



The Great Wheel of the Fates: Special Creature Briefing

Ghul

A Ghul is a human who has, as part of a dark magical ritual or through desperation or as an act of calculated evil, eaten the flesh of another human being. In rare cases, the transformation into a ghul is caused by the intervention of a powerful sorcerer or god of the underworld, who use them as servants and messengers.

Most Ghul are carrion creatures and subsist on the flesh of the already-dead, eating from corpses and graveyard fruit. While distasteful to many, such creatures are viewed as performing a task no Persian wishes to – the handling and disposal of the dead – and are therefore largely tolerated in the Thousand Nations. There are a small subset, who call themselves the Rakshasa or Ghul Princes, for whom such feasts are not fresh enough and who have no issue with taking down living prey.

For the purposes of the game, there are three kind of Ghul.

- Hooded Ones: A derisory term used by Ghul to describe humans who have begun the process of becoming a ghul but still look like (or can pass as) a normal human. They will have some of the lesser powers of the Ghul but will not have taken their Meat Name.
- Ghul: The carrion-eaters familiar to most as Ghuls. They will have undergone a degree of physical transformations through their diet and will have taken a Meat Name.
- Rakshasa or Ghul Princes: Ghul who have eaten a living soul and consumed it. Damned creatures of great power – they place themselves beyond life, death and the gods, but pay a very great price to do so.

Ghul can draw supernatural strength and sustenance from their unusual diet, and can be very potent opponents in combat – but such a diet can be corrosive to the sanity of anyone forced to subsist on it for a prolonged time. And once the forbidden flesh has been tasted, the Ghul must maintain their diet or weaken and lose their abilities.

There are three defining moments in the existence of a Ghul – the first is when they first feast on decaying human flesh, and become a Hooded One. Sometimes this status is granted through other means but the end result is the same. This must be a willing act – tricking someone into cannibalism with disguised pies, or forcing them to eat at swords-point do not count as initiation into the Ghul nation.

The second defining moment of a Ghul's life is the point they choose to take a Meat Name. This represents the first time a Ghul uses the power of The Charnel Feast to consumes an entire human corpse. By tradition, the Ghul takes on the name of the corpse (or, in the case of an unknown body, a name describing some of the corpse's distinguishing characteristics, such as One-Armed Warrior, Tasty Well-Fed Merchant or Scraggy End-Bit) to pay due honour to the person whose remains nourish them. From the point The Charnel Feast is first used, the Hooded One transforms into a Ghul, and may use any of the Ghul's Lesser or Greater powers.





The third defining moment in a Ghul's existence and one which very few choose to take is the murder and consumption of an unwilling, living human being through the Greater Charnel Feast. This begins the process which transforms a Ghul into a Rakshasa, and marks the final stage of Ghul transformation.

The Ghul in Play – Roleplaying Effects

- Strong affinity for darkness and being undercover – ghul dislike open spaces.
 - Prefers uncooked/raw food, ideally meat, ideally human; the less fresh the better (within the bounds of OOC safety and comfort).
 - Finds spilt blood and open wounds fascinating but slightly repellent.
 - May suffer bad dreams (or good ones, depending on the character's true views about being a Ghul) focussing on decay, flesh and rot. There may be an envelope awaiting you on any morning with information about your dreams; if not, feel free to generate them yourself.
 - Rakshasa, especially, favour aristocratic clothes and "looking good".
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The Ghul in Play: Unusual Abilities

"• The Charnel Feast: A Ghul, given half an hour of roleplaying and an undisturbed opportunity, can consume an entire human corpse, leaving behind nothing but some splintered bones and a wet patch. The first time any Hooded One uses this power, they take their Meat Name and automatically become a Ghul.

- The Greater Charnel Feast: This power may only be used on an unwilling, living victim who has been incapacitated or in some way restrained or rendered unable to resist. The Ghul may consume the living victim as if they were a corpse under the rules of the Charnel Feast. The victim does not formally "die" until the conclusion of the 30 minute process and unless drugged or rendered unable to speak is free to scream. Any victim consumed through the Greater Charnel feast will not pass before their death gods and will not be able to interact with their psychopomp even if given death rites – the Ghul has consumed the soul utterly.

Each time this power is used to consume a living soul, the Ghul or Rakshasa gains one skill from the deceased character until the next sun-up, and gains all the access permissions of that character's class.

