



The Strigoi

Out of what crypt they crawl, I cannot tell
But every night I see the rubbery things
Black, horned, and slender, with membraneous wings
And tails that bear the bifid barb of hell.
They come in legions on the north wind's swell,
With obscene clutch that titillates and stings,
Snatching me off on monstrous voyagings
To grey worlds hidden deep in nightmare's well.
—H.P. Lovecraft, “Night-Gaunts”

Introduction

A bloodline rarely known outside of Romanian folklore, the Strigoi have existed for countless centuries, a primordial branch of the Nosferatu haunting the wilderness of Transylvania and Wallachia. Long divorced from the clan which spawned them, the Strigoi have become an isolated strain, a self-contained race of vampires unconnected to the vast world of the Kindred glittering beyond their impenetrable forests. And yet this isolation has molded them in ways far more terrible than the influences of Kindred society, for the Strigoi still possess the ability to transform into monstrous beings; winged demons that haunt the night sky like relics from a mythological past.

Description

The Strigoi are a terrifying—but fortunately regional!—bloodline, and while their origins have never been directly traced back to the Nosferatu, one could hardly draw any other conclusion. The Strigoi are hideously deformed, possess a high degree of Obfuscation, and share a common geographical origin and mythology with the Nosferatu. But unlike their more prolific cousins, the Strigoi do not reproduce or create ghouls in the traditional vampiric fashion. Like all Kindred, a Nosferatu is free to inflict the curse of the Embrace upon any poor soul he desires; but for reasons likely more superstitious than supernatural, the Strigoi may only Embrace a select group of mortals: witches who have already been made into Strigoi ghouls, and humans who have committed suicide.

How this occurs creates an ecology unique in the vampire world. The vitae of the Strigoi has two distinct phases; the “quick” vitae of the Strigoi ghouls, and the “undead” vitae of the Strigoi vampires. Both types possess the power to engender progeny, and through a process that closely resembles the Embrace, Strigoi ghouls have the remarkable ability to create other Strigoi ghouls. Of all the clans and bloodlines of the Kindred, only the Strigoi have developed this separation of vitae, and a Strigoi ghoul is almost a new entity unto itself, more of a strange fusion between a vampire and a witch than a ghoul in the traditional sense. The unusual nature of the Strigoi and their ghouls is reflected in Romanian folklore, which distinguishes between them by name. The ghoul form is called a *strigoi viu*, or “living vampire,” and the undead form is called a *strigoi mort*, or “dead vampire.” The plural forms are *strigoi* and *strigoi morti* respectively. While the entire bloodline is simply referred to as “Strigoi,” traditionally, female *strigoi* are known as *strigoaica*.

Strigoi Viu

A *strigoi viu* is a unique class of ghoul, and is best viewed as an evil witch with vampiric abilities. Indeed, the word *strigoi* is derived from the Romanian word *striga*, meaning witch. This in turn comes from the Latin cognate *strega*, which has its origins in *strix*, the word for a screech owl; a creature often likened to a child-devouring demon of the night.

The term “witch” here refers to the idea in its most debased form; the *strigoaica* are not wiccans or pagans, but unholy creatures from Romanian folklore, adept at black magic and preying upon the pure and the innocent. They shun the sunlight, preferring to dwell in the blackest forests and emerging only at night. They have the ability to transform into animals, often appearing as bats, wolves, or screech owls. They can leave their body behind while their spirits roam free, hunting for prey—and their hunger is terrible indeed, for the *strigoi* rely on two things for sustenance, blood and psychic energy. A *strigoi viu* can enter the dreams of a sleeping child and transmute them into nightmares, “hagriding” the nightmares until dawn and leaving the victim drained of psychic energy. These poor souls frequently become ill, and if hagridden on consecutive nights, may even die. It is said that the female *strigoi* are more powerful than the males, and according to folklore, the presence of a *strigoaica* can ruin harvests, spoil milk and butter, stop cows from producing milk, and even wreck marriages.

