

The *Necronomicon*, v2.3

It's interesting (if not particularly surprising) that Jean, Archangel of Lightning, is absolutely personally prosaic about naming his creations. If it's a gun, he calls it a gun. If it's a particle accelerator, he calls it a particle accelerator. If it's a computerized mechanical tool designed to resemble a corporeal life form, he calls it a computerized mechanical tool designed to resemble a corporeal life form. Jean prefers things to be clear. However, the Archangel does recognize that his non-Elohim servants tend to favor more 'colorful' names, so he lets them indulge themselves. It may not add anything to a particular device's utility, but it doesn't take anything away, either, and the boost to morale is slight but measurable.

Thus, the Archangel of Lightning did not object when one of his Saints (Robert, 'leader' of the infamous Cadre of blessed souls with a lively interest in causing trouble back on Earth) took one look at Jean's new database and renamed it. In fact, Jean was slightly impressed: puns may be odious, but St. Robert had actually managed to create one that was accurate. Indeed, this new database **was** a book of the names of the dead.

Well, Undead, and it wasn't a book, and there were more than just names in there, but it was still faintly relevant.

The *Necronomicon* (currently on version 2.3) is essentially a combination of online field manual, discussion board, and portable library. Its avowed purpose is to provide Divine servants with as much information on the Undead as possible: both Soldiers and angels are encouraged to relate even the smallest details of a relevant encounter. Needless to say, the entire archives of the Lazarines (a society of Zadkiel's dedicated to the elimination of the Undead) were the first items to be transcribed into the *Necronomicon*, and their continuing research is routinely posted there.

The *Necronomicon* has three goals: identification, research and elimination. Identification is fairly straightforward: text and multimedia files provide the appearance, methodologies, weaknesses and variations of the three major forms of Undead. These files tend to be fairly stable, as most of the major work has already been done: they're also required reading for most new Soldiers or angels. Also found here are the names, pictures and descriptions of every Undead that Heaven has personally identified.

Research is a bit more involved, and can be broken down to formal (Lazarine laboratory research, among other things) and informal (massive freewheeling discussion boards and forums where brainstorming is the custom). Getting access to this section requires a certain amount of peer recognition: posting, more so. It's worth it, though, as the work done at the highest levels is truly astounding.

Elimination is technically part of the Research section, but in practice is its own distinct area of expertise. The emphasis here is pretty much on how to efficiently, quickly and *silently* destroy Undead: this can range from hybrid research/combat electronic conferences to gruesomely explicit discussion boards. The moderators routinely glean through the entries, distilling the best pearls of wisdom for inclusion in a 'how-to' file that gets larger every year. Sardonic servants of the Host tend to call this file *The Revelations of Glock-E*, in honor of both a favored zombie-killing gun and the average clearance of the field agents who face the Undead.

The regular contributors to the *Necronomicon* tend to be a fairly hard-boiled lot: constant exposure to zombies and mummies and vampires and whatnot has had an effect on their personalities, and it's reflected in their humor (fairly inappropriate, at times) and lack of squeamishness (truly

impressive). The more esoteric parts of the boards could cause acute nausea in an unprepared human -- or even angel. Naturally, most hardcore Investigators (their informal name for themselves) have less than zero sympathy for any philosophical position that lets a single zombified finger survive the inevitable cleansing.

Needless to say, such a resource as the *Necronomicon* is carefully guarded. The first line of defense is that the servers with the basic information are all in Heaven: regular firewalls pale in comparison. Furthermore, actual access to the database is regulated. Most servants of the Host are issued basic user privileges as a matter of course, should they request it. They are issued silvery electronic random password generators that allow them to access the common areas. Such generators are actual corporeal artifacts, and will not generate the necessary keys when parted from their owners.

However, such access only lets the user to read the declassified materials, and study up on the more common forms of Undead. There are five clearances: F grants declassified information, E through C provides access to some of the more engaging speculations, B allows the user to participate in the expert discussion boards and cutting edge research and A is reserved for Superiors 'and

their designates.' Furthermore, the ability to request that research be done on a specific target is subject to another set of clearances, based on the visible electromagnetic spectrum (visible to regular humans, at least). The higher the level, the more likely that someone will actually respond within a useful amount of time. PCs with access to the *Necronomicon* databases (and with a need for its information) should hold clearances somewhere in the middle of the scale. A clearance of D or so will allow them to see some of the interesting stuff, and a central color rating will get their questions answered fairly promptly, but the GM will still be able to throw surprises at them.

Occasionally, however, a demon or Hellsworn will slip through somehow. What happens next depends on their intentions. Those hoping to spread dissension (or even spy) are at constant risk of exposure and attack: suitably trained angels routinely resonate on every post on the *Necronomicon* database. However, a demon that sincerely **wants** to just learn how to kill Undead better may very well be quietly ignored, as long as he stays out of the classified sections and keeps his mouth firmly shut.

Note that only demons or Hellsworn are in a position to even try to sneak on. Those Undead that manage to steal or capture a key and try to bypass its security system

always seem to succeed -- until they actually log on. If they do, the key will immediately flash bright silver and attach itself to the Undead. Once this happens, the key will cause 1d6 Body hits per turn, which cannot be reduced, blocked or deflected: even the Corporeal Song of Shields won't dislodge it once it attaches (only delay the damage). This damage will last until the Undead makes a Strength roll (in other words, rips out the key -- for another 2d6 Body Hits), or dies.

Hey, if you're eternally lying, you **should** be dead. That's why they call it 'death' in the first place, rather than, say, 'hanging out.'

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