

Bronze and Bone,

a game of adventure in an Ancient Greece overrun by the dead

Haemon looked down at the crossroads. There were five of the grey dead there: pale shadows of what had once been living beings, skin dull and eyes dim, going through the motions of life though they had no memories of living, and no humanity. "Is that the man you thought it would be, Alecta?" he asked, shivering slightly, though it was not chill.

The woman crept forward on her belly to rest beside Haemon, her spear still in her grip but held back. It wouldn't do for the sun to catch on the bronze tip. She swallowed hard when she saw them, but kept her fear under control. "Oh, yes, that's Polyduectes. I knew him when I was a child. He was a great man, and a great warrior."

Was a great man. Yet still he stood there, with a bronze breastplate and a spear two feet longer than the man's great height; stood though, if Alecta remembered rightly, he had died fifteen years before. Haemon nodded. "If I woke him to his life, would he help us, do you think?"

"Help us win through to Megara? Maybe not. He hated the Megarans," she said, with a hint of a snarl in her voice; the natural loathing of an Athenian for one of their many rival cities. "But would he help us against his fellows there? Oh, surely he would."

There were five watchers at the crossroads, four of them armed and armored, the fifth a gangly woman obviously a runner, ready to carry a message off to the main army two leagues away if she was needed to do so. Polyduectes was the biggest, with the body of a divinity; somewhere in his line, Haemon felt, must be Zeus or Ares or Apollo, one of the Twelve, for he had that look about his face, even through the ghastly pallor of the dead: the glow of immortality that showed on some men, though they could not live forever as the Gods did. Or perhaps they could, now, live that long, with the gates of Tarterus left open, and the world invaded by the dead.

Perhaps even the Gods might not live forever now, Haemon thought, but he prayed it would not be so.

He slid back down the rocky slope, with Alecta following a moment after him, to join their other companions. Xeno was the oldest of them, a quiet man who had lost his sons and brothers when the Grey Hosts had swept across the island of Aegina and slaughtered all the folk there, including the fishing ships of Xeno's family docked in the harbor. He frowned at them as they came to him, but then, he was always frowning. So long as he could still draw his sword and keep his shield up, Haemon had little concern for the man's mood. Sitting down on a stone beside the old man was the boy Kleitos, with his dark eyes turned up to the heavens.

"The Gods' vision was correct," Haemon announced. "The leader of the sentinels is indeed that Polyduectes who Alecta here knew, and he is the mightiest of them. But there is a runner we must stop before she can carry word of our deeds to the army."

"My spear can reach her if I hurl it. That still leaves three others," Alecta said. "And that is if your libations actually call Polyduectes back to himself."

"I haven't yet failed," Haemon said. He looked over to the donkey, laden with their gear including the amphorae of sweet wine that he would spill to call back the memory and spirit of the dead hero into his body.

"The omens are not the best," Kleitos said. "The drift of the clouds speaks against this effort."

"Are you a coward, then, to give up the task given us by the city?"

The boy shook his head. "Of course not. I've a sword and a dagger that will put the dead back into the earth for a time, and my heart is strong enough to resist any terror. But you have to respect omens, all the same."

Haemon waved away the boy's words. "The Gods are above the omens."

"The Gods are busy," Xeno said, his voice whispery and weak. "When they are done with their fighting, when the Titans are imprisoned again, then you can speak of them. But your priesthood is not much good when the divine ones cannot answer."

He felt rage flowing into him, but there was nothing but truth in the old man's words. The Gods hardly answered prayers any longer, and they might fail and fall against their ancient foes. Well, that just meant it was up to men to set the world right.

Haemon walked to the donkey and, fumbling with ropes and ties, loosed an amphora of wine. He cracked the wax seal and pulled out the stopper, sloshing around the fluid within. The sweet smell came up: not yet spoilt, and that was good. The dead liked wine almost as much as they did blood, but only if it was sweet and strong.

"I will brave the sentinels, and wake noble Polyduectes to what he once was. If the Gods are good, he will fight his fellows, one by one, and win us the road, but you lot must hold them off while I wake the hero. Will you watch me, and protect me, so that we can pass this crossroads?"

"And how then get to Megara, Haemon? How then get past the whole Grey Host that is assembled outside the city?" Kleitos's voice wasn't a challenge, it was a plea, a prayer even, for some sort of solution.

Haemon couldn't give him answer through. "The Gods will show up the way," he

said, though he didn't believe it.

"Cheer up, Kleitos," Alecta said, slapping his shoulder with her left palm. She slid her hand under his arm and drew him to his feet. "We'll either win through, in which case we've served the city well, or we'll die, in which case we'll bathe in the River Lethe and forget all of this, and come back to join the Grey Host. And then you won't care that we lost."

"I just wish we had a good omen," the boy said, his eyes roaming the skies again.

A swift dart of color across the endless hard blue as some bird flashed past them, wings barely flapping, moving at incredible speed.

"An eagle, I think," Xeno said. "A sea eagle."

"Flying left to right," Kleitos said, nodding. "Perhaps the Gods haven't quite forgotten us."

"It's a good omen, then?" Alecta said.

"The very best," Kleitos replied, and a smile broke out on his young face. He needed to smile more often. A boy of seventeen shouldn't always be gloomy, Haemon thought; but such was the way of the world.

"Well, then. Gather your courage, my friends. We go to confront the dead." He held the amphora close to his chest and whispered a prayer to noble Athena that she would see them through, but he did not know that she heard him.

[Tartarus](#) lies broken open, and the gods fight against all the ills of the world allowed freedom at once. Mighty [Hades](#) must struggle to hold the borders of the lands of the dead against the Titan [Iapetus](#) and a horde of monsters, and his realm suffers from his neglect. The silent dead pour forth from the caves of [Cape Matapan](#), and through the oracular city of [Necromanteion of Ephyra](#), coming back to the sunlit world to claim the lands of men for their own. Empty of hope or memory of life, the [shades of the fallen](#) swarmed over the living without pity or mercy, swallowing city after city under the shadowy power of their hollow unlives. Brave men can stand and fight them, and the dead can be made to die once more; but they return, endlessly, if they are not held back by the offerings of the living. Much of the [Peloponnese](#) is fallen to them, and they spread in gray clouds across the waters to islands of the Aegean, and to the mainland of [Hellas](#), where the living can only hope to hold them back. Worse yet, perhaps, the battles of the immortals spill over into [Hellas](#), and [monstrous creatures](#) roam the desolate and lonely spaces of the world, coming sometimes even into the farmlands and towns of men and wreaking devastation before some hero manages, with luck and divine favor, to deal with them. Proud and impious monarchs still plot against one another, and wars wage between cities that are yet under the threat of the armies of the dead. So it is said that no man may be called happy until he is dead, and so it will be until such time as the great gods of [Mount Olympus](#) can once again take the world in hand and set things to rights.

You are those who fight the escaped souls of the underworld, who would protect the sun-bright cities of [Attica](#) and [Boeotia](#), of the Megarid and [Thessaly](#), the clustered islands of the [wine dark sea](#). Standing aside from the concerns of mortal kings and queens, you defend the lands of mortals against the dead and the Titanic monstrosities that threaten it. Whether you use your bronze spear or secrets of the [Mysteries](#), your wits or the propitiatory rites that comfort and free the dead, you resist the pale, fading end of the world just as the Gods fight against their ancient foes the Titans. Dare to adventure in the world of [Bronze](#) and Bone!