The Witch’s Kiss

As mentioned above, *strigoi* ghouls have another unique power—the ability to create progeny. A *strigoi viu* may actually perform a partial Embrace, an act that dooms a mortal into becoming *strigoi*, a gradual transformation that may last over ten long and painful years. Not any mortal, however, may be transformed by the Witch’s Kiss; the *strigoi* are bound to select their victims from a rather exclusive pool. Candidates include witches and Satanists, the unbaptized and the excommunicated, children born with a caul or a vestigial tail, the congenitally deformed, and the seventh son of a seventh son.

The Witch’s Kiss is bestowed much like a proper Embrace. The *strigoi viu* must drain the blood of her victim, a process that usually takes a week of nightly visitations. Then, upon the final visit, the dying human must be coerced into drinking the blood of the *strigoi viu*. This is usually followed by a terrible sickness and a long convalescence, and often the victim never fully recovers his health. Not that it really matters, for by that time the unfortunate soul is doomed. After a few years of dormancy, the metamorphosis begins, and the progeny begins to acquire the characteristics of a *strigoi viu*. One of the first signs is a shift in personality—almost as if something good inside the

person has just curdled and died, leaving behind a sour and vindictive shell. People begin avoiding the poor wretch, and many notice the appearance of a faint but foul odor. Deformities begin appearing or growing worse, the skin dries up and starts oozing pus, and bones lengthen painfully. As the progeny's appetite for normal food atrophies, a desire for fresh blood asserts itself with a maddening tenacity. The discipline of Nascence develops, and he begins to notice that his very presence has the power to profoundly disturb the sleeping—an effect that gives him a strange sense of renewed energy.

By this time, the creature has either been noticed by the Strigoi, or will seek them out himself. In order to complete his transformation, he must once again drink Strigoi vitae. If the mortal cannot find Strigoi blood to ensure his ghoulish future, the transformation takes a turn for the worse, and his body begins to physically decompose. If no infusions of vitae renew his tainted blood, he perishes within ten to fifteen years of receiving the Witch's Kiss—literally rotting to death until his heart fails.

There is one interesting rumor, however, that may provide a glimpse of possible redemption. Some say that the transformation may be reversed at any point before the progeny drinks Strigoi blood and becomes a full *strigoi vii*. He must simply locate the creature that infected him and kill her, driving a stake through her heart, severing her head, and stuffing her mouth with holy wafers.

Strigoi Mort

A *strigoi vii* may continue to exist as a ghoul, or may be properly Embraced by a *strigoi mort* and join the ranks of the Kindred. Hereafter, the term Strigoi is used interchangeably with *strigoi morti*, a “dead vampire.”

A Strigoi looks much like a Nosferatu; and worse still, the rebirth process often adds a second layer of deformities. As a result, more Strigoi are infected with such flaws as Putrescence and Parasitic Infestation than their marginally more fortunate cousins. The Strigoi are solitary vampires, preferring to dwell in the wilderness like outcast monsters, friends to the lowliest animal life on earth. Sleeping in the ground with the beetles and worms, the Strigoi are known for preying on sheep and cows with just as much frequency as humans, and often—foolishly, it may be said—return to the same village over and over again, draining the livestock as well as the blood of their old friends, surviving family, and available enemies.

Unlike the Nosferatu, many Strigoi are spiritually warped as well, and seem to draw nourishment from a bottomless well of bitterness and spite. There is no higher culture among the Strigoi, no real sense of community, no vast warrens peppered with subterranean artworks. The closest they come to the trappings of civilization are their sabbats, midnight revels usually held on St. Andrew's Eve (November 11) and St. George's Eve (April 22). At these times the Strigoi gather around a bonfire to exchange stories, bleed captives, and dance with their ghoulish offspring. These sabbats also serve another important function, for they mark the Strigoi calendar. The Strigoi are at their most powerful during winter. After St. George's Day, they become nearly dormant, laying low until the summer passes, awaiting their resurgence on St. Andrew's Eve. These two holidays are closely marked by Romanian peasants, and even today only a fool will venture out of doors during the evenings preceding them.

