

*Questers*  
*of the Middle Realms*

*The Book of*  
*Bewildering Beasts*

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The **Prose Descriptive Qualities (PDQ) System** has been designed for evocative simplicity, speed, and flexibility in play. Three levels of resolution, suitable for any type of situation.

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## Welcome!

Whether you're a *Questers of the Middle Realms* GM or an aficionado of another fantasy roleplaying game looking for interesting monster ideas, *The Book of Bewildering Beasts* has something for you!

It's a compilation of 44 monster write-ups. They were originally released in the mini-supplements *Ten Bewildering Beasts* vols 1-4 (number 4 was a special Halloween release with 13 beasties, and I've added a little extra for BBB). They've been packaged up with an expanded list of Qualities that crop up frequently, and a list of what monsters you might find where to help with adventure planning. A few have been tweaked slightly to remove errors and unintentional confusion. As always, remember that individuals can differ from the standard stats for their species - do customise to suit.

The lands of Median host a multitude of strange and fearsome creatures, of which this is only a sampling. Vaults and vermin await!

Tim Gray  
Silver Branch Games

† *Body Warp*: its main function is to act as Shocking Appearance, a hazard resisted by mental fortitude when the creature is first encountered in a scene. It can also add to attempts to intimidate other races. Rank can vary from Average upwards depending on how extensive the warping is. The corresponding Weakness affects social interactions with other races, though Fomorians aren't generally too bothered about that.

## Gargoyle

This malicious stone-like creature, presumably created by magic long ago, is a native of Scata, though it has been seen in northern Orthedia. It appears as a winged humanoid statue around 5ft tall. During the day a gargoyle is dormant: it must perch on stone by sunrise and is then motionless, hard to distinguish from any other statue and often hiding among carved stone figures on buildings. During the night it is active and flies about looking for people to terrify and kill. Sometimes gargoyles are encountered on their own, sometimes in small groups, occasionally in flocks of about a dozen.

During the day gargoyles remain aware, and everything is stored away in their crystalline brains. When not torturing victims (or when taking a break) they chat to each other about every tedious detail of the mundane to-and-fro. The gargoyles don't realise it, but to their victims this is another form of torture. Of course they do sometimes pick up useful information too, but it's a doughty soul who'll persist to get it.

**Strengths:** Expert [+4] Stone Body, Good [+2] Flight, Good [+2] Claws and Teeth, Good [+2] Evil, Good [+2] Night Vision, Expert [+4] Excruciating Smalltalk

**Weaknesses:** Poor [-2] Dense, Poor [-2] Harmed by Daylight, Poor [-2] Evil

† *Stone Body*: aids in resisting most forms of harm and hardship, and with blending in against a stone background and seeming like a statue. Also resists Arcane effects designed for fleshy life-forms. Poor quality weapons will just shatter without effect.

† *Dense*: packing a lot of mass for your size can give problems for floating, jumping, etc. (Doesn't affect Flight.)

† *Excruciating Smalltalk*: listening to the inane and pedantic conversations of gargoyles for any length of time is a hazard resisted with mental fortitude. It causes Failure Ranks that target mental Qualities.

† *Harmed by Daylight*: the touch of daylight is inimical to these creatures, acting as Average environmental damage each round (bypassing Stone Body). If they're in contact with stone to sustain them this is Failure Ranks, but if not it's Damage Ranks (and painful).

## Ghost

Ghosts are a varied lot. Well, they're all spirits of the dead that have remained in the physical world, but beyond that they range from shrieking, hateful marauders to amiable old duffers who go on about the war. By their nature they're obsessive personalities to some degree. (In fact, in Bynight a woman called Silence Carnacki has set up a practice as a ghost therapist. "How's business?" "Dead." Or, "Do you see dead people?" "Of course, come right in." Heh.)

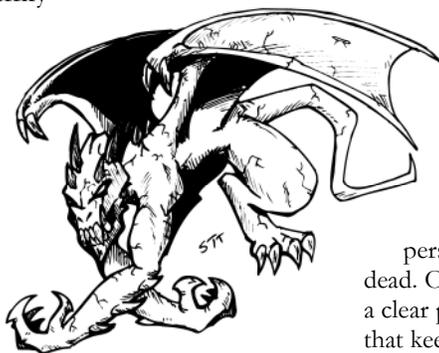
Some ghosts are merely a collection of impulses, echoes of a violent death or unfulfilled life, with varying amounts of personality. They might not even realise they're dead. Others are fully intelligent and aware, usually with a clear purpose. Ghosts almost always have an anchor that keeps them in the material world - a person, place or object that they must stay close to. Destroying the anchor might banish the ghost, but it'll probably fight tooth and nail to prevent this, and might be able to hook on to something else anyway. The safest way to get rid of a ghost is to satisfy the impulse that keeps it here, for example granddaughter is happy, revenge is achieved, message is delivered.

