

G U R P S<sup>®</sup>

# MONSTERS



COMPILED BY  
HUNTER JOHNSON




STEVE JACKSON GAMES

# ALL THINGS VILE AND MURDEROUS . . .

Some creatures are tragically misunderstood – fearsome in appearance, but basically harmless, or even good.

But the ones in *this* book are just plain rotten.

*GURPS Monsters* contains 48 of the meanest, vilest people, animals, and *things* to infest this (or any other) universe. With detailed biographies, motivations, and suggestions for encounters, each of these monsters is guaranteed to spice up your game! Meet:

-  Literary and mythic monsters such as Asterius the Minotaur, Dracula, and Medusa.
-  More recent legends such as El Chupacabra, the Jersey Devil, and the Queen of Air and Darkness.
-  Wholly new foes! Pit your parties against Elrond Carver, the Atomic Lich; Pusan Chen, an undead dragon; and Sylvia Sternenkind, a bioengineered pleasure slave turned contract killer!

Plus an entire chapter on playing monsters . . . and the people who hunt them!

## Beware. There are monsters here.



*GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition, Revised* and *Compendium I* are required to use this supplement in a *GURPS* campaign. *GURPS Grimoire* and *Magic, Second Edition* are recommended, but not vital. The creatures presented in *GURPS Monsters* can be used with *any* game system.

### THE BEAST-TAMERS:

Compiled by Hunter Johnson

Edited by Andrew Hackard  
and Luciann Wasson

Cover and interior art by  
Christopher Shy

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# MONSTERS

Compiled by Hunter Johnson

Written by Alan Atkinson, Michel Bélanger,  
Jan B. Berends, Kurt Brown, Jim Cambias,  
J.C. Connors, Jeff Culliton, Morgan Davey,  
Greg DeAngelo, Peter V. Dell'Orto,  
Peter Faulkner, Andy Fix,  
Leonardo M. Holschuh, Jürgen Hubert,  
Micah T.J. Jackson, Hunter Johnson,  
Ben Knight, K. David Ladage,  
Shawn E.A. Lockard, Jesse Lowe,  
James Maliszewski, Thom Marrion,  
Peter N. Martin, Phil Masters,  
David Morgan-Mar, Erik Peticolas,  
T. Carter Ross, Brett Sanger,  
Brian C. Smithson, William H. Stoddard,  
Joe Taylor, Rolland Therrien,  
Ed Wisniewski, and Jonathan Woodward

Additional material by Kenneth Hite,  
Sean Punch, and Robert M. Schroeck

Edited by Andrew Hackard and  
Luciann Wasson

Cover and interior art by Christopher Shy

**Playtesting:** Michel Bélanger, Frederick Brackin,  
Morgan Davey, Scott Harris, Peter Hatch, Phil Masters,  
David Morgan-Mar, Paul O'Neal, Brian C. Smithson, and  
Bill Stoddard, with help from the *Pyramid* subscribers.



**GURPS System Design** ● Steve Jackson

**GURPS Line Editor** ● Sean Punch

**Production Manager** ● Gene Seabolt

**Production Artist** ● Heather Oliver

**Prepress Assistance** ● Monica Stephens

**Creative Director** ● Philip Reed

**GURPS Errata Coordinator** ● Andy Vetromile

**Sales Manager** ● Ross Jepson

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# INTRODUCTION

Monsters are like art: hard to define, but you know one when you see one.

The term “monster” covers many creatures of wide-ranging aspects, abilities, and attitudes. Anything nonhuman is eligible, especially if the group calling it “monster” would like to see it destroyed. The nonhuman requirement is often relaxed to merely “different.” The Fear of Other (see *GURPS Horror*) is the fear of monsters.

*On the table lies a book of Hours, “cased in a cover of solid silver gilt, wrought with quaint devices and studded with small brilliants and rubies,” and close by it “squats a little ugly monster, a Lar, perhaps, dug up in the sunny fields of corn-bearing Sicily.”*

– Oscar Wilde, *Intentions*

While the creatures included in this compilation are certainly Other, they also meet additional criteria. First, almost all monsters here are *unnatural*. This rule excludes the likes of orcs and goblins, since they are natural creatures within their fantasy settings. This book also leaves out the human monsters – the serial killers and other psycho- and sociopaths. See *GURPS Villains* for their ilk. This collection restricts itself to mythological beasts, gothic horrors, demonic apparitions, and other bogeymen. Some of the cryptozoological entries, such as the Honey Island Swamp Monster, approach the natural order, but don’t quite reach it. The Phantom of the Opera (a classic human monster) is the exception that proves this rule.