Character Creation

Characters have three main Qualities: Bravery, Cunning and Piety. Bravery defines aspects relating to combat and physicality; Cunning represents a character's cleverness, guile and intelligence; Piety determines how connected a character is to the gods and the right ways of living.

Bravery encompasses three Traits: Strength, Speed and Skill.

Strength is the raw, brute might of a person, and helps to determine how well a person can perform tasks involving jumping, climbing, lifting and breaking; *Speed* the quickness of body and reaction, and helps to determine how fast a person moves, dodges and acts; and *Skill* the finesse of their movements, helping to indicate their basic ability with weapons and acts of dexterity.

Cunning similarly encompasses the Traits: Trickery, Strategy and Knowledge.

Trickery is the deviousness of a character's mind, and helps to determine how sneaky and deceitful a person is; *Strategy* is the analytical portion of a character, and helps to plot out actions and make decisions on all matters; while *Knowledge* represents the learning and awareness of a person, and shows what is known and how well they are able to learn.

Piety likewise has three components: Wisdom, Inspiration and Faith.

Wisdom is awareness of the divine, and helps determine how well a person performs in the Mysteries or in confusing circumstances; *Inspiration* is the sacred fire of creativity which fills a person with divine presence, and helps to avoid corruption and to win over others by sheer will; lastly *Faith* is a belief in the gods and their works, and helps to determine how much influence over the character the Gods will exert for good and how responsive immortal things are to a person.

Characters possess a rankings in each of the nine Traits, which combine to determine their Qualities. It is possible to have a Trait with a value of 0 (and this is in fact common among ordinary folk), indicating it a thing which the character does not devote any particular time or energy to, but it is not possible to have a Quality with a value of 0 however; at least one point will have to be assigned to at least one Trait for each Quality. Each Trait allows a character a number of bonus dice

useable to add to dice pools during a session equal to its total value (for example, a character with a Piety of 4 could add a total of 4 bonus dice to actions associated with Piety in a single game session, when and as they saw fit.)

Each Quality may also have a number of specialities associated with it, based on the value of the Traits associated with it: the player may select one Speciality for each Trait with a value of at least 4, and one more if a Trait has a value of 7. Whether a character has Traits of those values or not, the player also selects a single speciality for whichever Quality has the highest total value (their choice if there is a tie), but only one..These specialities enhance the character's performance in the related area, such as Spears or Libations or Swimming.

For each Trait which reaches a value of 4, the character will gain 1 point of Hubris, which is a measure of how much in peril the character is from the Gods' wrath at mortals who try to reach too high (see Hubris below, pg. 7). A second point is given to any Trait with a value of 7. The exception is Faith, which in fact mitigates Hubris to some degree, and no matter the level does not provide any additional Hubris.

Characters have several derived characteristics: Health, Will, Initiative and Move

A character's **Health**, which generally represents the amount of physical punishment they can endure, is equal to the value of their Bravery x2 added to their Piety.

A character's **Will**, which generally represents how far they can push their mind, is equal to the value of their Cunning x2 added to their Piety.

A character's **Initiative** is the sum of their Speed, Strategy and Inspiration.

A character's **Move** is important only in tactical (combat, for instance) circumstances, and is determined by adding 3 to their Speed, expressed in yards per exchange. For longer distances, all characters have effectively the same movement rate.

Characters are made by assigning a total of 24 points among their Traits. A Trait's value costs an increasing number of points as shown below (costs are total, not cumulative).

Level 0:	Free
Level 1:	1 point

Level 2:	3 points
Level 4:	6 points
Level 5:	10 points
Level 6:	15 points
Level 7:	21 points.

Remember that each *Quality* must have a value of at least 1, but that individual *Traits* may have a value of 0. It's thus completely possible to have a starting character with a single Trait of 7 (examples might include Strength for Hercules, or Trickery for Odysseus.) But such a great value invites Hubris, and the wrath of the Gods, and should perhaps be avoided. Derived characteristics are determined as listed above, and Specializations are chosen from the lists below (which should not be thought of as comprehensive, but only as suggestions.)

Bravery Specializations: Spear, Bow, Shield, Sword, Dodge, Rowing, Swimming, Climbing, Leaping, Chariots, Running, Juggling, Disarm, Knockdown, Lift, Throw,

Cunning Specializations: Folklore, Tactics, Smithing, Woodworking, Bargaining, Lies, Stealth, Disguise, Debate, Oratory, Survival, Puzzles, Languages, Sailing, Observation, Discernment

Piety Specializations: Mysteries, Libations, Divination, Omens, Prayer, Endurance, Castigation, Persuasion, Conviction, Resistance, Songs, Focus

Each character also picks an **Advantage**, special abilities or talents which might not be possessed by just anyone. Such things include:

Initiate of the Mysteries, which allows a character to perform the lesser Mysteries

Initiate of the Greater Mysteries, which allows a character to perform all Mysteries, but comes with 1 die of Hubris that must be allocated to a Trait in the Piety Quality

Master of the Spear, which allows a character to both attack and block with their weapon as a single action

Devotee of the Ax, which allows a character devoted to this sacred weapon of Crete and Mycenae to ignore Hubris dice and added Hubris when wielding an ax

Master of the Sword, which allows a character to count two extra success when using a

sword, so long as any successes are generated in the first place

Master of the Bow, which allows a character to double the range of their weapon

Fast Shot, which allows a character to shoot two arrows in an exchange at a one die penalty for each

Clever Tongue, which allows a person to retry attempts to deceive others that have failed the first time

Hearty Soul, which allows a character to shake off the terror effects of the shadowy dead with a successful test of Piety (Faith)

Godly Blood, which makes the character immune to certain effects, and able to perform certain tasks, but has no day to day impact

Divine Birth, which is like Godly Blood but with a benefit based on the divine parent, and which come with 2 dice of Hubris that must be allocated to the characters 2 highest value Traits.

Sacred Item, which is a blessed item holy to or even created by a divinity that carries with it bonuses and will be recognized as a wonder by the faithful, but which also comes with 1 or 2 dice of Hubris that must be allocated to a Trait related to the item's function

Excellent Voice, which allows a character's songs to produce an impact on beasts and monsters, not just mortals

Muse's Blessing, which permits a character a reroll for any chosen non-combat or magical action (such as Folklore or Sailing or Persuasion, for instance)

Bountiful Offerings, which allows a reroll of any attempt to pour libations or make another offering to the dead

Or *anything else* that might give a character a small special power not directly connected to a Quality such as a Specialization is.

Shame and Hubris are negative characteristics which the characters may start with as a result of choices in character creation, and will later accumulate in play.

Shame represents dishonor, cowardice, and in general failure. In most cases characters will not have any of this characteristic, but acting improperly can result in gaining Shame. When a character gains Shame, it is noted on their sheet, but has no effect until such time as they attempt a roll with a Quality that is exceeded by their Shame (for example, if a character has 4 Shame, and makes a test of the 5 Bravery, Shame does not come into play; if however they test their 3 Piety, Shame *does* come into effect.) While under the influence of Shame, a character feels

as if they are worthless, and the attempted roll will succeed on only a 6, instead of a 5 or 6 (all other rules, such as those for Specializations, remain in effect.) The player loses one point of Shame no matter the end result; if they still succeed at the action they were attempting, they lose **all** current points of Shame.

