

Nessus: Adventures in the Dead City at the Twilight of Urth

A module and primer for tabletop roleplaying in Gene Wolfe's *Book of the New Sun* setting. For use with any retroclone or old school D&D variant. Assumes an ascending base AC of 12, a D8 hit die, and that a medium one handed weapon such as a longsword does D8 base damage.

"How many people do you think there are in Nessus?"

"I have no idea."

"No more do I, Torturer. No more does anyone. Every attempt to count them has failed, as has every attempt to tax them systematically. The city grows and changes every night, like writing chalked on a wall. Houses are built in the streets by clever people who take up the cobbles in the dark and claim the ground - did you know that? The exultant Talarican, whose madness manifested itself as a consuming interest in the lowest aspects of human existence, claimed that the persons who live by devouring the garbage of others number two gross thousands. That there are ten thousand begging acrobats, of whom nearly half are women. That if a pauper were to leap from the parapet of this bridge each time we draw breath, we should live forever, because the city breeds and breaks men faster than we respire. Among such a throng, there is no alternative to peace. Disturbances cannot be tolerated, because disturbances cannot be extinguished. Do you follow me?"

"There is the alternative of order. But yes, until that is achieved, I understand."

"There are parts farther south that are older still, a waste of stone where only omophagists live. The Citadel used to stand some distance north of Nessus, did you know that?"

I shook my head.

"The city keeps creeping upriver. The armigers and optimates want purer water - not that they drink it, but for their fishponds, and for bathing and boating. Then too, anyone living too near the sea is always somewhat suspect. So the lowest parts, where the water's the worst, are gradually given up. In the end the law goes, and those who stay behind are afraid to kindle a fire for fear of what the smoke may draw down on them."

The impossibly ancient city of Nessus oozes northward while the chiliads tick by, creeping along the poisoned banks of the Gyoll as the wealthy move upriver and all but the most desperately poor abandon the fetid leftovers downstream. The ruins to the south of the city stretch for leagues and leagues, as far as the eye can see, unmapped and given over to criminals, scavengers and beasts. But a few brave souls still venture out into the decaying labyrinth, tempted by gold, glory, and the lure of relics from ages long past.

Travel in the Dead City

Travel through the ruined city is similar to travel through any other urban area, but is slowed by collapsed buildings, flooded streets and chance encounters with the sordid inhabitants. The abandoned city is almost entirely uncharted. Adventurers wishing to map the route they take and landmarks they find must do so themselves, moving at reduced speed. The Gyoll serves as the most obvious visible landmark, threading its way through some portions of the old city and allowing faster access by water. The best way to orient oneself is to climb one of the crumbling spires or raised causeways and attempt to spot the destination from a distance.

For every two leagues travelled, (or whenever you as referee deem it appropriate, such as every hex if you're running a hex crawl), throw a D20 and consult the random encounter table.

1. D6 Zoanthropes, rutting in the street like animals or searching for food
2. DAverage Omophagists, lying in ambush or scavenging

3. D2 Feral children
4. An Adventuring Party, chasing rumors of fabulous riches in the old city
5. 3 Peltasts, on a mission to cull the degenerate inhabitants of the ruined city, human or otherwise
6. A party of Armigers, testing their mettle against the horrors of the old city
7. An Exultant and her bodyguards, looking for her ancestral home
8. A Smilodon, stalking its prey
9. A skeleton, clad in decayed rags and shut into a set of stocks
10. Street overgrown with fungus. Deals D4 acid damage per round to any exposed flesh it touches
11. An abandoned baby, only D10 days old, deposited by some unfortunate courtesan
12. A cirriped, mimicking the sound of an abandoned baby
13. 2 Uhlans, hunting smugglers.
14. The street gives way to a sinkhole. Eurypterids splash in the flooded pools at the bottom.
15. The street and surrounding buildings are overgrown with thick vegetation.
16. A cleverly hidden pit trap. If the group falls in, DAverage Omophagists attack, throwing rocks.
17. A collapsed building blocks the street, going around takes 3D10 minutes.
18. A dead body, wearing a fine pair of boots. Bad things happen to anyone who tries to remove them.
19. Monomolecular wire strung across the street. Deals D4 damage/D10 if hit at high speeds.
20. A flier passes overhead, ferrying an Exultant to or from the House Absolute.

