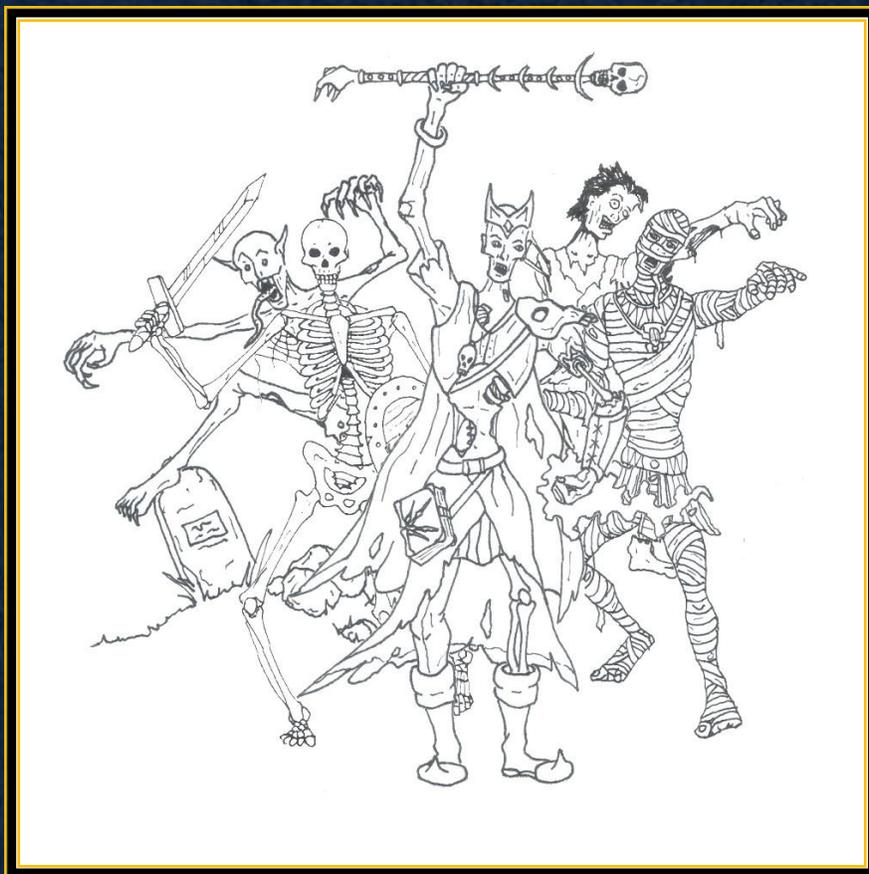


Monster Focus

Undead



A Minotaur Games Supplement
By Jason Bulmahn



Monster Focus: Undead

A Minotaur Games Bundle Supplement

When the wind begins to howl and the leaves fall from the trees in waves of gold and brown, a chill takes to the air signaling the end of the good and plentiful summer months. The time of harvest is here. For the undead it is a time of harvest as well and their bounty is the souls of the living. Rising from their slumber they stalk the chilly autumn nights in search of fresh victims, seeking drag the living into the cold embrace of death.

This bundle contains a wealth of information about undead, covering skeletons, zombies, ghouls, mummies, and lichs. Each individual PDF contains tools for player characters, to fight against the undead, as well as new rules for Game Masters, such as magic items, monster variants, and adventure hooks.

This bonus PDF ties them all together into a single theme, giving you even more adventure hooks and rules to create a game plagued by the walking dead.

SOUL HARVEST

Coming but once per year, the soul harvest is an annual plague upon the living. While the undead are never to be taken lightly, the soul harvest makes them even more deadly, for it is this time of year when the undead are bolstered and drawn to the living. As the fateful night draws near, their power continues to grow, culminating in a single hour of terror.

The events of the soul harvest date back thousands of years when the god of death demanded tribute. As the years past, and the gods of light gained in strength, the people took a stand against death, refusing his due. His rage was unimaginable and he soon decided that if the people would not pay tribute, he would take it from them. That year was the first year of the soul harvest. Every year since, in the middle of autumn, the undead begin to gain strength, emboldened by their dark patron. After one week, on a dark and moonless night, the undead rise to full strength, striking out at the living in a single hour of terror. Those that die during this orgy of death are said to be given to the god of death, forced to wander forever in his endless graveyard.

Today, the people gather together as the soul harvest draws near, protecting one another from the ravages of the dead. Tension runs high until the fateful night when the undead are at their most powerful. Many seek shelter in keeps or other stout fortifications, while those of lesser means hide in cellars or caves, barring the entrance and praying until the hour has past.

