

Zombies

Zombies (note variant spelling) are interesting examples of notions taken to their logical conclusion. The logic goes like this: Sorcery can reanimate a human corpse, making the unnatural biological construct known as a Zombi. Zombis are useful, being immune to pain and fear. They also degrade too quickly, thanks to both the fundamental limitations inherent in the human body, and the Need to fuel the Sorcery which keeps them functional. It would be better to start out using a higher grade of raw materials: finding some already effectively 'unnatural' anyway would be a bonus.

Discarded Celestial Vessels, in other words. Certainly, angels and demons tend to go through them at a high enough rate.

Creating Your Zombie

First, scrounge up a celestial Vessel. This is harder than it looks: Vessels are supposed to be indistinguishable from regular human bodies. Also, neither Heaven nor Hell look favorably on attempts to recycle discarded corporeal husks, to put it mildly. Finally, Remnants are not suitable candidates for this type of zombification. There's just

something about the loss of their Celestial Forces that invariably interferes with the process.

Once the Vessel is acquired, it must be prepped. Any decay that has already taken place must be reversed: luckily, Vessels usually have sophisticated repair systems on the 'cellular' level that can be reactivated with a successful Necromancy -4 roll (2 Essence, one hour ritual). Once reactivated, the rejuvenated systems function for three days before needing to be renewed. Many prospective Zombies are buried during this time period, in order to avoid suspicion.

The actual Create Zombie (a more elaborate version of Create Zombi) ritual may be attempted at any point after the preparatory work has been completed: The Sorcerer rolls at (Necromancy + Enchantment - [Total Forces of the Vessel/2]): the ritual takes a straight eight hours to perform, with the new Zombie rising at the end of it. Essence cost remains equivalent to the total number of Forces of the target Vessel. This ritual can be very loud.

Maintaining Your Zombie

Zombies do not possess Celestial Forces: any Celestial Forces are transferred into either Corporeal or Ethereal

Forces. For every -2 taken to the creation roll, the Sorcerer may dictate the allocation of one Celestial Force. Any Forces above the twelfth are lost.

Zombies also retain at least some of their abilities. All Attunements and Celestial skills are lost: divide Corporeal and Ethereal skills by 3 (rounded down). Zombies also retain their highest-level Corporeal and highest-level Ethereal Song (level divided by 2, rounded up). Zombies lack free will and sapience, and will exercise their remaining abilities upon command by anyone. Prudent Sorcerers set up a system to ensure their new servant cannot hear any orders but their own.

Zombies do not have Needs: the peculiar nature of Vessels does not need constant Sorcerous reinforcement in order to stay stable. Instead, a Zombie starts play with a 3 point Vulnerability (level equal to its Corporeal Forces).

Keeping Everybody from Ganging Up on Your Zombie

Neither Heaven nor Hell approves of Zombies, but they can't always stamp out the practice. The Loa pantheon in particular makes sure the Create Zombie ritual is available to some of their worshippers, which does nothing to help their relations with the Host. On Hell's side, it's not safe for

a Sorcerer to even know the Create Zombie ritual *exists*, let alone learn it: Hatiphas, Demon of Sorcery, isn't known for her sense of humor. Still, Zombies can be useful - and, as long as Baal and Michael have any say on how to run the War, there's always going to be a few of them floating around somewhere.

Also: the mere existence of Zombies encourages celestials to avoid just abandoning their discarded Vessels. Nobody likes having to explain to Dominic or Asmodeus just *why* their old bodies are still walking around...

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