If the party elects to enter random buildings, either to scavenge or to rest and make camp, roll 1D20 and consult the following (or choose whichever you think appropriate). Searching a building takes 6*D10 minutes. If players elect to rest in a building without fully searching it, roll on the table anyway.

1-4	Cirripeds equal to number rolled on die, waiting for unwary adventurers
5-15	Nothing
16	Assorted junk worth D20 Aes
17	Assorted junk worth D10 Orichalks
18	Roll once on the random trinket table
19	Omophagist, hiding or lying in ambush
20	Randomly generated monster w/ D8 HD (sleeping or waiting)

If the players elect to make a fire, there is a 5 in 6 chance that a randomly generated 2D6 HD monster will be drawn to their position. A Wisdom check will tell them not to do this, if they don't already know it's a bad idea.

Encounters

Zoanthropes: Humans reduced to brainless animals through elective surgery. Want to feed and breed.
 HD 0 (D6), AC 10, Biting Attack for D2 damage, Club attack for D4 Damage, Morale 6

Omophagists: Criminals, slaves, outcasts, these wretched men and women infest the outer city. They eat their meals raw, out of fear of what fire may attract. Want whatever you have.

Level 0, AC 12, Knife for D4 Damage, Morale 7

Feral Children: The product of matings between zoanthropes, or of abandoned babies who failed to perish, these children have grown up ignorant of language and civilization. Curious. Want food.

HD 0 (D4), AC 10, Biting Attack for D2 damage, Morale 7

-

Adventuring Party: The abandoned sections of Nessus are occasionally picked over by enterprising gangs of bravos, braving the outer city in search of gold and glory. Wants treasure. The group carries D10 Orichalks and D20 Aes between them.

Osmund: A hunter of beasts and men. Thinks he's the shit. Had a hemispherectomy when he was 2. Wants to kill something impressive.

Level 1 Fighter, AC 14, Zweihander for D10 Damage, Morale 9

Isaac: A thief, had one of his hands chopped off after a botched job. Wears a prosthetic that allows him to hold a buckler, but cannot do anything else with his right hand. Wants enough money to retire.

Level 1 Specialist, AC 15, Buckler and Backsword for D8 Damage, Morale 9

Wigfrid: Cast out of the witches tower after an accident left her completely deaf. Whenever she attempts to cast a spell, there is a 1/3 chance she will misspeak and fail. Wants to succeed at something important.

Level 2 Magic User, AC 12, 2 Random Spells, Smallsword for D6 Damage, Morale 8

-

Peltasts: Soldiers of the Autarch, clad in half armor and wielding blazing spears and transparent shields. Want to defend Nessus, keep the law and preserve their own lives.

Immanuel: Level 2 Fighter, AC 17, Shield and Spear, Morale 9

Rolento: Level 2 Fighter, AC 17, Shield and Spear, Morale 9

Brutus: Level 2 Fighter, AC 17, Shield and Spear, Morale 9

-

Armigers: The Commonwealth's warrior aristocracy, well trained in the use of arms. Want glory and honor. Carries miscellaneous trinkets worth D20 Orichalks

Hasdrubal: Level 3 Fighter, AC 17, Kite Shield and Falchion for D8 Damage, Morale 10

Rutherford: Level 4 Fighter, AC 15, Buckler and Rapier for D8 Damage, Morale 10

Haggai: Level 3 Fighter, AC 16, Lochaber Axe for D10 Damage, Morale 11

Enkidu: Level 2 Fighter, AC 14, Flamberge for D10 Damage, Morale 10

-

Exultant: The Commonwealth's highest caste, descended from the starfarers who accompanied the Monarch to Urth in his abortive attempt to restore the Empire. Tall, partly as a result of a process carried out on kaibits, clones of themselves, so that they might prolong their youth. Wants wealth, power and honor. Carries miscellaneous trinkets worth D10 Asimi

Kassandra: Her sisters serve as concubines in the House Absolute, her brothers ride against the Ascians to the North, her mother and father squander their fortune and good name intriguing against the Phoenix Throne, Landgravine Kassandra is the only member of her family who takes seriously the task of searching the ruined city for the once mighty seat of her noble house. Wants to locate her ancestral estate and recover an important heirloom.

