' radius. Within the area of effect, all opponents are under a *fear* effect (DC 18), while all allies gain a +1 morale bonus to all attack rolls, saving throws, and AC.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.