

# Zombie Cicadas

*Magicalcicada septendecim mumia*

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Description: imagine a seventeen year locust. Now give it a half-eaten undead appearance, apparent mummy wrappings (actually, flaking chitin), and eyes that glow red in the dark. And they can fly, too! ...Of course they can, because that's all the situation needed, really.

Strictly speaking, these should be called 'Mummy' Cicadas, given that the undead fungus that infects them causes the stricken cicada to appear swathed in wrappings. But that's popular media for you; have the first examples of the 'breed' show up shambling all over the Eastern Seaboard during a time period where zombies are 'hot,' and you're going to get misidentification. That's just how it goes.

As to the fungus: well, if the fungus turned *people* into shambling flying Undead it'd be more of a problem. But it doesn't. Heck, a pulped Zombie Cicada can cure gout, although the CDC only discovered that by accident and they're not keen on further experimentation, or indeed any

other kind of experimentation into the pharmaceutical qualities of Zombie Cicadas... what? People in the health community **do** watch horror movies, you understand. They know how zombie plagues get started -- more importantly, they know how the zombie plagues would **actually** get started, and so they're doing the six or so things smart people do to keep that from happening.

Which would include keeping not-smart people from eating the damned things, but somebody (of course) thinks that Zombie Cicada powder is an aphrodisiac and somebody else (equally of course) thinks, with admittedly **much** better anecdotal evidence, that Zombie Cicada powder will get you high and then there's the minor detail that Zombie Cicada powder *can* cure the gout; not treat, but **cure**. Four percent of the population still gets that disease, you know. They're willing to pay money for a dose of Zombie Cicada. And they're naturally being aided in this matter by any number of forward-thinking entrepreneurs and other self-made individuals determined to not let the dead hands of either fearful authority or the uncaring law prevent them from servicing the needs of the common man.

Which eventually means that somebody's got to raid the illegal cicada 'breeding' pits; and while it's not exactly dangerous (except for all those hostile people with guns),

it also isn't really for the more timid members of law enforcement. In fact, the experience can be downright spooky. It's the chittering moans, you understand. Something in the reptile brain hears a Zombie Cicada moan, and it tells you *Either get the hell out of there, or go get an axe and start lopping off heads.* Even if the heads in question are quite small.

PS: They taste awful. Good GOD! Why would you even ASK that?!?

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