Level 4 Fighter, AC 15, Buckler and Sabre for D8 Damage, Pistol (+2 to hit) for D12 Damage, Morale 11

Brahmaputra: Level 3 Fighter, AC 14, Halberd for D8 Damage, Morale 11 (8 if his liege is killed)

Vincent: Level 2 Fighter, AC 14, Halberds for D8 Damage, Morale 11 (8 if his liege is killed)

-

Smilodon: A creature out of antiquity with vicious saber teeth, its bellowing can be heard for leagues. Though more often found in the jungles of Urth, Skuld, and other worlds, a few are known to haunt the old city. Wants to stalk and kill prey.

HD 5, AC 14, Attack Bonus 3, 3 Attacks, Claw and Bite for D18 Damage, Morale 9. Faster than a human.

-

Cirriped: An immobile crustacean, germinated from spores brought down from the stars in the bilges of the Monarch's ships. Infests the abandoned quarters of Nessus. Capable of mimicking the cries of humans and animals to lure its prey. A wisdom check may allow adventurers to determine that something is amiss. Wants to eat things.

HD 1, AC 18 (10 w/ Tongue Extended), extends tongue to ensnare prey. Tongue lash for D2 Damage. Unaware targets must save vs Paralysis or be caught. Next round captured prey is hauled up into the creature's maw, where it gnaws them for D4 damage per round until Killed. Totally immobile.

-

Uhlans: Mounted soldiers who fight with saber and lance, tasked with slaying all who trespass along the Autarch's roads. Want to kill criminals and take their belongings.

Bruno: Level 2 Fighter, AC 16, Spear, Saber for D8 Damage, Morale 10

Jan: Level 3 Fighter, AC 16, Spear, Saber for D8 Damage, Morale 10

Destrier: A war beast bred up by thaumaturges whose very bones are now dust, with clawed feet, tusks, and an omnivorous diet. Strong, capable of carrying its rider at incredible speeds.

HD 4, AC 14, Attack Bonus 2, Claw and Bite for D8 Damage, Morale 10 (8 if rider is killed or thrown). Faster than a human.

-

Sample Adventure

A bloated lindworm has awakened from its slumber in the semi-flooded flooded tunnels and caverns beneath the dead city. It has established itself beneath a ruined greenhouse, where outlaws, slaves and outcasts of all type worship it as a god. Its acolytes scour the ruined city for plunder to feed its insatiable hunger. The party is drawn in by something like the following:

Rumor tells of a place where mindless pilgrims worship an enormous wyrm, heaping the treasures of antiquity at its thousand feet. They are said to hold mass in a six sided house with a glass roof, which can be seen from a great distance, if one is high up and knows where to look.

The greenhouse is in the abandoned city outside the wall, and therefore not visible from anywhere inside. The best hope to locate it would be to find a tall structure outside the wall and look Southward for its distinctive green glass roof. It is at least two day's travel on foot from the Piteous Gate, which may be shortened to a day's travel by boat, though it is anyone's guess if they will be able to find a boat going the other way.

-

Replace items 9 and 20 on random encounter table with "2D6 Proselytes, looking for artefacts to feed to their deity."

Proselytes: Ragged inhabitants of the abandoned city who worship a monstrous wyrm. They scour the old city for trinkets, and in return the beast is said to grant them unimaginable delights. They all have scars on their foreheads. Upon encountering adventurers they will insist that the player characters relinquish their gear and accompany them to their church. If rebuffed they will turn violent, attacking with chairlegs, boards and other improvised weapons, attempting to bludgeon the unwilling visitors into unconsciousness. If successful they will truss their victims and carry them to their church in the greenhouse. Want to gather loot, feed it to the wyrm, be rewarded, and convert visitors to the old city to their faith.