There may be one aspect of the Strigoi which brings a small degree of solace to the human community, and that is the limitations of their Embrace. A Strigoi may only Embrace mortals of two types—a *strigoi vii*, and a suicide. The rituals behind both these Embraces are different, but both create a *strigoi mort* as a result.

The Kiss of Death

The Embrace of a *strigoi vii* is a great celebration that usually takes place during a sabbat, most often on St. George's Eve. It is a very painful affair, and one that generally involves the sacrifice of an unbaptized child. The Strigoi dance and cavort around the candidate witch, hooting as she devours the child, skeleton and all. After a brief ritual in the Old Slavonic tongue, the Strigoi chosen as her Sire steps forward and performs the Embrace. The fledgling is then buried in a coffin and must claw her way out. (The Nosferatu believe this to be the origin of the Sabbat Embrace ritual.) If she is successful, she presents herself to be accepted into Strigoi "society" as a full member, bound to her Sire until he sees fit to release her.

The Judas Kiss

This is the power to Embrace a corpse, and is available only to the *strigoi morti*. There are certain rules that limit this ability, however. The corpse must belong to a human who has willingly taken his own life. (Although certain Merits may expand this restriction; more on this later.) The mortal may not have been buried for longer than forty days, and may not be interred in hallowed ground or buried at a crossroads—both actions render the body untouchable to the Strigoi. Additionally, the corpse must not have been embalmed: the Judas Kiss must be preceded by the complete exsanguination of the corpse, and embalming fluid destroys its potential for resurrection.

First, the Strigoi exhumes the body. Then he must drain it of every drop of blood, no matter how cold or curdled. This is done by clawing open the chest and saturating the heart with a stream of vitae from the Strigoi. The heart is squeezed, allowing the vitae to permeate and unclot the dead mortal blood. After this blood is drained, the vampire allows his precious vitae to fall into the corpse's mouth. The coffin is resealed and the body buried. The transformation generally takes two to three days, after which the progeny awakens to his new state, and must claw his way to the surface or be trapped forever, a howling creature consumed by hunger and fear. If he manages to reach the surface, he may be lucky enough to find a Sire waiting for him.

It should be noted that since most suicides wanted to be dead in the first place, they are generally quite upset at being granted immortality! This rage, coupled with an awareness of the aborted monstrosity they have become, often drives them mad—or *madder*—and the Strigoi produce a fair share of failed progeny which must be put to death. Of course, some of these damned souls discover that being granted a second life is a blessing, and these rare creatures often rise to become the greatest of the Strigoi.

Future of the Strigoi

Fortunately for the rest of the world, both Kindred and Kine, the Strigoi are a dying breed. Increased urbanization, better burial practices, and a diminishing belief in the supernatural have all taken their toll. But blame for their eventual extinction may not be placed solely on the outside world. Many internal factors have hastened the harrowing of this bloodline, including their lack of sophistication, entrenched xenophobia, and paralyzing obedience to tradition and

superstition. Not all the Strigoi are so backwards, however. A few Strigoi have migrated with the Nosferatu, blending in with their cousins and adapting themselves to new homes. But these are few in number, and their potential to create progeny diminishes with each passing decade. One day the last Strigoi will find herself trapped by the coming dawn, her entire bloodline passing into myth as she's blasted to ashes by an indifferent sun.

Information

Nickname: None, but in some parts of Romania, particularly Wallachia, the Strigoi are known as the Moroi.

Appearance: The Strigoi are even more loathsome to behold than the Nosferatu, but their disfigurements tend to remain more consistent than the seemingly random deformities of their cousins. Most Strigoi are bald and leathery, their vermin-infested flesh cracked and oozing with putrescence. They have long, spidery fingers that can stroke the hair of a sleeping child with tenderness one moment, and crush the spine of a horse the next. Their fangs cannot be retracted, and their disproportionate length is the cause of many running sores on their lips and chin. They tend to dress in moldy, tattered clothing, and most Strigoi have little desire for fineries and self-improvement. The older they get, the more hideous they appear, and ancient Strigoi resemble gaunt demons more than they look like Kindred.