All monsters here are *horrific*. No misunderstood grotesques, no noble beasts, no merely colossal specimens. The creatures here each want something . . . and whatever it is, it isn’t pretty. Mundane folk should avoid getting in the way. Even the Golem, serving as a ghetto guardian, struck fear into those he protected as well as those he opposed.

Finally, the monsters here are *mythic*. Not all spring from real-world legends, but each has a mythos encompassing its existence. The villagers are spooked, the natives are restless, and the thrill-seekers are entranced . . .

## About the Compiler

Hunter Johnson lives with his wife and two sons in Dayton, Ohio. His home is only blocks away from the Washington-Centerville Public Library, used extensively in his *GURPS* projects. Besides compiling and revising *GURPS* books (*GURPS Japan*, *GURPS Bestiary*) he also writes reviews for *Moves* magazine and hosts an annual gaming weekend, humbly called HunterCon. In his mundane guise, he is a computer programmer, working primarily with PowerBuilder, C++, perl, and SQL. You can find Hunter on the Web at [www.hunterandlori.com](http://www.hunterandlori.com).

## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources include:

*Pyramid* ([www.sjgames.com/pyramid/](http://www.sjgames.com/pyramid/)). Our online magazine includes new *GURPS* rules and articles. It also covers *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Traveller*, *World of Darkness*, *Call of Cthulhu*, and many more top games – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *In Nomine*, *INWO*, *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre Miniatures*, and more. *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online!

*New supplements and adventures.* *GURPS* continues to grow, and we’ll be happy to let you know what’s new. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our website (below).

*Errata.* Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE. Or download them from the Web – see below.

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*GURPSnet.* This e-mail list hosts much of the online discussion of *GURPS*. To join, e-mail [majordomo@io.com](mailto:majordomo@io.com) with “subscribe GURPSnet-L” in the body, or point your web browser to [gurpsnet.sjgames.com](http://gurpsnet.sjgames.com).

The *GURPS Monsters* web page is at [www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/monsters/](http://www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/monsters/).

## Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Page references that begin with CI indicate *GURPS Compendium I*. Other references are AH for *GURPS Atomic Horror*, BE for *Bestiary*, BT for *Blood Types*, CII for *Compendium II*, D for *Dinosaurs*, EG for *Egypt*, FB for *Fantasy Bestiary*, FF for *Fantasy Folk*, G for *Grimoire*, I for *Illuminati*, J for *Japan*, M for *Magic*, SU for *Supers*, T for *Technomancer*, UN for *Undead*, VO for *Voodoo*, WWi for *Who’s Who 1*, and WWii for *Who’s Who 2*. For a full list of abbreviations, see p. CI181 or the updated list at [www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html](http://www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html).

## Variations

Scylla is closely tied to Greek and Roman mythology, particularly the wanderings of Odysseus and Aeneas, but there's no reason she can't appear in other settings as well.

### *The Final Fate of Scylla*

In all the legends about her, Scylla was never defeated. It is said that she was eventually turned into reefs, and she is thus still a hazard to sailors. In a *GURPS Cabal* game, Scylla and Charybdis (along with the Wandering Rocks) might have been taken to the Pearl Bright Ocean of Yetzirah, to serve as obstacles to adventurers in search of lost secrets and profound truths.

### *Saving Scylla*

Finding a way to restore Scylla is no easy task, but could make a quest of epic proportions. Heroes would first have to reach the palace of Circe and convince her to give them an antidote. If they manage to outwit or seduce her, she might agree to help, but she will demand something in return, and she will likely send them to the far corners of the world to

gather the ingredients. And the hardest part is to get close enough to Scylla to administer the antidote.

### *Scylla on the Move*

By removing Sessile from Scylla's disadvantages, she can be used as a sea-monster menacing travelers on many large bodies of water. She could be an opponent to *Swash-bucklers*, to *Steampunk* submariners, or to divers seeking the secrets of *Atlantis*.

### *Elixir of Monstrosity*

If it were rediscovered, the formula of the elixir that Circe used on Scylla could wreak havoc. It transforms its victims into creatures out of their own worst fears and nightmares (the more grotesque the better; anything from this book, or from *Fantasy Bestiary*, *Space Bestiary* or *Creatures of the Night* is possible). An entire *Horror* campaign could be based around an evil sorcerer using it to create monster after monster, with the investigators slowly discovering that all those monsters they had to fight were once normal people.



*Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim.*

– Vergil

*(He runs on Scylla, wishing to avoid Charybdis.)*

# The Great Sphinx

3,395 points

A stone lion with the head of a man. Various parts, most notably the nose, are missing or crumbling. Approximately 66' high, 230' long, weighing an indeterminate number of tons.