Level 0, AC 12, Improvised Weapons for D4 Damage, Morale 8 (10 if defending the greenhouse, 5 if the worm is killed)

The Greenhouse

The hexagonal building will be recognizable as a greenhouse to any resident of Nessus familiar with the Botanic Gardens. Its walls are a good three ells (ten feet) in height, constructed of solid brick, painted and posterized over with peeling images of cacti, mandragora, pitcher plants, flowers and all manner of other botanical life. At two ells there are three hexagonal windows to a side, all of them too small for anyone to fit through. Above this is the roof, made of green glass and sloping upward from the six sides to meet in the center. Many of the panes have broken or fallen away from the lattice supporting them, and vines have climbed up the scaffolding, out the windows and through the missing panes over the walls. A dextrous adventurer could scale the wall, or possibly leap from one of the adjacent buildings, to land on the roof, although clambering around up there may result in a nasty fall, as the supports are in some disrepair. The building is accessible through a large set of double doors in front, which are locked (barred from the inside) but should not be difficult to batter down. There is a secret door accessible from the alleyway on the West side of the building, locked but trivial to pick or remove from its hinges with a well placed boot.

Inside, the passage leads to a central chamber with a circular pit in the center surrounded by a metal railing, descended by a dainty spiral staircase. The interior of the greenhouse is completely overgrown, host to all manner of plant and animal life. Botanically minded adventurers may find all manner of valuable plants and herbs to cut here. The interior walls are glass, and would provide a clear line of sight if not obscured by vegetation. They can be fired through, attacked through and broken through. There are a total of twenty six proselytes, 4d6 of which will be out scavenging during the day (the ones on the random encounter table) and the rest of which are either in the greenhouse or beneath it. There is a chance that any of the cultists out prospecting the city which the PCs did not encounter and kill will return while they are there. If the adventurers stake out the exterior and conceal themselves well enough, they may catch one of these parties returning with loot gathered around the city. They will either use the secret door, or be let in through front if they're carrying anything too large to fit otherwise. About a third of however many cultists are home will be in the greenhouse. If they know the PCs are coming (they made lots of loud noise, took multiple turns to beat down the door, etc) they'll set an ambush (they aren't tactical geniuses but they know how to hide in foliage) and alert everyone downstairs. Otherwise they'll be lolling about, picking berries, fucking in the bushes, generally enjoying themselves. They aren't a terribly alert group and a stealthy group of adventurers, or one that arranged a suitable distraction or disguise, could sneak past them. There is a secret hatch hidden in the greenery in the Northwest wing.

Below the Greenhouse

The spiral staircase leads down to the bottom of a pit, also filled with plant life. There is a door to the North leading to a storage annex, and one to the Southwest leading downward to a cistern where the cultists' god has made its home. The Northward room is a former storage room which the cultists have renovated to a dormitory. A door to the East leads to a pentagonal room that once controlled the sprinkler system in the greenhouse, now used as a sanitarium for members of the group who are too far in withdrawal to be of any use until the man-centipede decides to minister to them again. From there, a narrow, downward sloping maintenance tunnel allows access to the pipes that were once part of the irrigation system, ending in a grille which looks out into the man-centipede's chamber at roughly foot level.

One of the beds in the dormitory blocks a secret door leading to another maintenance tunnel, which happens to be accessible through the secret hatch above. This tunnel is visible with a thorough search of the bottom of the pit, the vegetation blocks an impassible grate. This tunnel leads to a triangular room heaped with most of the loot the cultists have recovered since they last fed the man-centipede. From here

a gently sloping upward ramp leads to a raised catwalk ringing the cistern. A pile of rubble (which could be removed, noisily, given some effort) blocks a passage leading to the tunnels beyond.