Characters unfamiliar with the soul harvest can attempt a Knowledge (history) skill check to learn more.

DC Information

- 10 The soul harvest is an annual event in which the undead grow in power and seek to feast upon the living
- 15 The event begins one week before the soul harvest itself and throughout this time undead grow stronger and become resistant to divine power.
- 20 On the night of the soul harvest, the undead become ravenous and seek out the living. In the final hour, starting at midnight, the undead become nearly immune to the power of the gods.

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Using the Soul Harvest in your Game

The soul harvest is a deadly event that could be the culmination of a month long story leading up the dreadful night itself. The details are left relatively open to allow for a wide variety of stories. It could be a localized event or something that affects an entire kingdom. It could be used as a recurring event, or as a one-time occurrence. In any case, it should lead to a single hour of terror as waves of unstoppable undead emerge to claim their bounty.

- 25 Legend holds that the soul harvest is a punishment, handed down upon the living for refusing tribute to the god of death. Some believe that a proper tribute might bring this grim holiday to an end.

EFFECTS OF THE SOUL HARVEST

As the soul harvest draws near, the following effects sweep across the land. All undead are affected as follows.

1 Week until the Soul Harvest: Undead become restless as the event draws near. Graveyards begin to spawn lesser undead creatures (1d4 per skeletons or zombies per night for a small graveyard up to 3d6 for a large one). In addition, all undead receive a +1 profane bonus on attack rolls.

5 Days until the Soul Harvest: Undead begin to move about more openly. Small graveyards spawn 1d2 ghouls per night (in addition to other undead), while large ones spawn 1d6 each night. All undead receive a +2 profane bonus on Will saving throws made to resist the effects of channeled positive energy and *cure* spells.

3 Days until the Soul Harvest: Undead are drawn to the living, congregating near towns and other settlements. The amount of undead being spawned by graveyards doubles in the final three nights. In addition, all undead receive a +1 profane bonus to AC



and the saving throw DCs of any of their special attacks or abilities increases by +1.

Final day of the Soul Harvest: The weather this day is gloomy at best, mixed with rain and storms. The undead walk openly in the day, attacking any living thing they see. All bonuses gained up to this point are doubled (+2 on attack, +4 on Will saves, +2 to AC and saving throw DCs).

The Soul Harvest: Starting at midnight, this lasts for one hour after which all bonuses and effects end. During this hour, undead take half damage from positive energy and *cure* spells (reduced to one quarter on a successful save). Undead also receive fast healing 1 for every 5 Hit Dice they possess (or fraction thereof). Finally, all undead can automatically sense the presence of living creatures within 30 feet.

Other Adventure Hooks

The soul harvest is far from the only adventure that can be created using the rules found in the PDFs in this bundle. In addition to the hooks contained in each PDF, the following are designed to take advantage of all the rules are your disposal.

Book of Blasphemes: The PCs are asked to investigate the death of a nobleman who died just one week after procuring an odd book from the estate auction of a collector who also just recently passed away. Now the book is missing and the nobleman's daughter fears the book is responsible. In reality, the book is a lesser artifact that creates undead. Each day, the book can be turned one page and each page contains the power to create a single undead creature, conjuring it from the pages of the tome. The original collector was killed by a shadow that fled soon after, but the nobleman was killed by a shifting mummy (see *Monster Focus: Mummies*) who took the tome with him. Even worse, the next page will create a skeletal lord (see *Monster Focus: Skeletons*) followed by a blackfrost lich (see *Monster Focus: Liches*). The PCs have to track down the book before it unleashes a catastrophe on the town.

House of the Dead: While traveling through a fierce storm, the PCs find an abandoned house in the wilderness. Taking refuge inside, they soon discover that they cannot leave and all manner of undead infest the building. If they survive the night, the awake in a clearing the next morning, with no sign of the house ever having been there.

Rotting Zoo: A rather eccentric wizard has opened up a rather gruesome attraction: a zoo filled with a wide variety of undead. He has spent years collecting his specimens and now he hopes to show them off as a sort of freakish attraction. His collection includes the common undead such as skeletons and zombies, but he has a few more rare creatures including a gluttonous ghoul (see *Monster Focus: Ghouls*) and a monstrous skeleton made from the bones of a chimera (see *Monster Focus: Skeletons*). Unfortunately for the PCs, when his zoo arrives in town, a righteous cleric goes to confront him and goes missing. Now the local high priest wants answers and the wizard is not talking. The PCs want to get to the bottom of this, they will have to sneak into his attraction and look for clues.

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