Hubris marks the arrogance of a character, and is an offense to the Gods, who do not like mortals to reach too high; when a character has a high Trait, they assign one (or more) Hubris dice to that Trait. When spending bonus dice to add to the efficacy of a high Trait, a player must also assign at least at one Hubris die to the total (use a different color of die to differentiate), and must assign all Hubris dice at some point in rolling the bonus dice (that is, they cannot leave off Hubris dice when assigning their last bonus dice; finishing the bonus pool requires finishing the Hubris pool.) Hubris dice are not eligible for re-rolls, and never count as successes no matter the number rolled; but if any Hubris dice end up as unsuccessful (either because they come up a 1, or because the number rolled is not chosen as a success when allocating Specialities) then the Gods have noted the hero's pride and boastful ways, and punish them. If the hero would fail normally, they fail miserably (instead of simply missing, they fall to the ground at their opponent's feet); if they would succeed, they succeed with a problem (although the hero has struck with their spear and damaged their foe, it has become trapped in armor or a rib, or held under an arm, and cannot be removed easily). If more than one Hubris die is a failure, the effects are made worse yet: the hero might injure herself in falling before her foe, or the spear might shatter as it strikes (and hurts) the opponent. Each Hubris die is rolled only once per session, though they, like bonus dice granted by Traits, renew in every new session.

Systems and Rules

Task Resolution is determined by rolling a number of dice (d6) equal to the Quality affiliated with that task.

--the player can add a number of dice up to the value of the Trait that is most closely associated with the action, subject to the number of dice already used in earlier rolls, and may additionally be required to add at least one Hubris die to the roll;

--Successes are scored for each die that turns up a 5 or a 6;

--a roll of 1 is always a failure;

--but if they possess an appropriate Specialization, they can determine another number (2-3-4) that counts as successful; this number can be selected after seeing the results of the dice. If there are no numbers 2-4 showing, the player does not gain any benefit from their Specialization.

Each action has a Difficulty, the number of successes that must be obtained to achieve success, as shown below. Difficulties range from the simplest of tasks which any person might expect to succeed at, to nearly impossible feats that even a God might struggle with.

Difficulty

Narrow	1 success
Ordinary	2 successes
Remarkable	3 successes
Extraordinary	4 successes
Heroic	5 successes
Epic	6 successes
Divine	7 successes

Note: In the event that a character achieves a Divine success, they gain 1 temporary die of Hubris immediately, whether it is meaningful that they got that level of success (if they are trying to break through a door with difficulty Hard to smash down but manage to roll 7 successes, they gain Hubris all the same, too proud of their ease at their achievement.) This die will linger attached to the Trait in question until it is added into a pool when testing a Quality, which may be in the current session or a later one; but it is not *permanently* attached to the Trait, as Hubris dice for high Trait values and other circumstances are.

Opposed Tasks: Often a character will be trying to do something while another entity attempts to stop them. In this case, both actors make their rolls, and the winner is whichever ends up with the greater number of successes, succeeding at the level of additional successes possessed. (Two warriors are having a drinking contest; the PC gets three successes on his Bravery test, while the NPC only manages 2; the PC wins, but only barely; the next night, the PC manages only 1 success while his returning foe obtains 5, for an Extraordinary success: he's still quite sober, and everyone else is much impressed, and not impressed with the first victory, counting it rather a fluke, even. The losing PC may even gain Shame.) When opposed rolls tie outside of combat, there is no victor; either the matter passes without meaningful change, or the contest, whatever it may be, continues for another roll.

Before Combat: When a party knows that combat is coming, they have two options to gain advantage. If they are able to set up an ambush, they may attempt (taking only their best result) a Cunning (Trickery) test, with a difficulty determined by circumstances. In an empty field, with bright light and little time, the difficulty might be Divine; in a rocky mountain pass that twists and turns, at twilight and with half an hour's time, the difficulty might be Modest. If the test is successful, every friendly participant will receive one bonus die to every combat action taken in the first exchange; for each level of additional success in the basic test, this one die bonus carries over to another round. For any combat at all where foreknowledge of the fight is possessed, be it one where an ambush is possible, or a situation where, for instance, the party means to attack a defended cavern or watchpoint of the dead, the character with the highest Strategy may attempt a Cunning (Strategy) test; if any level of success is obtained, that number of bonus dice are set aside, to be given out as needed for combat actions during the fight. They may be claimed by any friendly combatant (as all have been informed of the stratagems to be used), so that, even if there are five bonus dice for instance, one person could claim all five for a single action. These bonus dice must be added before rolling for successes; one could not wait to see if the action was failed, then claim additional dice to try to turn that into a success. If a character claims more than one of the bonus dice, and fails in their attempted action, they gain a point of Shame.

Under normal circumstances, these rolls are not opposed; the difficulty of setting up an ambush is determined by terrain and other similar factors, and a strategy is thought of based on known parameters. However, there are creatures and notable humans (as well as some of the Dead) who might see through such schemes and feints, and deprive a party of some or all of their advantages.

This will be noted in the statistics for a given creature, or applied to an NPC by the GM, but should be kept an uncommon circumstance.

It is possible to set up both an ambush and a stratagem if all conditions can be met.

Combat: Combat is a series of opposed tasks, taking place over a series of **exchanges**. Each exchange is held to be about five to ten seconds. Human warriors fight one on one by preference; this is not always the case especially when larger combats occur, but failure to do so when possible will necessitate a Piety (Inspiration) test for the side with more combatants to not lose face in the eyes of any witnesses, gaining Shame.

Initiative is determined first: players check their values, and the highest value acts first (note there is no roll to determine initiative; it is based on flat values). Monsters and villains also have initiative, and will act in their normal spots, but do not pick **combat stances** (see immediately below); only PCs do that. In the event of a tie in initiative, PCs act before Gamemaster characters and can determine among themselves what order tied PCs will act in.

Combat Stances: players must determine whether they will place their characters into Close Combat, Careful Combat, or Defensive Combat; they will receive a 2 dice bonus to attacks if in Close Combat, but a 2 dice penalty to defense; the reverse applies if they have chosen Defensive Combat. While in Careful Combat they enjoy no benefit, but suffer no penalty. Ranged combatants don't have to make such choices, obviously, unless they chose to put themselves into hand to hand range (or are forced to do so), in which case, chose as per normal, but apply a 1 die penalty to the normal modifier. A character will remain in her chosen combat style for the duration of combat; to change stance requires a Cunning (Strategy) check with a difficulty of Modest to change one position, or Mediocre to change from Close to Defensive or vice versa, and can be done attempted at the start of any exchange. Disengaging from combat requires a similar roll with a difficulty of Hard, or Very Hard if facing more than one opponent. It does not take an action to change stance, but it does to attempt to leave combat.

NPC opponents (called **Foes**) have one combat value, called **Prowess**; this is the number of dice that the Game Master should roll when attempting an action in combat (either striking a foe or blocking or dodging an attack). Monsters and villains do not have the same complement of Qualities and Traits as PCs possess; their statistics are simplified, and their choices most often more limited.

To determine if a character hits when attacking, make a Bravery (Skill) test, with a difficulty of Narrow (unless otherwise noted, it is not hard to hit an opponent who is doing nothing to avoid being hit). If an opponent is defending, they too roll, and successes are compared one to the other: if at least one success remains from the attacker's pool (that is, matching the 1 success needed to overcome a Narrow difficulty), the attacker hits.

If a character hits, they do damage equal to their Strength in melee combat, or their Skill, if using a ranged weapon, plus one point for each level of success beyond the first, plus any additional bonuses they might possess from Advantages or other benefits. If they are struck, they will take an amount of damage as appropriate for the Foe, plus any margin of failure the PC has allowed to occur.