**ST:** 1,000 [396]\* **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 7.0

**IQ:** 20 [175] **HT:** 15/500 [2,485] **Move:** 7

**Dodge:** 7

\* No Fine Manipulators, -40%

## Advantages

Body of Stone 10 (Unswitchable) [60]; Doesn't Breathe [20]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Four Legs [5]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immunity to Disease [15]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Brain, No Cutting/Impaling Bonus, No Vitals) [45]; Magery 3 [35]; Night Vision [15]; Sanctity [5]; Sharp Claws [25]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Unaging [15]; Universal Digestion [15].

## Disadvantages

Horizontal [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Mute [-25]; No Fine Manipulators [-30]; Odious Personal Habit (Eats humans) [-15]; Secret (Not merely a statue) [-30].

## Skills

Area Knowledge (Egypt)-20 [1]; Astronomy-20 [4]; Bard-20 [2]; Diplomacy-20 [4]; History-25 [14]; Jumping-15 [4]; Mathematics-20 [4]; Occultism-25 [12]; Politics-20 [2]; Psychology-20 [4]; Running-15 [4]; Savoir-Faire-20 [1]; Stealth-15 [8]; Strategy (Land)-25 [14]; Survival (Desert)-20 [2]; Thaumatology-25 [16].

## Languages

Akkadian-19 [1]; Ancient Egyptian (Native)-20 [0]; Ancient Greek-20 [2]; Arabic-20 [2]; English-20 [2]; French-20 [2]; Latin-19 [1].



## Spells

All at level 21: Aura; Colors; Command; Compel Truth; Continual Light; Control Person; Create Air; Create Earth; Darkness; Daze; Detect Magic; Dream Projection; Dream Sending; Dream Viewing; Earth to Air; Earth to Stone; Earth Vision; Encrypt; Fascinate; Fear; Flesh to Stone; Foolishness; Forgetfulness; Glow; Identify Spell; Light; Mage Sense; Mage Sight; Mass Daze; Mass Sleep; Mind-Reading; Mind-Sending; Panic; Permanent Forgetfulness (VH); Possession (VH); Purify Air; Rain of Stones; Remove Shadow; Sand Jet; Sandstorm; Seek Air; Seek Earth; Seek Magic; Seeker; Sense Emotion; Sense Foes; Sense Life; Shape Air; Shape Darkness; Shape Earth; Shape Light; Sleep; Soul Rider; Stench; Sunlight; Telepathy (VH); Terror; Truthsayer; Whirlwind; Windstorm [63].

## Biography

The Great Sphinx of Giza is the enigma of the sands. Its age is uncertain; although traditional dating places it in the Fourth Dynasty (around 2,600 B.C.), there is evidence that it may be younger than this, and occultists often claim a far greater age for it. Although it is usually assumed that the head of the Sphinx represents Khafre, the pharaoh responsible for its construction, it may instead represent his older brother, the pharaoh Djedefre. Khafre also referred (metaphorically?) to the Sphinx as his father. The 18th-dynasty pharaoh Thutmosis IV claimed that he ascended to the throne in return for removing the sand that had buried the Sphinx in the 15th century B.C. Throughout the ages, the Sphinx has symbolized Egypt, royalty, and wisdom.

This is not coincidence.

The Sphinx is an ancient spirit. Its motives are inscrutable at best. It first appeared in Mesopotamia in the third millennium B.C., manifesting to the early city builders in dreams and desert mirages. However, they resisted its influence, and so it moved on – to Egypt. There it begat the pharaoh Khafre, revealing itself during his adolescence. Under the Sphinx's guidance, Khafre built its physical form. Finding its new home good, the Sphinx merged with the stone of the Giza plateau and blessed Khafre's reign as pharaoh.

The reign was a good one, but Egypt groaned under the weight of the Sphinx, which roamed up and down the Nile and out into the desert, devouring any who crossed its path. After Khafre died, the Sphinx returned to Giza to honor its son in death. There it was trapped (and muted) by the priests of Ra in its present location. Without the power of the Sphinx to guide them, the Fourth Dynasty deteriorated, to be replaced by a dynasty descended from the priests who had imprisoned the Sphinx.

Over the next millennia, the Sphinx sat imprisoned in front of its son's tomb. Egypt rose to great prominence, then fell, first to the Ptolemies, then to the Romans, and finally to the forces of Islam. Although the Sphinx was able to regain a little power in the 18th dynasty by influencing Thutmosis IV, the priests of Ra were alert and countered further attempts at restoration. Thus, it sits in the sands of Egypt, sleeping but aware.