The *strigoi vii* are slightly less loathsome to behold, appearing as witches cursed with numerous physical aberrations: humps, claws, cataracts, and club feet are common. Their breath is rank with the odor of spoiled milk, and all *strigoi vii* radiate an aura of foulness that makes mortals near them acutely uncomfortable. As they age, ingesting more Strigoi vitae, their disfigurements accumulate until a point is reached where they must be Embraced, lest their deformities cause their mortal death.

Haven: Most Strigoi dwell in the deep forests of Romania, making their havens in caves, old castles, or forgotten crypts.

Background: The *strigoi* are very similar to ghouls, and each one must drink the vitae of a *strigoi mort* to survive. They prey on the nightmares of children, visiting them in astral form or the shape of an animal, feeding on their psychic energy and only occasionally drinking their blood. Occasionally, if they find one who meets their criteria, they give her the Witch's Kiss, and she will become a *strigoi vii* over the course of the next few years. When it's finally time to cross over to the true realm of the undead, a *strigoi vii* is Embraced by a *strigoi mort*, and must drink blood to survive as any other vampire.

Character Creation: The Strigoi are not intended to be used as player characters, but if so desired, may be generated along the same lines as a Nosferatu.

Clan Disciplines: Obfuscate, Opyri, Protean. (Animalism and Fortitude are also common.)

Weaknesses: The Strigoi are not the most intelligent vampires, and their adherence to superstition and tradition often outweighs their ability to adapt to new situations. Unsurprisingly, the Strigoi have a weakness for many of the traditional vampiric wards. Garlic repels them, and

they must roll Willpower vs. 7 to approach anywhere near this noxious herb. Crosses, too, require a similar roll to overcome, and the list of substances that cause them aggravated damage includes silver, wood from the wild rose, whitethorn, ash, or aspen tree, and any metal rubbed with garlic. Certain Strigoi are more subject to superstition than others, and a list of additional weaknesses may be assigned as Flaws, which are discussed below.

Organization: The Strigoi are solitary creatures, rarely living together in groups above three. They only gather *en masse* during sabbats, these taking place on St. Andrew's Eve and St. George's Eve. They tend to remain in the wilderness, although more intelligent and "civilized" Strigoi have been known to dwell in old castles or hollowed-out crypts, occasionally establishing minor domains and ruling as petty princes. If even aware of their presence, any Tzimisce or Nosferatu in the area tend to leave them alone.

Quote: "Come here, little child. Do you remember me? I was the sad woman that kept going to the monastery on the hill. Yes, child, come here. Sleep against my side, as I stroke your silky hair, hmmm...?"

Stereotypes

What the Undead Think of the Strigoi

The insular Strigoi are a minor bloodline, best known to the Nosferatu and the Tzimisce—a pair of clans not exactly renowned for freely dispensing information. As a result, most of the Kindred world remains unaware of the Strigoi, and the few who've heard stories usually dismiss them as legends, or at best, the activities of a few uncivilized Nosferatu. The "opinions" expressed below are therefore not widely held by the clan as a whole, and some may be considered speculative.

Nosferatu—The Strigoi are an interesting bloodline. We grew up and left the cradle; they did not. Like our caitiff, they probably should have been put out of their misery long ago, but time and progress will render them obsolete; and then no one will remember them but us.

Ventrue, Lasombra—The Strigoi are nothing more than caitiff Nosferatu who never left home for the big city, elevated to folklore by ignorant peasants.

Toreador—I confess, I find it hard to imagine anything worse than a Nosferatu. Still, I assume every clan must have a crazy aunt locked up in the attic.

Gangrel—Old World monsters. The Strigoi are what we would all become if we surrendered to the Beast.

Tremere, Giovanni—The only thing interesting about this bloodline of Nosferatu are the *strigoi vivi*. Ghouls that may create other ghouls? This is something that "must not be watched go."