This power may only be used once during an Annual. This power is open to any Rakshasa or Ghul, but the first time it is used, the Ghul will automatically complete their transformation into a Rakshasa.



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- The Curse of Thoth: If you hear any character pronounce CURSE OF THOTH against you, you immediately lose all but one body hits. Please roleplay catching on fire.
 - The Curse of Melqart: If you hear any character pronounce CURSE OF MELQART against you, you must obey the next command they give you, faithfully and to the letter. You may roleplay reluctance, anger or resistance but the command must be obeyed promptly.

The Ghul in Play: Restrictions

Execution by Special Weapon

Please read this section carefully; it has changed slightly from previous Annuals.

If executed by any weapon¹ which calls “**EXECUTE – PERMANENT**” then the Ghul will die, permanently, irrespective of however many hits they have remaining.

Any Ghul may use the weapons above freely during combat, but if they use the weapons to call “**EXECUTE – PERMANENT**” on another unwilling special creature then they lose their special creature status including all the abilities, bonuses and powers within this document, immediately upon doing so and will probably be the subject of a powerful CURSE originating from the patron of the executed character.

The Great Hunger

A ghul loses three body hits for every game day that the character does not consume dead human flesh.

This must be done in the IC field or on a quest, during time in – it explicitly cannot be done “off-stage”, on body parts “back at the tent” or otherwise bypassed. If a Ghul drops to zero or below body hits through starvation, then this triggers THE LESSER HUNGER.

Ghul who use their more advanced powers or are injured often experience The Hunger. This is a craving for sustenance and strength that can be difficult or impossible to slake – until it is satisfied, the Ghul can use none of its powers. The Hunger comes in three stages.

THE LESSER HUNGER demands blood to slake it. The special creature must drink or consume sufficient blood to cause three body hits of damage to slake its thirst; while this can be from multiple donors, it must be fresh and “from the tap” – stored blood is of no use. Until THE LESSER HUNGER is assuaged, the special creature cannot speak, use their hands for anything other than weapons and shields and is filled with an all-consuming HUNGER. The special creature can – barely – understand shouted orders. If THE LESSER HUNGER is not assuaged within one half-hour, it becomes THE GREATER HUNGER.

¹ There are currently six such weapons in the game, though the means exist at the Final Annual whereby more might be made. The existing weapons are: *The Labrys, The Harpoon of Yam, The Subtle Knife, The Spear of Alexander, The Sickle of Kronus and Lucretia's Blade.*





THE GREATER HUNGER is more difficult to assuage. To slake this, the special creature must consume human flesh – in addition to the blood drain of THE LESSER HUNGER, the injuries caused by a special creature feeding will incapacitate its victim and will require a bead pull for the victim to survive, even on Atlantis. (A Drowned Dead will be required to witness the slaking of THE GREATER HUNGER and perform the requisite bead pull).

Until THE GREATER HUNGER is assuaged, the special creature cannot speak, use their hands for anything other than weapons and shields and is filled with an irrational all-consuming HUNGER. The language of others is gibberish to it. If THE GREATER HUNGER is not assuaged within one half-hour, it becomes THE ALL-CONSUMING HUNGER.

Finally there is THE ALL-CONSUMING HUNGER. Many special creatures never reach a degree of potency where this HUNGER is triggered – which is perhaps for the best. The only way to assuage the ALL-CONSUMING HUNGER is to take a life. Until THE ALL-CONSUMING HUNGER is assuaged, the special creature cannot speak, use their hands for anything other than weapons and shields and is filled with an irrational all-consuming HUNGER. If THE ALL-CONSUMING HUNGER is not assuaged within one half-hour, the special creature's human personality is permanently lost, and they become a ravaging, savage HUNGER unable to tell friend from foe.

Automatic Triggering of [The Great Hunger Status](#)

Note that during the Final Annual, The Great Hunger will trigger more often than usual as the increasing lack of Quintessence provokes the Ghul.

During the Friday and Saturday of the Final Annual, your The Great Hunger status will **increase by one step** at **Midday and Midnight**.

If you are in no status, it will automatically move into LESSER; if in LESSER it will automatically move to GREATER and if already in GREATER it will move to ALL-CONSUMING.