-

The proselytes' ritual is that they pile up whatever they find in the triangular room, then have people gather on the catwalk above. Everyone else stands in the cistern, and together they all scrape and bang whatever metal objects they've gathered to call the worm. The man-centipede arrives from the tunnel to the South, and the people on the catwalk all start throwing down everything they've gathered, and the thing skitters around the room slurping it all up and chittering with delight. When it's satiated, the thing "blesses" its followers by puncturing their foreheads with its forelegs, injecting a powerful euphoriant directly into their brains.

-

Man-Centipede: A cacogen with the body of a large, fleshy worm, many segmented legs, a coat of fine hairs, a gaping, toothy maw, and a lovely human face. Loves to swallow things, especially metal, but will eat almost anything. Though no great and noble mind, it is smart enough to corral its human followers, which it manipulates through a drug secreted from its articulated forelegs. The substance induces a dangerously addictive euphoria, which it doles out sparingly in return for treasure. Can understand some speech, though cannot speak itself, communicates by chittering and scratching crude drawings in the mud or on the walls. Wants to eat valuable things.

HD 10, AC 14 (12 on face), Attack Bonus , 3 Attacks (bite or spit and two forelegs) or 1 Attack (rolling/charging), Morale 10

-Bite attack for D8 damage, on a hit victim must save vs Paralysis or be caught in the beast's mouth, next round if they are wearing metal armor they must make a save or be swallowed and take D10 acid damage per round.

-Acid spit, everyone in the area of effect must save vs Breath Weapon or be splashed with acid, corroding metal and dealing D4 damage. If the damage roll is 4, the victim takes D4 damage per round for D4 rounds or until it is scraped off.

-Rolling/charging attack, everyone in the path must pass a Dexterity check or be crushed for D8 damage

-Foreleg attack, anyone hit must save vs poison or be filled with indescribable pleasure, unable to act for D6 rounds. When the drug wears off, the victim must save vs Wisdom or become addicted, at which point they cannot attempt to do further harm to the man-centipede (if the entire party becomes addicted treat as a TPK).

If the PCs have made lots of noise and raised the alarm, the cultists will call the worm, both in hopes that it will help defend them, and because they would rather feed it what they've gathered than let some adventurer run off with it. This means making noise until it shows up, then tossing as much of their haul into its maw as they can before the Party can stop them. There is a chance that the sounds of combat, such as clanging weapons and armor, will draw the worm. If the PCs have been captured, the Proselytes will hold them in the dormitory for a time, probably allowing them at least one opportunity to escape (although their weapons and most of their gear will be taken and stashed in the treasure room) and most likely accidentally showing off the secret door. Thanks to the effects of the drug they aren't a terrifically bright group. If the player characters are still held captive by the time the ritual starts, they will be brought to the cistern, witness their stuff being fed to the worm, then it will puncture them all like it has the rest of the cultists.

If they are not captured, do not raise the alarm and the ritual is not in progress when the adventurers arrive, they might not even encounter the worm.

-

Loot

The Greenhouse up above has very little worth taking. The dormitory beneath has D10 orichalks worth of junk, along with comestibles, albeit of poor quality. To determine what treasure can be salvaged from the triangular room, or from the cistern below, roll on the loot table below.

Roll 4 times if the worm never arrived, all the treasure will be located in the triangular room.

Roll 3 times if any of the treasure was tossed to the worm, twice for the triangular room and once for the cistern floor

Roll 2 times if at least half the treasure was tossed to the worm, once for the triangular room and once for the cistern floor

Roll 1 time if all the treasure was tossed to the worm and it ate most of it, for the cistern floor.

Roll 0 times if the worm was unharmed and had time to eat all the treasure thrown to it at its leisure.