Malkavian—Of course I believe in the Strigoi! Didn't Louis and Claudia run into them in Europe? You know, in *that* book...

Ravnos—The gypsies tell stories of such creatures, tales that chill even my stolen blood. Putting them down to some estranged Nosferatu is an attempt to deny reality. There are things out there that are not Kindred, and do not feel the need to follow our laws.

Brujah, Assamite—A dying breed of Nosferatu that feeds on peasant children? Is this something we have to care about?

Tzimisce—To look at the Strigoi is to gaze back in time, like the Kine and their precious anthropology. Poor, demented creatures, haunting the forests and the hills, utterly unaware that vampire culture left them behind generations ago. Still, having one or two *strigoi morti* in one's domain has its advantages; just as long as they stay out of the castle proper.

Merits and Flaws

The following Merits and Flaws are intended for the Strigoi, but if the Storyteller permits, may be adopted by a Nosferatu character. A “recently dead” person refers to a corpse that has not yet been buried.

Merits

Suicidal Sympathy (1 pt. Merit)

A common Merit, a Strigoi with this ability can sense suicidal thoughts, tendencies, and predilections in mortals. It is not uncommon for a mortal so detected to be hounded by a Strigoi; but the suicide must still be voluntary.

Fateful Omen (1 pt. Merit)

If a cat jumps or a crow flies over the body of a recently dead person within sight of the Strigoi, he may Embrace the corpse as if it were the victim of a suicide.

Fateful Reflection (2 pt. Merit)

If the body of a recently dead person is reflected in a mirror within sight of the Strigoi, he may Embrace the corpse as if it were the victim of a suicide.

Fateful Shadow (2 pt. Merit)

If the shadow of a living person falls upon the body of a recently dead person within sight of the Strigoi, he may Embrace the corpse as if it were the victim of a suicide.

Dumbfounding (2 pt. Merit)

The sudden appearance of the Strigoi may strike a mortal speechless. A resisted Willpower roll must be made, with each success for the vampire inflicting her victim with a full day of speechlessness. If the human botches the roll, he is struck dumb forever.

Less Superstitious (3 pt. Merit)

The vampire is less superstitious than usual, and the target of all rolls vs. a superstition based weakness decrease by one.

Deadly Calling (3 pt. Merit)

If a Strigoi with this Merit can get a mortal to tell him her full name, the Strigoi is invested with a certain power over her. If he climbs to the belfry of her church and calls out her name while striking the bell, she will be forced to come to the vampire as if Dominated; providing of course she is in earshot of the bell. A resisted Willpower roll is allowed.

Blessing of the New Moon (3 pt. Merit)

This Merit is only available to a Strigoi who possesses Opyri level 7. Normally, a Strigoi may only assume Strix form during a sabbat. By spending three Blood Points, the Strigoi may assume Strix Form on any night with a New Moon. See the Opyri discipline below for details.

Non-Superstitious (4 pt. Merit)

The Strigoi has conquered all superstitions, and is not confined to any superstition-based weaknesses. (She must still follow the Strigoi rules of Embrace.)

Blessing of the Night (5 pt. Merit)

This powerful Merit is only available to a Strigoi who possesses Opyri level 7. Normally, a Strigoi may only assume Strix form during a sabbat. By spending four Blood Points, the Strigoi may assume Strix Form at any time. See the Opyri discipline below for details.

Seven Year's Death (5 pt. Merit)

This Merit is extraordinarily unusual, and may be considered purely legendary if the Storyteller so wishes. A Strigoi with this Merit is not destined to be undead forever. If he can remain undetected for seven years, his curse may be lifted by travelling to another country where a different language is spoken. There, if he can find a mortal lover, he can become human again. This act of love must be given freely, and no vampiric glamour may be used to bring it about. If he is successful, he returns to his human form—but all his children will become Strigoi when they die.

Flaws**Dog's Bane** (1 pt. Flaw)

The Strigoi may be repelled by a black dog with an extra set of eyes painted on his forehead with white paint, and must make a roll of Willpower vs. 7 to pass beyond the dog.