Combatants can attack only once in an exchange (barring some Advantage); they can defend as many times as needed (subject to penalty dice as listed below). Their first action (whether attack or defense) is unpenalized; their second suffers a one die penalty, their third a two die penalty, and so on. Antagonists will have listed statistics for their actions, so that it will be clear to the gamemaster whether they can take more than two actions (this is rare, though many Monsters will have several attacks available for use).

A character that successfully defends against an attack gains a one die bonus to their next combat action against the same opponent, whether that is for attack or defense. Similarly, failing to beat a Foe's defense (not other characters, of course, who are detailed as immediately preceding) gives a one die penalty to the next combat action against that same Foe only.

When a hero reaches 0 Health (or lower) they may spend 3 points of Will (plus 1 point for each negative health) to remain functional, immediately moving to 1 Health again. A second option (not much recommended, but sometimes needful) is to rely on the Gods: a character may make a Piety (Faith) test; a Heroic success will restore the PC to 1 Health; an Epic success to half their normal Health; a Divine success to full health, and as Faith is the associated Trait, in this case gain no Hubris. Any other result is meaningless; the Gods have many things to call their attention at this time, and only a Hero is worthy of notice. A choice to pray prohibits use of Will, so is often a last ditch attempt.

A hero at 0 health is helpless, half conscious and barely functional. They can wail against fate, or gnash their teeth, or crawl slowly away, but that's about it. A hero at less than 0 Health is Dying; he must receive attention before a number of exchanges equal to his combined Qualities, after which he is, quite simply, dead.

A hero with 0 Will is weary and exhausted; they suffer a 1 die penalty to all actions until they recover sufficiently to have a positive Will.

Healing is accomplished by time, tests or magic. The Gods, of course, determine who lives and who dies, so being strong or clever has nothing to do with the matter of mundane health: instead a character heals their Inspiration in Health each day of light activity, or twice that if they are resting fully. But it is possible for a learned character to attempt to subvert the will of the Gods. Characters can attempt to treat injuries with a Cunning Test (Knowledge), healing one health point per level of success; if the character is Dying, they must first make a Modest success to bring them to 1 Health and then can attempt to treat them further; a failed test counts as one additional exchange having passed. A failure or inadequate success does nothing, and the character achieving that result is helpless to assist the mortally injured character any further, though others may attempt it. Lastly, of course, prayers can be made at appropriate temples, such as those dedicated to Apollo (one of the Twelve Great Gods, and in charge of medicine among a great number of other things) or Asclepius (a less important God devoted entirely to healing and medicine) or by the use of potions. For this, see Prayers (pg 15) and Potions (pg. 21)

Regaining Will: A character can regain Will by means of rest or enjoyment. For each full night of rest, a character will regain a number of Will points equal to their Cunning. Furthermore, once per day a character can (time and circumstance permit) refresh their Will by enjoying a sumptuous meal, a long and relaxing bath, or a celebration; in any of these cases, the character regains 1 Will immediately at the conclusion of the activity.

The Supernatural

Death and the Dead: The dead are the greatest menace to Hellas at present, though the Titans would of course be a greater peril should the Gods fail to defeat them. The dead must be appeased and, if needed, sent back to the gloomy halls of Hades by force. But first, there are propitiations that can be made, libations spilled, and the dead may yet be assuaged by such measures. There are many rituals to be performed over the just departed, such as binding up the body, tearing of clothes and wailing and pulling of hair to show grief, and placing of a coin or amulet or the like over their eye or in their mouth in order to pay for passage into the realm of the dead; these are just a few of the [many rituals](#) associated with propitiating and honoring the recently departed.

[Libations:](#) Some (truly, any) of the Gray Host can be revived, for a short time, by offering them libations. The proper sacrifices can make the dead reawaken to themselves, and to the horror of what they are; can make them aid and assist the living. A hero can offer a libation to the dead, and possibly revive them to the world of life, in the following manner.

At very least, a libation to the dead must include wine (usually watered), though some offer milk and honey, and this too is acceptable. Poured out at the feet of the dead one with a moment's offering (that is, an action during an exchange) and at a cost of 1 Will, the hero may make a Piety (Wisdom) test and if they achieve a result commensurate with the gray one's difficulty (which will vary), they momentarily bring them back to a semblance of life: grant them color and memory for a few minutes or longer, and bring them back to themselves.

Any success at all will grant three minutes of liveliness for the libationed spirit; this increases by a factor of three for each additional success (going to 9/27/81/etc.); the spirit, granted life, will fight against the dead, and possibly aid the one who helped her (though maybe not: the rivalries of the living might interfere, of course). When the libation's positive effects have faded, the spirit sinks back down to Hades, and does not trouble the living for a time (until they once more slip free from the unguarded realm.)

It is also possible to make a libation at the grave site of a dead person, calling up their spirit to converse with them. This is a perilous act; the offerant might suffer traumas and even death if they do not handle the matter properly. But the spirit can provide information about such things as they knew of in life, and even sometimes about the world of the dead. A

Piety (Wisdom) test with a difficulty of Hard must be succeeded in simply to call up the spirit, with a cost of 1 Will, and then a Piety (Inspiration) test with a difficulty based on the prominence of the departed must be made; calling up the spirit of a great hero or queen is thus very perilous. Failure in this test means the conjured spirit rends at the summoner, drawing blood with claws barely visible: an attack based on the spirit's power (the same number as it's difficulty to compel) will be made, opposed by the character's Piety (Wisdom); any successes are inflicted as damage to Will; if the character runs out of Will, additional damage is taken to Health. The spirit vanishes then. But if successful, the summoner gains one minute per level of success to ask questions of the pained and suffering spirit, who may not be able to fully answer, but should provide useful information. After this time is up, the summoner may hold the spirit on the mortal plane by spending 1 Will per quick question asked, as well as spilling out more libations; if they lack more libations, the spirit will wound them for one additional Health per question instead. These answers are perforce also very brief and anguished, as the spirit is being drawn back to Hades, held only by the force of the summoner's mind.

The Dead themselves are terrible. In their hundreds and thousands they rise from the hidden places of the world, and strive to take the place of the living. Pale and faded, they show still signs of their own deaths: pocked bodies, burns, the grim marks of death in battle. Their own eyes seem not to notice the death marks, or ignore them at least; but every one of the dead is an object of fear to mortals. When encountering one or a group of dead, characters will be forced to test their Bravery against the Terror rating of the Grey Ones; failure will leave them panicked and shaken, and suffering from a die penalty equal to their amount of failure. Individual dead might have a Terror rating of only 1, but formidable dead, or groups of them, can be much stronger and more terrible.

Omens: To the people of Hellas, Omens are a vital part of life; a way to determine what course of action might do well, or what choice might bring only doom. Various events count as omens. Birds flying by, or sudden cries of animals, or anything, really, could be an omen. Those who study such events (and even those who don't, really) make proclamations about what they mean. Someone wishing to determine the value of an omen must make either a Cunning (Knowledge) check or a Piety (Wisdom) check with a difficulty of Hard, as well as spending 1 Will point. A success means they can determine something about a future action; the effects of which are that the person they

relate their fact to can re-roll one die during any action; one extra die can be rerolled for each extra level of success. The foreteller can only have one omen foretold at a time; if they reveal a second omen, the first becomes useless, no matter who they reveal it for. A note: if an Omens check doesn't result in any successes, the person they discerned the Omen for must instead reroll one success on their next (meaningful) action (they can't just roll dice to burn off the bad omen); and this type of Omen doesn't fade away if another foretelling is made.