01-57	Treasure Worth Chrisos Equal to # Rolled
58	Azoth
59	Pistol
60	Needler
61	Catoptric Armor (AC of leather, grants Invisibility)
62	Conflict Armor (AC of plate, encumbrance of leather)
63	D4 Tubes of Biofoam (heals D10 HP)
64	Personal Shield, battery absorbs 10+D10 damage before failing
65	Staff of Tartaros (negates all light sources within 10 yards)
66	Wand of Magnetism (acts as a superconducting magnet when active, can switch polarity)
67	Repeating Arbalest
68	Slug Gun
69	Visor (allows user to see in all light spectra, emits terahertz rays to see through thin walls)
70	Contragravity Harness (grants flight)
71-80	Case of D6 scrolls w/ Random Magic User Spells
81-90	Case of D6 scrolls w/ Random Cleric Spells
91-100	Spellbook w/ D6 Random Magic User Spells (Each is D8 Level)

-

Random Trinkets

1	Suits of clothing, musty but otherwise intact
2	Bottles of brandy, rum or whiskey

3	A painting in desperate need of restoration
4	Vinyl Records, worn but still playable
5	A Datacube, holds D6 petabytes of information
6	Tins and jars of pickled meat and vegetables
7	Trinkets and baubles cast in unsmeltable metal
8	Skeins of copper wire
9	Bolts of brightly colored cloth, like new
10	Books, in various states of readability

-

Currency

The values of coins are as follows: 10 Aes to an Orichalk, 10 Orichalks to an Asimi, 10 Asimi to a Chrisos. 1 Orichalk=1 XP

Aes (Copper)	Orichalk (Brass)	Asimi (Silver)	Chrisos (Gold)
1	1/10	1/100	1/1,000
10	1 (1 XP)	1/10	1/100
100	10	1	1/10
1,000	100	10	1

-

Weapons

Adventurers would do well to be circumspect in their use of any solar level weaponry that comes into their hands, as they are likely to draw unwanted attention. An arbalest or lance would arouse suspicion, as these are generally only issued to Commonwealth military personnel, while a pistol and a needler would be the target of every thief. Even an Exultant would contemplate murder to get her hands on an azoth.

-

Azoth: Hand weapon. An ornate, jeweled hilt which projects a shrieking discontinuity in the fabric of the universe, which the wielder can use to slash up reality like a blade. D20 damage.

-

Pistol: Ranged weapon. A relic of a lost civilization, or perhaps brought down from the stars chiliads ago. Worth a wagonload of Chrisos.

Capacity=100, comes charged with 50+5D10 energy. +2 to hit. Choose which damage die to roll (D4, D6, D8, D10, D12, D20 or D100) before firing. The number rolled is subtracted from the battery, even if the attack fails to hit. If the number exceeds the weapon's remaining battery life, damage equal to the remaining battery is dealt and the weapon is empty.

Arquebus/Carbine/Fusil: As pistol, but two handed, and the battery is 200 or 100+D100

-

Spear/Lance: Ranged weapon. An energy weapon with a blazing head. usually issued to members of the Commonwealth military.

Capacity=5, comes loaded with 3+D2 charges. Deals D10 damage. If the damage rolled is 8 or greater the target catches fire and takes d4 damage per round until the flames are extinguished (water, rolling on the ground, smothering etc). Can be wielded in melee for D8 damage.

-

Needler: Ranged weapon. A handgun, fires magnetic needles at hypersonic speeds.

Capacity=30, comes loaded with 20+D10 needles. D6 damage, +1 to hit and +1 damage per extra needle expended after the first (up to five needles can be expended in a single round).

-

Repeating Arbalest: Ranged weapon. A crossbow, fires pyrotechnic bolts.

Capacity=5. D8 Damage, +1 to hit and +1 damage per extra bolt fired after the first (two bolts may be fired in a single round). If the total damage rolled is 8 or greater the target catches fire and takes d4 damage per round until the flames are extinguished (water, rolling on the ground, smothering etc).

-

Slug Gun: Ranged Weapon. A pump action firearm, perfectly suited for defeating armor.

Magazine=8, comes loaded with 4+D4 slugs. D10 Damage. Slugs negate any AC derived from armor or shields.

