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Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

INTRODUCTION

The creatures encountered in an adventure set the tone for the game. They should be appropriate to the genre, but still a surprise for players. *GURPS Creatures of the Night Vol. 1* provides the GM with an assortment of monsters, animals, and unnatural beings that are both versatile and specific, designed to create unforgettable conflicts and unexpected alliances with the characters.

These creatures use the abbreviated template for animals explained on p. B456, though a few feature full racial templates as described on p. B261.

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GREIDER (GRAVE WORM)

A greider is a semi-transparent worm that lives underground. It is at least 20 feet long; some are over 50 feet long. Greiders burrow through the earth toward graveyards, sensing the smell of rotten corpses, decomposing bodies, and coffins. They burrow slowly, taking weeks to cover just a few miles. Once a greider arrives under a graveyard, it begins to consume the corpses.

It worms its way into a grave, enveloping everything it finds – caskets, bones, clothing, jewelry, etc. The contents of the graves fill the greider's body. Anyone who sees it can peer through its thick, gummy skin and see bones, clothes, rotten faces, and body parts in every state of decomposition.

A giant, brainless slug that burrows under graveyards and swallows caskets and corpses.

While feeding, the greider stays underground, deep enough to be completely undetected by anyone on the surface. Once every grave has been sucked dry, it burrows away slowly and hibernates for months. Then it awakens and seeks out another graveyard.



Mind-Numbing Slugs

Greiders are big, soft targets, so anyone who wants to kill one could potentially do so easily. But the greider has a defense – a telepathic signal that numbs the minds of animals and people around it. If a greider encounters *any* living, moving creature bigger than a housecat, it will reflexively send out the numbing signal. It is not intelligent and doesn't discriminate between victims; it just senses danger and defends itself.

The range of the effect is determined by the size of the greider. A normal, 20-foot greider has a range of 20 yards. Every additional foot adds one yard to the range, to a maximum of 50 yards for a 50-foot greider. Anyone within the area of effect must make an immediate Will roll, with a new roll every minute. Failure lowers the victim's IQ by one for every point by which the Will roll was failed, to a maximum of -10! The IQ level stays reduced until the victim moves out of range or succeeds at a later resistance roll.

About 10% of all greiders are a special breed, with 2d pairs of dull white pseudopods running down the length of their body. These limbs are soft and useless, but they *greatly* increase the intensity of the effect; reduce the Will roll to resist by -1 for every two full pairs. In addition, the effects of a failed roll last for minutes equal to the number of pseudopods, while a successful roll only staves off the mind-numbing for one minute. Victims who leave the area of effect still recover immediately.

If a person fails the roll too many times, he may suffer lingering effects even after the greider is gone, dead, or the mind-numbing attacks otherwise end. If the effect lasts for over half an hour, the GM can pick an appropriate disadvantage (such as Indecisive or Confused) and a reasonable period of time (up to a few days) and give it to the victim.

Encounters with Greiders

Normally, greiders stay in underground tunnels beneath (or near) a graveyard for their entire life. They can also be found while shoveling out a new grave at a graveyard – the digging can lead to an accidental attack on a grave worm as a pick or shovel pierces its vulnerable soft hide.

There are a few events that can make them surface. One is a spell or magic ritual specifically designed to summon the creature. Another is a mausoleum (or other above-ground grave). If the mausoleum is in a graveyard, the greider might crawl up through the floor and devour everything inside. Once it feeds, it will burrow back down into the ground.

Greiders also go aboveground once a year to reproduce. A grave worm that's ready to divide surfaces slowly as the sun goes down, trying to sense other animals. If it feels safe, it rests in the glow of the stars and moon, gently splitting in two. By dawn, two half-size greiders sit in the place of the original. They immediately burrow into the earth and slowly travel in different directions.

Resurrection

Some people who have heard of greiders know that they can be used to bring someone back from the dead. In its most simple form, a Resurrection spell is easier to cast (or is more effective) when placed on a dead body that has been recently removed from inside a greider. Normally, a Resurrection spell

Margin-Based (Optional Rule)

Instead of causing a set effect, an Affliction with the Attribute Penalty enhancement, or an enhancement that adds or removes a leveled trait, can make that enhancement *Margin-Based*. This triples the cost of the enhancement, but the effect is multiplied by the subject's margin of failure (maximum $\times 10$). Thus, the greider pays +30% for its Attribute Penalty (-1 to IQ) enhancement, but a victim who fails his resistance roll by 4 is at -4 to his IQ instead of -1!

costs 300 energy, can only be attempted once, brings the subject to life at 0 FP and 0 HP, and takes two hours to cast. The GM must decide which requirements are altered and by how much. For example, the energy cost might be reduced to 100 and the spell can be attempted twice. Or, maybe the cost is just 1 point of energy, but the spell takes three hours and it must be cast while the corpse is inside the greider.

This property of greiders also works with the Zombie spell (and its variants) as well, halving the energy cost (round up) if the corpse remains inside the greider during the spell casting. In addition, any spellcaster who knows the Resurrection spell can choose to use it as if it were the Zombie spell (for half cost) on such corpses, by only bringing them halfway back to life!

Adventure Ideas

One of the easiest grave worm adventures is the simple, accidental encounter in an underground tunnel. The characters find a well-fed greider with dead bodies packed inside of it, attempt to escape from it before the mind-numbing effect is too debilitating, and continue through the tunnels to find the underside of the graveyard where the greider has been feeding. This can lead to encounters with undead monsters, cursed tombs, and all kinds of other fun things.

Another adventure involves the resurrection of someone, maybe even a dead PC. The characters find out that a grave worm has swallowed someone's fresh corpse, and they need to locate the worm and to bring that person back to life.

Or, the characters might encounter an evil sorcerer who has captured a greider, and numbs the minds of his enemies by exposing them to the creatures. He can then use spells to enslave the victims. Those who resist are fed to the grave worm.

ST 12-40; **DX** 4; **IQ** 4; **HT** 12.

HP 4-10; **Will** 10; **Per** 10; **Speed** 4.00; **Dodge** 7; **Move** 2.

SM +3 to +6; 500-7,500 lbs.

Traits: Affliction 1 (Will; Area Effect, 20-50 yards; Attribute Penalty, Margin-Based, -1 to IQ; Based on Will; Cosmic, Irresistible Attack; Emanation; Nuisance Effects, Maximum duration one minute or until victim leaves area, Resistance gives immunity for one minute)*; Detect (Corpses); Doesn't Breathe; Easy to Kill 4; Invertebrate; Tunneling 1; Wild Animal.

* Greiders with pseudopods have a higher level of Affliction