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Combat Rules for the **Ghul: Atlantis Outside the Arena**

Please read this section carefully; it has changed slightly from previous Annuals.

A Ghul might be involved in combat on Atlantis outside the Arena. Under those circumstances they are obligated to use the following ruleset.

Total Body Hits: (This takes into account armour, body and all other hits:

7 Hits Total - this cannot be increased by any means.

Damage Calls You Can Make:

You may not use any special call effects under Atlantis rules or when fighting on Atlantis.

Calls you can call RESIST against to treat as ONE NORMAL HIT:

- **IMPALE** at any time
- **REPEL** or **CRUSH** if blow is parried with a weapon or shield.

Calls you cannot call RESIST to:

- **STRIKEDOWN, PARALYZE** and **CURSE** - you cannot be subject to any mystery effect which grants resistance to these calls.

Regeneration Rules:

- If reduced to zero hits/incapacitated, fall to the ground. After a slow count of ten seconds, regenerate at one hit per ten seconds to original maximum (or one less if execution).
- This is a major strain, and will trigger the **LESSER BEAST** after the bead pull is resolved.
- **AT THE END OF THE BATTLE WAIT FOR PHILOSOPHER TREATMENT/BEAD PULL PROCESS TO BE COMPLETED** before taking any further action. Take one extra bead pull (with replacement) for every time you were incapacitated.
- On an execution or for each black bead, lose one body hit permanently.



Combat Rules for the Ghul: For Use Under Arena Rules

Please read this section carefully; it has changed slightly from previous Annuals.

Any Ghul may enter the Arena when their associated warband does if they so choose, irrespective of their path. They are not obligated to do so, however.

When inside the Arena as part of a battle under Arena Rules, they are obligated to use the following ruleset **in addition to any further effects the Arena Minoans may state are in play:**

Total Body Hits: (This takes into account armour, body and all other hits:

7 Hits Total - this cannot be increased by any means.

Damage Calls You Can Make:

- Either STRIKEDOWN OR CRUSH for three uses total (not each) per Annual.
- Gains the skill USE TWO HANDED WEAPON

Calls you can call RESIST against to treat as ONE NORMAL HIT:

- IMPALE at any time
- REPEL or CRUSH if blow is parried with a weapon or shield.

Calls you cannot call RESIST to:

- STRIKEDOWN, PARALYZE and CURSE - you cannot be subject to any mystery effect which grants resistance to these calls

Regeneration Rules:

- If reduced to zero hits/incapacitated WAIT FOR PHILOSOPHER TREATMENT/BEAD PULL PROCESS TO BE COMPLETED AT THE END OF THE BATTLE.
- On an execution or black bead, lose one body hit permanently. Only once bead pull is resolved, hits regenerate at one hit per ten seconds to original maximum (or one less if execution/black bead).
- This is a major strain, and will trigger the LESSER HUNGER once bead pull is resolved.



Combat Rules for the **Ghul**: For Use On Quests

Please read this section carefully; it has changed slightly from previous Annuals.

Any Ghul might be involved in combat off Atlantis on a quest or other mission. Under those circumstances they are obligated to use the following ruleset.

Total Body Hits: (This takes into account armour, body and all other hits:

7 Hits Total - this cannot be increased by any means.

Damage Calls You Can Make:

- Either STRIKEDOWN OR CRUSH for three uses total (not each) per Annual.
- Gains the skill USE TWO HANDED WEAPON

Calls you can call RESIST against to treat as ONE NORMAL HIT:

- IMPALE at any time
- REPEL or CRUSH if blow is parried with a weapon or shield.

Calls you cannot call RESIST to:

- STRIKEDOWN, PARALYZE and CURSE - you cannot be subject to any mystery effect which grants resistance to these calls.

Regeneration Rules:

- If reduced to zero hits/incapacitated, fall to the ground. After a slow count of ten seconds, regenerate at one hit per ten seconds to original maximum (or one less if execution).
- This is a major strain, and will trigger the LESSER BEAST after the bead pull is resolved.
- AT THE END OF THE BATTLE WAIT FOR PHILOSOPHER TREATMENT/BEAD PULL PROCESS TO BE COMPLETED before taking any further action. Take one extra bead pull (with replacement) for every time you were incapacitated.
- On an execution or for each black bead, lose one body hit permanently.