**Strengths:** Master [+6] Incorporeal\*, Expert [+4] Invisible\*, Master [+6] Dead\*, Good [+2] Energy Drain\* (chilling touch), Good [+2] occupation, Good [+2] personality trait; possible special abilities

**Weaknesses:** possibly Poor [-2] Obsessed, and Poor [-2] Self-Awareness or Intellect for a fragmentary spirit

Ghosts can develop special powers. The following are common, though a given spirit would probably have just one or two.

† *Impression\**: convey fleeting sensory echoes of the ghost's life or death, perhaps unconsciously or as an attempt to communicate, potentially causing



contest they are now inside the creature, and will be attacked by its Swallow each round automatically (without needing an action by the creature) - an attack that can't be avoided, only resisted. Hopefully they can get themselves out or be rescued before they are digested!

† *Burrow*: this Quality could be used to disappear below ground to escape from attack (taking an action), or to emerge from the ground in a devastating ambush.

† *Vibration Sensitive*: if characters can find a way to produce unpleasant vibrations, they might drive the worm off. Your group's least favourite type of music might be an amusing option.

## Troll

These are large, tough, brutish humanoids with a tendency to eat people. An average troll is about 9 feet tall, with a greyish skin somewhat reminiscent of stone, sometimes mottled with greenish patches. (Some scholars think their toughness originates from the earth a bit like a dwarf's, though trolls are known to reproduce in the normal way.)



Some are broad and stocky; others are lean and lanky. They have long, muscular arms with clawed fingers, and a crudely formed face. They also have some regenerative ability, and have even been seen to reattach recently severed limbs.

Trolls live all over the Realms. They like dark places, such as caves and under bridges - sunlight hurts their eyes and seems to reduce all their other abilities too. They sometimes get used as evil forces' heavy infantry,

though keeping them under control requires a firm hand and lots of "treats". They have a rudimentary understanding of languages, but most do not speak - though some of particularly stubborn bent are known for starting and perpetuating completely pointless arguments.

**Strengths:** Good [+2] Large, Expert [+4] Strong, Expert [+4] Tough, Good [+2] Claws, Good [+2] Fierce, Expert [+4] Darksense, Good [+2] Regeneration (not fire damage, not in daylight)

**Weaknesses:** Poor [-2] Large, Poor [-2] Not Very Bright, Poor [-2] Ugly, Poor [-2] Hampered By Daylight

† *Hampered By Daylight*: under the sun, pretty much everything a troll does gets penalised. It even interferes with their regenerative ability. They can manage alright outside on a very cloudy day. Other forms of bright light might give the penalty momentarily, but are not as potent.

## Vampire

These are the undead that people want to be. They've managed to get the cool tricks without all the icky bits-falling-off stuff. In Groth they're celebrities; in Scata they're nobility; in Ko-Sha they're lawyers. The only downside, really, is that powerful urge to drink blood, but there are always more peasants. Oh, and the bursting into flame in sunlight, but you've probably always been a night person anyway. And being hunted down with pitchforks in less enlightened places.

Vampirism's exact origins are lost in the mists of time, though many accounts claim it started as a punishment by the gods on wicked people. (Most don't make a big deal of this idea, on the basis that if true it arguably worked very badly and the gods don't take criticism well.) It is passed on through the bite: someone killed by a vampire often comes back as one.

The gods Shamutu and Nansin, the sun and moon, take a dim view of this undead nonsense, and are particularly irked when people make it look sexy. They have instructed their sub-gods and daemons to cooperate as little as possible with vampires. Nansin's edicts are subtle, causing light to play tricks around them: mirrors give nothing back, light bends around them to avoid making shadows, and sometimes a little aura of darkness follows them around. Shamutu is more direct: if vampires are caught under the sun its power is focused to burn them. A number of other minor deities have joined in as well, so there are various things that repulse or harm vampires, and these vary confusingly from place to place.

The following stats are separated into those for experienced/established vampires and a reduced set for lesser vampires, those that are newly created or minions of a more competent one. Because a vampire is created from a normal person, there's a template element that modifies existing Qualities, then a set of new fixed Qualities. (Ranks can't be raised higher than Master.) Most also have at least a basic occupation Quality, and possibly other skills from their former life; and as they're basically immortal skills could get quite high.