-

Solar Cycle Miscellany

Using Demi-Humans: Ideally most player characters will be human. If someone really wants to be a Dwarf or Halfling call them an Autochthon (they're short and they live underground). If someone wants to be an Elf you can call them an Exultant (they're tall and arrogant) or make up a human or alien subspecies that has the same stats as an Elf.

-

Alignment: Characters are aligned based on how they feel about the coming of the New Sun. Pro New Sun characters believe that without the New Sun, the Old Sun will eventually burn out and leave Urth a frozen wasteland. They usually believe the New Sun will bring paradise to Urth, saving humanity, and that without it the planet is doomed. Anti New Sun characters believe that the coming of the New Sun will kill everyone on Urth. They might believe that rather than worshipping the Conciliator and the possibility of a New Sun, man should look to the stars, and to retaining the glory of past ages when humanity was able to travel freely across the universe. Neutral characters might not believe in the New Sun at all, or they may simply be apathetic, reasoning that there is nothing they can do to affect the outcome and thus no sense worrying either way.

The Commonwealth, the Pelerines and most (but not all) Clerics favor the coming of the New Sun.

The Ascians, the Megatherians, Vodalus and many (but not all) Magic Users oppose the coming of the New Sun

-

Ascians: Come down from the North to besiege the commonwealth, the Ascians serve Erebus and Abaia, titans who would tear down the works of man and thwart the coming of the New Sun. Ascians use roughly the same language as the inhabitants of the Commonwealth, but can only speak by quoting "approved texts" issued by their leaders, the Group of Seventeen, which connotate to the meaning they wish to express. Wants to carry out the will of the Group of Seventeen.

HD 1 (D4 HP), AC 10, Miscellaneous hand weapons for D2 Damage, Morale 10 (Ascians who fail morale at the start of a battle will usually commit suicide), Horde Rules (damage in excess of the first target's health is dealt to any other foes of the same type within range)

-

Alzabo: A red furred ghoulish bear from a distant world, inhabits the mountainous regions of the Commonwealth. Devours living things and absorbs their memories, allowing it to take on the personality of any sentient creature it devours, even speaking in their voice. Hunted for the gland in its body which produces the famous analeptic, allowing humans to mimic its abilities by eating the flesh of the dead. Wants to eat sentient beings.

HD 8, AC 14, Attack Bonus 3, 2 attacks, Claw and Bite, D10 Damage, Morale 9

The Alzabo can express the personalities of its sentient victims. When it does so it gains intelligence, wisdom and charisma equal to the highest of those values any of its prey had.

-

Androids: Machines fashioned in the likeness of men. Some clothe themselves in flesh and disguise themselves as humans, while others resemble suits of armor which can be worn. Most were created long, long ago, although many cannot remember their pasts.

Optional rule: There is a 1/1000 chance that a given human NPC is actually an android in human skin. These androids have +1 AC and negate 2 damage per die rolled against them, although any damage they incur runs the risk of stripping away their fleshy mask, revealing the machine beneath.

-

Further Adventures in the Dead City

An abandoned cathedral towers over the dead city. In the windowless belfry above, bloodbats roost. The catacombs below hold stasis tanks full of sleepers, placed there during the age of the Monarch and long since forgotten.

A vast dome is guarded by a maniple of “suits of armor,” actually androids carrying out their mission to protect it. Inside, ancient “perpetual motion” machines whir away, powered by uranium batteries with half lives counted in millions of years.

The flooded tunnels under the city are infested with obstinate sea life from every era. Dunkleosteus and liopleurodon war with kronosaurus and megalodon in the sightless depths. What riches lie sunken beneath the cobbled streets?

-

Credits/Resources Used

Gene Wolfe's *Solar Cycle*

OJ at *A User's Guide to the Apocalypse* for helping populate the encounter tables and adventure hooks

Michael Andre-Driussi's *Lexicon Urthus* and *GURPS New Sun*

Jack Shear for the random monster table in *Flavors of Fear*

Andrew K. at *Goblin Punch* for a bunch of cool OSR stuff I ripped off

/lit/ for being a sweetie