Divination: While Omens provide a momentary and obscure glimpse into the future, divination is a far more powerful tool to ascertain what fate is in store for a hero. Given time to prepare, a diviner can determine facts about the future by casting an augury. The most common form is searching the entrails of a sacrificial animal for information, but some release birds and examine their flights, or spill wine and look at the markings made, or cast bones or stones onto a prepared surface. In any case, the matter takes at least an hour of preparation, as well as the expenditure of 2 Will Points. The diviner makes a Piety (Wisdom) check and with a difficulty set by the diviner. With a success, afterwards, they are able to recall their predictions at a time of their choice to make a basic success at the same level or lower level as the divining check; they receive no benefit for extra successes obtained in the divination check, but if the latter check is easier than the successful divination check, they apply the divination check's (self-chosen at the time of the test) success level. The test can be of any sort, including combat or magic, though it can only be applied if the diviner is the subject, or is able to communicate to the subject in a timely fashion: the diviner may not be able to intervene during combat, for instance, to mention that now is when their friend should duck. Only one divination can be active at a time per diviner.

Prayers and Invocations: When presented with an appropriate shrine or temple, a character can make an offering to the divinity associated with the locale. After spending a point of Will, a test of Piety (Faith) should be made, with a difficulty based on the grandeur of the shrine and the offering: a humble roadside stone carved with markings and a donation of a loaf of old bread will require perhaps a Heroic success, while one of the great fanes, with the sacrifice of a pure white ram, might instead only require a Modest success. The grander the site and the offering, the longer the process will take, though in no case will it be done in less than fifteen minutes. In any case, a successful prayer will grant a benefit appropriate to the divinity; the size or importance of the temple or offering do not matter for size or importance of this result, as the gods can reach the humblest locale as easily as the greatest, but it is harder to persuade to the former as noted. The

benefits are usually temporary but impressive: a prayer to [Hekate](#) to protect a house, for instance, might result in the structure becoming inviolate to any hostile force for a span of days; a prayer to [Apollo](#) might grant succor from a disease, and so on. Note that often the Gods will not respond no matter the offering; note also that characters with high Hubris may find this act more difficult than others.

Songs: Being sacred to the Gods, songs are things of power. It is possible for a character to sing a song and influence those about them. This is done in four major ways: Inspiring Courage, Inflicting Fear, Somnolence and Swaying Emotion. In all cases, the musician must first make a Piety (Inspiration) test to play a song at all, with any success sufficient to continue; and must also expend 1 Will point. Failures in the particular tests for each song will result in something of the opposite of the desired action: soldiers may flee, the singer might be attacked immediately, or the persuasion may go in the other direction, and so characters should tread carefully.

Inspiring Courage requires the musician to sing and/or play a rousing song to a target audience, and then make a test of Bravery (Skill) with a difficulty based on the size of the group; if a success is achieved, all the listeners gain one bonus die on their next Bravery test; or a reroll of any failed dice should they be subjected to Terror from either another song or a monstrous encounter (such as with the Dead), whichever comes first within the next day.

Inflicting Terror requires the musician to sing and/or play a discordant song to a target audience and then make a test of Cunning (Trickery) test with a difficulty based on the size of the group, and it's hostility/belligerence. If a success is achieved, the group will break up and flee, or turn aside from their intended action, whatever might be appropriate. This cannot interrupt an actual battle unless the musician achieves at least an Epic success, but that level of playing will not be ignored. The quivering fear that will have overtaken the listeners lasts for at least an hour.

Somnolence requires a music to softly sing and/or play a lullaby or pastoral song. The song will then, over the course of its length (at least three minutes) act to cast listeners into a sleeping state. A test of Cunning (Knowledge) is made with a difficulty based on the attentiveness of the listeners: well trained guards might be a Heroic level success, while drowsy patrons of a wine shop might be as easy as a Narrow success. In any case, the singer may not put to sleep anyone further from their playing than a number of yards equal to their

Piety quality. Sleepers are only normally asleep: they may be awoken by loud noises, shaking, or any sort of harm being inflicted on them.

Swaying Emotions requires the musician to sing and/or play a song that evokes the desired emotional response, and serves to persuade the crowd of to some action (be it attacking a passing caravan, or falling into an orgy, or weeping in sorrow). A test of Cunning (Strategy) must be made, with the difficulty based on the size of the crowd and the distance from the desired state. The greater the success, the more frenzied will be the response; a very minor success might make a few people cry, for instance, or increase agitation toward the caravan, but it would take a notable success indeed to cause a group of ready warriors to throw down their weapons and fall into erotic caresses when a battle threatens.

Lesser Mysteries: Those who have been initiated at the cult center of Eleusis, not far from Athens, gain certain abilities which others doubt are real. But it is true that initiates are changed from what they were before, and that, while sometimes there are those who claim grand and mystical powers as a result, there are certainly some powers which seem common to initiates. In truth, the gifts of a lesser initiate are available to anyone, though it is perilous to tamper with the Mysteries if one is not prepared for them: those who have not gone through initiation cannot make re-rolls (of a beneficial sort; they may still be forced to re-roll successes by circumstances) when attempting to use these powers, and must allocate any and all Hubris dice they have associated with the tested Trait to the first Mystery attempt they make.

One of the notable facts about the Mysteries is that they are meant to be secret: an initiate is never to explain what they are, or how they are performed, to the uninitiated. This rule is sometimes failed, but if a character reveals intentionally something about the mysteries, they immediately gain at least one, and possibly more, Shame. This does not mean they cannot perform Mysteries in front of others (though with some secrecy and furtiveness), but mainly that they cannot explain the process or answer any questions.

Healing Sleep: an initiate may purify themselves for an hour before slumber, and then, upon resting for an entire night, regain fully half of their Health and half of their Will, with a Mediocre success on a Piety (Faith) test. They will be very difficult to wake up during the night. If they make no successes, their dreams will be troubled by horrid visions, and while they will still regain a normal amount of Health (as per healing above) they will regain no

Will, and in fact lose 1 point.

Purification: by spending an hour in cleansing themselves, and at a cost of 1 Will point, the initiate may purge themselves of their sins. With a successful Piety (Inspiration) test, they burn away Shame points equal to the success value of the test. Note: Shame does not come into play for this test in any fashion. A failure in the test does no harm, in this case. Purification cannot be attempted more than once per week.

Sight of Distant Things: consuming a potion of herbs mixed with wine and honey, the initiate enters a trance and casts her awareness to a distant known or even unknown location, catching a vision of what occurs there. At a cost of 1 Will, and with a successful Piety (Wisdom) test, she can see and hear, cloudily and uncertainly, what goes on at some distant place; the higher the success of the test, the more obscure the place may be. A modest success, for instance, might only allow the initiate to know what goes on in the next room; while a Very Hard success might allow her to have a vision of an enemy camp, the exact location of which she is uncertain; and a Divine success might allow her to see “whatever it is she needs most to know,” or something similarly vague. Her awareness will be present there for only a few moments; to remain longer will cost extra Will points. Failure to match the needed threshold means the initiate’s mind wanders in nothing at all; she must pay 1 Will point per level she missed the target by to return to herself, and if she lacks the Will to pay, must wait until she recovered sufficient to do so, and will be in a trance (and rather helpless) until such time.

Awareness: Those who have experienced the Mysteries can perceive their actions; whenever a Mystery is occurring near such a character, they are aware that something is happening. An initiate (and one *must* be so for this particular Mystery) may spend 1 Will point to be aware of what specifically is going on: to see the dream form of one watching with Sight of Distant Things, or to recognize the identity behind a Seeming, for instance. They cannot take direct action against the Mystery; but they can at least know what’s happening.