Counting Curse (2 pt. Flaw)

The Strigoi has an innate and irresistible need to count, and will often find himself counting objects against his will. (This occurs at the Storyteller's discretion; a roll of Willpower vs. 6 is needed to break the compulsion.) If thorns or poppy seeds are strewn in his path, or in front of his lair, the Strigoi must make a roll of Willpower vs. 7. If he fails, he will be forced to count every thorn or seed unless directly threatened. ("Poppy seeds! I *love* to count poppy seeds! Vun poppy seed, two, *two* vonderful poppy seeds, ha ha ha!")

Witchflight (2 pt. Flaw)

This Flaw may only be taken by female Strigoi who already possesses Opyri level 6. The *strigoaica* may only use the "Fly" power with the aid of a specific magical fetish—a besom-style broom, a walking stick, a mortar and pestle, a hobby horse, etc. See the Opyri discipline below for details.

More Superstitious (3 pt. Flaw)

The vampire is unusually superstitious even for a Strigoi. The targets of all rolls vs. a superstition based weakness are increased by one.

Homebound (4 pt. Flaw)

The Strigoi may not travel beyond his homeland. For all practical purposes, this is usually Wallachia or Transylvania. Each night spent outside his homeland will temporarily decrease both his Willpower and Blood Pool by one point until he returns. If he fails to return before zero is reached in either score, he suffers the True Death.

Aura of Foulness (5 pt. Flaw)

Affecting only female Strigoi, it is impossible for a *strigoaica* with this Flaw to keep a low profile, and as a result, it makes life considerably more hazardous. The Strigoi radiates an aura of foulness that affects the region around her lair, and has a subtle but telling influence on the local land and population. Milk and butter spoil more readily. Cows refuse to give milk. Crops are blighted by drought and disease, and tend to yield significantly lower harvests. Wounds take longer to heal, and mothers find their breast milk curdled or in short supply. Insomnia becomes commonplace, and when people do sleep, they suffer from exhausting nightmares. Even human relationships tend to sour, and people argue more frequently. Needless to say, the cumulative effect of this foulness is usually noticed by the village, and it's safe to say that a Strigoi hunt is not far behind.

**The Strigoi Discipline**

Opyri, derived from the Old Slavonic root word for vampire, is a fascinating discipline possessed exclusively by the Strigoi bloodline. It is unknown whether any other vampire may learn Opyri, and with the exception of a few Nosferatu who remain silent on the matter, none have ever tried. The discipline is also unusual in that Strigoi ghouls—the *strigoi*—can learn the first five levels of Opyri, and indeed use them more frequently than their vampiric Sires. It should also be noted that the names of the individual powers are rarely used by the Strigoi, and have generally been attributed by Nosferatu scholars.

Nascence (Level 1)

Innate to every Strigoi, Nascence is the ability to sense the history of a mortal from conception to baptism. Simply by touch, the Strigoi can immediately divine every unusual fact about a human's birth: whether he was born in wedlock, was the child of rape, was baptized or not, was the seventh son of a seventh son, was born with a caul, was born with a tail or any other deformities, and so on. If a child is particularly strong in any of these areas, a Strigoi can sense it from afar, and the power of Nascence will lead the Strigoi directly to the child's side.

System: Nascence is as an innate ability which can be used at will. Although strong impressions can attract a Strigoi to a human, a clear reading is available only by touch.

Hagging (Level 2)

This terrible ability is one of the most feared powers of the bloodline, and is particularly used by *strigoaica*. Hagging is the act of entering a human's dreams and draining psychic energy, an invasive attack which empowers the Strigoi at the expense of the mortal. Victims feel the psychic drain as a series of hellish nightmares, and the next morning finds them feeling sick and listless. It is even possible to kill a mortal through repetitive hagging, and any human murdered in this way may be made into a *strigoi mort* in the same manner as a suicide. Hagging is most often done to children, but virtuous men and virgin maidens are other common targets.