## Motivations

The priests of Ra believed that the Sphinx was driven mostly by hunger, but some of its behavior hints at more complex plots. It has consistently played a role in the rule of Egypt, as a symbol of royal power; the GM may choose to make it more than a symbol. For example, many of the great conquerors of the ancient world are associated with Egypt in some way: Alexander the Great, his general Ptolemy, Julius Caesar, Mark Antony – did they make bargains with the being inhabiting the Sphinx, or refuse such bargains to their sorrow? In the 19th century, Napoleon's soldiers are reputed to have desecrated the Sphinx. Napoleon then met with disaster in Russia. . .

## Variations

In a *GURPS Illuminati* game, the Sphinx can operate as a rather peculiar Secret Master. Based in Egypt, it uses its knowledge of history and human nature to extend its power throughout the world. Countless secret organizations and cults trace their roots back to Egypt; what if they owe their existence to the Sphinx? In such a game, the Sphinx should be Illuminated and have an Ally Group (A Conspiracy).

In a *GURPS Horror* game, the Sphinx is better suited to the role of dark god. This is especially appropriate when combined with *GURPS Egypt*. A secret cult of the Sphinx could oppose the priests of Ra throughout the dynasties or make trouble for more modern investigators.

It's also possible that characters could encounter the Sphinx before it inhabits its stone body, or that it might choose to abandon that body in order to regain its freedom. In that case, replace all of the Sphinx's physical Advantages and Disadvantages with one of the following: Astral Entity (p. CI96), Being of Pure Thought (p. CI34), or Spirit Form (Unlimited lifespan, no materialization; see p. 121). In this state, the Sphinx will likely be looking for a body of some kind; this could make for an interesting scenario involving robots or mecha.

For more information on the Sphinx and Egypt, see *GURPS Egypt* p. 38 and *GURPS Places of Mystery* p. 34.

– Jesse Lowe

## Dumb Brute

An ancient, ambivalent demigod may not be what a particular campaign needs, while a giant, city-smashing monster may just fit the bill. In that case, the Sphinx can be an ancient monster imprisoned by the pharaohs in a body of stone. Drop the IQ to 6 and remove most of the spells and mental skills. A rampaging Sphinx would make a suitable opponent for *GURPS Supers*, *GURPS Steampunk* mecha, or a band of intrepid *GURPS Cliffhangers* heroes.





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Hammack, Allen. *Monsters of Myth & Legend* (Mayfair Games, 1984). A mythological bestiary in Mayfair's *Role Aids* line. Followed by two sequels.

Hite, Kenneth. *GURPS Cabal* (Steve Jackson Games, 2001). A horror world where monster characters can find their home.

Maykrantz, Scott Paul. *GURPS Creatures of the Night* (Steve Jackson Games, 1993). The original horror bestiary for *GURPS*; also not intended for creation of characters, but some are suitable (Chimneyrues, Corpse-Kissers, Darklings, etc.).

McDevitt, Bradley K. et al. *NightLife* (Stellar Games, 1990). The first game of roleplaying horror monsters (vampires,

werewolves, etc.). Went from 96 pages in its first edition to 256 in its third, before the publisher disappeared.

Miller, Todd and Pramas, Chris. *Ork!* (Green Ronin Publishing, 2000). A satire of the monsters-as-player-characters RPG sub-genre.

Nystul, Mike. *The Beast Within* (Mayfair Games, 1993) for *Chill*. Players normally take on the roles of humans in *Chill*, but this variant campaign sourcebook switches sides.

Rein-Hagen, Mark. *Vampire: The Masquerade* (White Wolf Publishing, 1991). The best-known monster game; a revised edition (1998) by Guy Davis is currently available. Spawned a short-lived television series and a computer game. Subsequent entries in the World of Darkness line allowed players to portray werewolves, mummies, and ghosts (along with less monstrous types).

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Smith, Lester. *The Book o' the Dead* (Pinnacle Entertainment Group, 1997) for *Deadlands*. Sourcebook for playing the Harrowed (undead revenants) as characters.

Shy, Christopher and Vasilakos, George. *All Flesh Must Be Eaten!* (Eden Studios, 2000). Primarily for playing humans resisting a zombie epidemic, but can be turned to play the zombies instead.

St. Andre, Ken. *Monsters! Monsters!* (Flying Buffalo, 1976). Players take on the roles of the monsters fighting back against the invading humans, in a reversal of Flying Buffalo's *Tunnels & Trolls* standard.

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