Greater Mysteries: These can only be practiced by those who are Initiates of the Greater Mysteries; there is no other way to access these powers.

Seeming: It is possible, by means of a trance state and the consumption of certain herbs

after a purifying wash (and with an expenditure of 5 Will Points and a Piety (Wisdom) check of Hard difficulty), to assume another form, take on a different shape, and perform an appropriate action. One can take on the form of a dove, an owl, a hart or a hound. The **dove** flies at speed to a location known to the initiate, and delivers there a message to the first inhabitant of that place who is seen. The **owl** flies by night only, visiting a person known to the initiate and delivering a warning which is perceived as a dream from which the visitant awakens at once with full memory. The **hart** leads a small party (not more than 1 person for each Piety of the initiate) by secret ways for a day's travel; the initiate need not know the path she will be showing, and barring magical intervention, the journey will be safe from discovery, though it may be quite difficult and dangerous in its own right. The **hound** protects a known person in a known location for as long as a day and a night, being an attentive and fierce beast, though it can be beaten in combat, of course. **In every case**, the initiate has next to no exact control over her actions; the seeming undertakes the chosen task while the initiate is in a sort of dream state, riding along with limited memory or awareness, as if in a vision. After it is over, they will be just where they started, having been...nowhere...in the interval, except only the hart, which will wander off as soon as the day's travel is done, and the slumbering initiate will be found just at the stopping point, easily awoken, but slightly confused as all initiates will be after taking on a seeming. Failure in the initial test results in the initiate having vivid dreams of taking an animal's form and being attacked by other animals; they will awaken after an hour, unrested and troubled, and having lost 2 Health.

Walk Through Flames: With a moment's notice, the Greater Initiate can prepare herself to pass through fire, a test common in the Greater Mysteries. For a cost of 3 Will points, and with a Piety (Wisdom) test of only Modest difficulty, she will become immune to all heat and flame for the next exchange, and can extend that by one exchange for 1 Will as needed. Neither the initiate nor anything unliving things she carries will be hurt by the flames. As an initiate always believes they have become protected from flames, failure in the test is its own punishment; because of this, some Game Masters will prefer to make this test secretly for a hero.

Render Harmless the Waters: Poisons are not so much of a trouble for a Greater Initiate, as they are bit by vipers during the ceremonies, and drink strange fluids. When a poison is introduced to their system, they make the normal test to resist it, but if they fail the test,

they merely spend Will points equal to the amount of the failure (this also requires a Piety (Wisdom) test of Modest difficulty), and then spit out a clear sweet fluid from their mouth. Of course, an initiate who is weary can be poisoned; one must have Will to resist. Failure in the test is its own punishment.

Items and Equipment

Poisons: Though not honorable, poison enjoys a long tradition in Hellas. It is possible, given time and certain basic equipment and supplies, for a character to manufacture poisons capable of inflicting injury or paralysis; the hero must make a test of Cunning (Trickery) and take at least an hour of work. Most poisons can be applied to weapons or put into food or drink. A very few (which are harder to make) can be inhaled; rarely and most difficult are those that work on mere contact. Most poisons have a limited lifespan, and will last only so long (weeks, usually) in storage, and no more than a day or two if applied to something. Anyone using poison gains a point of Shame immediately (that it, at the moment when the poison is applied to a weapon or otherwise used).

Potions: Similarly, a person with basic equipment (a fire, a mortar and pestle, a few bowls, a sharp silver knife, an [amphora](#) for the final product), time and supplies can create potions that can have seemingly wondrous healing effects. A potion can be crafted with a test of Cunning (Knowledge) and a work of at least an hour (more if the lab is primitive and the supplies limited) and can cure injuries over the course of a further hour after consumption (with the same amount of Health restored as by a successful healing check of the same difficulty), and also can be used to treat sickness and poisons (with a difficulty commensurate with the power of the illness or toxin.) (And yes, one potion can possibly be used for any of these effects, though not all. One needn't craft specific Antidotes or Medicines or whatnot.) Potions, like poisons, last for only a few weeks at most before they lose their potency. Usually they are served mixed in with wine and honey; this is often the same method for administering poisons, and so a maker of potions is sometimes viewed with suspicion by many folk.

Gear: Hellas is a society lacking in coin; there is no currency at all, and goods are bartered and gifted. Great men give away rich gifts to those they would honor, or to the brave; lesser men trade for or make their goods; the poor have very little, of course.

Weapons: Bronze is the standard metal for weapons (as it is for most purposes). Spear heads, ax blades, the rare swords, arrowheads, all are made of bronze. It is possible to make them of copper or stone as well, but such items have a one and two die penalty when used in combat against bronze. A Strength of at least 1 is required to wield an ax or shoot a bow.

Shields: Made of hide strapped over a wooden frame and edged with bronze, or on

occasion entirely of bronze on a frame. When used to defend against an attack, add 2 dice to the roll. A shield requires a Strength of at least 1 to wield.

Armor: Bronze chest and back plates over fitted, boiled leather with a skirt of leather strips; this is the most basic armor found in Hellas, and it reduces damage from any attack by one point. However, a character must have a Strength value of at least 2 to comfortably wear such gear; with a Strength of 1, a penalty of one die is suffered to all actions; with a Strength of 0, it simply cannot be worn. It is possible to add greaves and vambraces to armor, giving it a damage reduction of 2; these additions give a one die penalty to any action involving manual dexterity or maneuverability, including such things as climbing, tumbling, balancing and crafting items. A character in any sort of armor suffers a five die penalty to swimming; this is made one worse by greaves and vambraces due to the need to maneuver in water, of course.

Musical Instruments: Lyres, pipes, cymbals and drums are common instruments, and are played to accompany songs and during rituals. A character using such a thing during a test of that sort gains a one die bonus; but of course they are cumbersome to carry, and must be maintained.

Kraters: low, broad bowls, often of bronze but sometimes of other precious metals; a libation poured from such a thing allows an extra die to be rolled for the test; or two dice in the event of a very fine krater. However, they are massive (usually two to three feet across) and quite weighty, and thus difficult to carry about with one. In addition, they must be purified between uses (a process taking at least an hour, and requiring clean water at the least), or forfeit the bonus.

Crafting tools: Be it hammer and tongs for metal work, chisels and saws for woodworking, awls and knives for leatherworking, or the equipment needed for crafting potions (or poisons), there are many different sets of such items, but all are necessary to practice their crafts. Usually somewhat cumbersome and difficult to manage.

Food and Drink: Very little food lasts for long; salted or pickled or smoked meat or fish has a decent lifespan, but it is still measured in weeks unless stored in sealed containers; bread lasts only days; cheese is barely known, but yogurt is reasonably common and milk is drunk, most often goats' milk; wine is the only real alcohol, usually mixed with water at a fifty/fifty ratio and drunk regularly (during the day, sometimes mixed more weakly.) The host is the

one who mixes the wine, and this is viewed as a matter of etiquette worthy of praise: to make it strong enough to enjoy but weak enough that one does not pass out or vomit. It is possible to gain Shame for serving wine too weak or too strong. Very little plain water is drunk, as it is thought to cause sickness (correctly, as it turns out) but taken from springs or streams, and especially holy ones, it is well thought of.