System: The mortal must be asleep, whether naturally or magically. The witch must touch her victim's forehead and place her lips over his. She may drain the victim at the rate of one Willpower point each hour, and for every point the *strigoaica* drains, she receives one Blood Point in return. Draining a victim to zero Willpower forces them to make a Stamina Roll vs. a target of 6. A successful roll results in a day-long coma; failure means death. A hagridden victim gains back one point of Willpower each day until fully recovered.

Night Ride (Level 3)

This ability permits the Strigoi to project her astral form outside of her corporeal body. When in astral form a Strigoi may perform several actions not usually allowed by Psychic Projection. She may use the discipline of Animalism; she may communicate with other Strigoi, living or dead, and most importantly, she may use the powers of Nascence and Hagging. Indeed, many Strigoi would rather drain their victims from afar, hagridding their victims until dawn while their corporeal bodies remain safe in their lair, protected by a guard of wolves.

System: The astral form follows all standard rules (see Level 5 Auspex "Psychic Projection"), but the form of a Strigoi is limited in movement to a radius equal to her Willpower x 10 kilometers.

Spooking (Level 4)

By use of Spooking, a Strigoi may lift objects in the air with her mind and move them through space. This is often used to generate poltergeist-like confusion, instilling helpless terror in the hearts of her victims and their families.

System: A roll of Willpower vs. a target of 6 must be made in order to lift an object. Contrary to what Yoda says, weight is an issue, and the vampire may only manipulate an object equal to or less than her Willpower x 5 kg—which nicely covers most knives, stones, and small children. Multiple objects may be lifted, but each additional object increases the target roll by one until a failure occurs. A botch immediately drops all objects. Of course, these objects may be flung, causing damage appropriate to the size and shape.

Vircolac Form (Level 5)

By use of this power, Strigoi may transform into animals. While in this form, they have all the powers of their human form, but are limited with respect to physical capabilities such as movement and speech. The type of animal a Strigoi may change into is governed by gender. Males may transform into dogs or pigs; females into screech owls, and both sexes may become wolves and bats. Although each Strigoi may freely select from these options, most establish a favorite animal form, down to color and other distinguishing features.

System: The transformation process takes one round and costs one Blood Point, and if the Strigoi does not change back before sunrise, she is stuck in that form until the next evening.

Fly (Level 6)

This power gives the Strigoi the ability to fly through the air while in human form. Motion is limited to approximately 60 kilometers per hour, and the Strigoi must follow certain restrictions. She may not fly over consecrated earth or hallowed ground, she may not cross directly over running water, and she may not cross a border to a country where another language is spoken.

System: The Strigoi must roll Willpower vs. a target of 6, and each success allows fifteen minutes of flight. Flying is exhausting, however, and each additional attempt to fly during the same night increases the difficulty by one.

Strix Form (Level 7)

The most horrifying ability available to the Strigoi, this power may only be used on the Eve of St. Andrew's (November 11) and on the Eve of St. George's (April 22). By assuming Strix form, the Strigoi undergoes a transformation into a terrible monster, a bat-winged demon with wolf-like jaws and the talons of a raven, a creature whose horrifying shriek can chill the blood of the stoutest warrior. The creature has the power of flight, can travel at the rate of 100 kilometers per hour, and can lift burdens equal to twenty times the Strigoi's normal weight. In combat, a Strigoi in Strix form may inflict terrible wounds, her bite and claws causing aggravated damage to other supernatural beings. If feeding in this monstrous form, the Strigoi may drain three Blood Points per round rather than the usual rate of one per round.

System: The transformation process takes two rounds and costs two Blood Points, and if the Strigoi fails to change back before sunrise, she acquires new deformities upon waking the next evening.



Sources & Notes

This document was first uploaded on 25 August 1997, and extensively revised on 10 September 2017. The banner image is a drawing by the incomparable Edward Gorey. Most of the information I present about the Strigoi has its origins in Romanian folklore—even the four-eyed dog thing! My bibliography is as follows:

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