Animals: There are horses, but they are small, too small to be ridden by most people; a small person or an especially large horse would allow it, or a short ride might be all right, but most often horses instead draw carts or chariots. Chariots hold two men, one the driver, and one a warrior usually hurling spears or shooting arrows. Donkeys are common enough as pack animals. Goats and chickens are kept, and there are some cattle, but the land is not well suited to them in most places. Dogs are kept as hunting animals and something like pets, but they are all working dogs. It is possible to have a hunting dog, which can usually be commanded to attack or watch or similar, using Cunning (Strategy) as the test. These are not particularly large animals: much like greyhounds but a little thicker.

Precious Items: Wealth is preserved as jewelry and ornaments: bracelets and torcs and armlets and belts and headpieces; or as decorative items, such as kraters or vases or bowls, or jeweled boxes, that sort of thing. These are signs of nobility, and as such are usually displayed; only a coward would fear to have them stolen, though such things do, of course, occur.

Amulets: A particular fetish with the Hellenes, amulets are found everywhere. They are marked with symbols that supposedly deflect evil, or avert the attention of wicked men, or grant the protection of a God. Very seldom do they actually do much; but there are rare and true amulets that actually grant some power or protection, and one never knows which is which, so that it doesn't hurt to have a few about one's person. Usually triangular in shape, with a depiction of an eye one side, and symbols of other sorts of the reverse.

Foes

The lands of Hellas are filled with perilous creatures, not the least of which are the Hellenes themselves. Brigands operate in wild areas; raiders range forth from cities and settlements to take the goods of their neighbors; soldiers of rival cities fight one another. Worse than all those, of course, are the Dead: from the humble sorts who were formerly ordinary crafters or farmers, to warriors, to great heroes, the Dead inspire Terror into the hearts of the living, and do not hesitate to slay those they meet. Perhaps worst of all are the monsters that have been spawned and loosed by the war of the Gods and Titans; though few in number, they are devastating in effect.

While it is certainly possible to create human NPCs using the normal rules for character creation (and this is in fact recommended for important human characters: allies, recurring villains, kings and priestesses), it is also possible to create simpler human foes using the rules that follow. The Dead and Monsters are never written up using character creation rules; they are too different from ordinary humans. Collectively, these simple humans, Dead and Monsters are known as **Foes**.

Foes have the following statistics: Prowess, which measures their combat and physical ability; Slynness, which measures their mental strength and resistance; Toughness, the amount of damage they are capable of taking; and possibly any of a number of special abilities, such as the Terror inspired by the Dead and many Monsters, or Armor, which will reduce damage taken by the foe. When using foes, always roll Prowess in opposed contests with Bravery tests of any sort, and Slynness in opposed Cunning tests of any sort. Apply all damage to Toughness, no matter if it would (in a PC) be applied to Health or Will. Keep track of any special abilities: some are always active, such as Terror or Armor; some must be activated but continue to work, and some work only under special circumstances, or only one time per encounter

Humans Foes

Ordinary mortals, like the heroes, are common as opposition. Found in all the lands of the world, they are much the same all over. Most of them are not inherently wicked, but times being what they are, it is a fool who trusts their fellow humans too far.

Brigands and Raiders

These two types are, in statistics, identical; the real difference between them is that brigands are unaligned men and women who prey on travelers and dwell in wild places, while raiders live in cities or strongholds and venture out in bands to loot their neighbors (or often the same people that brigands prey on.)

Statistics

Prowess: 4

Slyness: 2

Toughness: 6

Special Abilities: Gang Up--Brigands and Raiders think nothing of ganging up on opponents. For each extra Foe able to attack the same opponent, add one die to Prowess; the B & Rs will attack as a unit, making one roll with greater potency.

Soldiers

Much more dangerous combatants than mere Brigands, soldiers of the city states of Greece will often work with heros, but can stand against them as well. However, they are almost always more honorable than scum like Raiders, and will normally fight one on one.

Statistics

Prowess: 6

Slyness: 3

Toughness: 8

Special Abilities: Armor (1)--Soldiers take one less point of damage from every successful physical attack. Well-made Weapons--Soldiers do one extra point of damage whenever they succeed in damaging a hero.

Priestess/Priest

A follower devoted to one of the Twelve Great Olympians, priestesses should not lightly be trifled with. But at times, it becomes necessary to confront them, or to negotiate some kind of favor or benefit from them.

Statistics

Prowess: 2

Slyness: 7

Toughness: 6

Special Abilities: Curse--a priestess may hurl a curse at a hero; this is a Slyn's attack opposed by Piety (Wisdom). For each success, the character suffers a one die penalty in all interactions against the priestess and those who follow the same deity. The curse will last for one week, until lifted by the priestess, or a purification ritual is performed (see Mysteries above.) While a curse is in effect, a priestess may not hurl another. Call for Aid--the priestess may call on nearby others for assistance; roll Slyness and that number of people (if available) will defend the priestess, perform simple tasks for her, or support her and her claims (if they engage in combat, treat as Brigands without special abilities).

The Dead

Finding their way back to the sunlit world from the glooms of Hades, the Dead are a numberless horde of nearly emotionless killers. Their memories of the bright lands slipped entirely from them, their human feeling drained by time in the realm of the dead, they seek only to capture shadows and remnants of what they once had: lands and cities, tasks and lives. That the living react to them with terror and loathing only makes them more likely to savage the mortal realm; but this was, in fact, to be the case no matter what.

Their forms are broken and hideous in many cases, bearing the signs of their demise; and they are pale and faded, such that some claim they can see dimly through the dead. Gaunt faces, visible bones, gaping wounds that do not bleed, pustules and blisters, all these are signs of the Dead. But even those who seem fully intact, who have marks of their demise, spread Terror about them simply through their unnatural state.

The Dead come in all walks of life, from peasant land holders to warriors of the city-states to great heroes slain in their prime. When a character attempts to awaken one of the dead using libations, the difficulty is equal to the higher of the Dead's Prowess and Slyness; the difficulty drops by one if the person pouring the libation knows the mortal name of the Dead; by two if they actually knew the Grey One when it still walked under the sunlit skies as a mortal; and by three if they were also related by blood or marriage.

Common Dead

The workers and farmers and sailors, once ordinary folk. In groups, they tend to forget their humanity even quicker than other Dead; their lives were poor things, and they have more trouble holding on to even their newly recovered vestiges than others. This makes large groups of the common Dead exceedingly frightening.

Statistics

Prowess: 3

Slyness: 3

Toughness: 9

Special Abilities: Terror (1)--a hero must test Bravery against a Narrow difficulty. Group terror--for every exponential increase in the dead (4/9/16/25/36/etc.) the Terror rating for facing a group of them increases to the root of their quantity (2/3/4/5/6/etc.)

Fighting Dead

The soldiers and warriors of the Dead, a group lamentably large, as these are most of the types who have slipped loose from Hades: the sort with drive and determination. Terrible enough alone, they become more so when in cadres.

Statistics

Prowess: 7

Slyness: 3

Toughness: 12

Special Abilities: Terror (3)--a hero must make a Bravery test against a Remarkable difficulty. Group Terror--when at least three Fighting Dead operate together, their Terror rating climbs to (5). Armor (1)--Fighting Dead take one less point of damage from any successful physical attack.

Heroic Dead

The great ones of Hellas, come back to the realm of the living. Most deadly of all the Grey Host, but in some ways the most helpful: their fame makes their names well known, and so it is easier than it might be to call them back to themselves; once awoken to their old lives,

they are great allies of the living, for a time.

Statistics

Prowess: 9
Slyness: 6
Toughness: 15

Special Abilities: Terror (5)--a hero must make a Bravery test against a Heroic difficulty. Armor (2)--Heroic Dead take two less points of damage from every successful physical attack. Deadly Attack--Heroic Dead do two additional points of damage on a successful physical attack. Excellent Strategist--Heroic Dead and those they lead cannot be Ambushed; also, Stratagems set up before combat are less effective, lose two dice from the total of a pre-combat Strategy use (minimum 0 dice).

Monsters

Taking many forms, all of them horrifying perversions of recognizable things, monsters are the greatest (and mercifully rarest) dangers currently abroad in Hellas. Stories speak of such beasts as Chimera or the Minotaur; these are not likely to be met, yet each is a good example of a monster: ill formed combinations of beasts, or of man and beast.

Ophidius

This monstrous entity, of slightly greater size than a normal mortal, takes the form of a human with snakes in the place of arms, and with a scaly, snake-like head. Birthed from the fallen blood of a Titan, it is full of malice, and seeks to destroy mortals. It possesses a special weakness, though, for tender young animals (a category that, for Ophidius, includes infants), and after consuming several, will fall into a fitful slumber lasting some hours.

Statistics

Prowess: 11
Slyness: 7
Toughness: 22

Special Abilities: Armor (1)--the scales of the beast block one point of damage from every successful physical attack. Two Arms--the creature attacks (bites) two targets, or one target twice, whenever it makes an attack. Swallow--despite seeming normally

sized, Ophidius can swallow whole even a normal human. This, however, takes some time, and is not a thing that can be done in combat exchanges. Terror (4)--heroes must make a Bravery check against a Extraordinary difficulty. Brutally Strong--Ophidius may shatter walls and destroy barriers by testing its Prowess with a difficulty determined by the strength of the obstacle; but even the strongest normal wall or barrier would be no more than a Heroic difficulty. Note, it may still be injured, for instance, by falling rubble, so it will try to avoid smashing larger barriers. Poison--Ophidius may poison any target that it bites; the victim must make a Bravery (Strength) test against an Extraordinary difficulty or suffer a one die penalty on all actions; this is cumulative over multiple bites. Weakness for song: Ophidius is susceptible to Songs; they can affect it even if normally they would not (for instance, if it is in combat, or if the singer could normally only affect mortals); it's Slyness counts as only 5 to resist such effects.

The Olympian Gods

The Twelve Great Gods

--*Zeus*, Father of the Gods, ruler of Olympus. youngest brother of Demeter, Poseidon and Hades, brother and husband of Hera, father of Apollo, Artemis, Ares, Athena, Aphrodite, Dionysus, Hephaestus and many others. He is a god of the sky and storms, as well as a patron of kings, hospitality, oaths and public business. **Pray to him for:** fair weather, vengeance on an oathbreaker, achievement of a lustful desire, help with rulers.

--*Poseidon*, the Earthshaker, brother of Zeus and Hera, Demeter and Hades. Lord of the Sea and master of Horses, patron of the city of Corinth and of Athens. God of sailors and ships, of the waves and the deeps, creator of earthquakes. **Pray to him for:** good sailing, good fishing, anything to do with horses.

--*Demeter*, the Law Bringer, sister to Hera, Zeus, Poseidon and Hades. Goddess of the Harvest and growing things and patron of sacred law as the creator of civilization through cultivation. Patron of the process of life and death. Her daughter Persephone being kidnapped by Hades and taken as his wife, Demeter's mourning created winter. A central figure of the Mysteries, along with Persephone and also, separately, Dionysus. **Pray to her for:** good harvests, a favorable judgment, an easy birth, the Mysteries.

--*Hera*, Queen of the Gods, oldest sister of Demeter, Poseidon, Hades, sister and wife of Zeus, mother of Ares and Hephaestus. She is the protector of women and the sanctifier of marriage, as well as the goddess of cattle. **Pray to her for:** anything involving women, a favorable marriage, vengeance on those who have wronged you.

--*Apollo*, the Sun God, son of Zeus and twin brother of Artemis. Patron of music and poetry, truth and prophecy, healing and sickness, light and the sun. Proud and easily offended, even for an Olympian. **Pray to him for:** visions of prophecy, healing, creativity, sickness of your enemies.

--*Artemis*, the Huntress, daughter of Zeus and twin sister of Apollo. Goddess of hunting, archery, wild animals and the wilderness, the moon and virginity. Dangerous even to see without her consent. **Pray to her for:** a good hunt, safety on a wilderness journey, magical secrets.

--*Athena*, called Pallas Athena, daughter of Zeus. She is the goddess of noble warfare and

strategy, of architecture and building, of crafts and arts, justice, strength and wisdom. A paragon even among the Olympians, but she is very testy of being challenged. Patron of Athens. **Pray to her for:** wisdom, honorable victory, learning.

--*Ares*, Lord of War, son of Zeus and Hera. The violent and bloody slaughterer of men, god of the brutal aspects of war. Patron of Sparta. Accompanied always by the lesser gods Fear and Terror, Discord and Violence (who might all be his children). Lover of Aphrodite. **Pray to him for:** victory in battle, destruction of your enemies.

--*Aphrodite*, the Foam Born, daughter of Zeus (or born of bloody foam on the sea), wife of Hephaestus, lover of Ares. Goddess of Love and Beauty. Feared for the passion she inspires (and controls) in almost all who see her. **Pray to her for:** love.

--*Hephaestus*, the Lamé, son of Zeus and Hera, husband of Aphrodite. God of smiths, fire, volcanoes, craftsmen and artisans. Crippled by his father Zeus and horrifically ugly. **Pray to him for:** skill at crafting, great weapons or armor, protection from fires.

--*Hermes*, the Messenger, son of Zeus. God of travelers and roads, communications and trade, thieves, wits and athletes. A trickster, he is sometimes punished by the other gods for his schemes and jokes. Mediator between the hidden world and the real one in his role as messenger. **Pray to him for:** news, safe journeys, victory in sports, escape.

--*Dionysus*, the Liberator, son of Zeus. God of divine madness, of wine and the grape, of ecstatic mysteries. Important in the Mysteries. His followers are known to fall into madness, especially women, who become known as Maenads and follow him about singing and drinking. **Pray to him for:** epiphanies, hidden lore.

Other Gods

--*Hades*, Lord of the Underworld, brother to Hera, Demeter, Poseidon and Zeus. God of wealth, death and the dead, a ferocious warrior. Pitiless but sternly just. Feared by the living, so that even speaking his name is thought dreadful. One of the mightiest gods, but he is not accounted part of the Twelve Great Olympians, as he does not often leave his subterranean realm. **Pray to him for:** wealth, restoration of things lost; but do not pray lightly, for he is not a gentle god.

--*Hecate*, goddess of crossroads, ghosts, the moon, magic, dogs, herblore and poisons. A

dark and mysterious goddess held as important in Thrace to the north of Hellas. **Pray to her for:** magical power, herb lore, guidance, protection from the Dead.

--*Hestia*, goddess of the home and hearth, sister to Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Hades and Demeter. She is beloved of the people, granted the first and last offerings of wine at feasts and celebrations, but is a quiet presence among the gods. Known for her kindness. **Pray to her for:** a safe homecoming, happiness, domestic bliss.

Titans and their allies

There are a dozen of the first generation of Titans, including their leader *Kronos* the father of Zeus and his siblings, as well as their great progeny. Massive and powerful, the Titans are primordial gods without any of the desperate need for worship that the Olympians possess; they are raw elemental might. Their allies include all manner of monstrous beings birthed in the early days of creation, including the half-dragon monster Typhon, the hundred handed Hecatonchires who once guarded the Titans, and other terrible beasts.