

The Wretched

The Starving Dead

“They leapt from the shadows, hitting us like starving beasts. Their ferocity wasn’t human—it was primal, desperate. I watched as one tackled a companion to the ground, jaws snapping wildly. Avoid letting them close the distance at all costs; they’ll drag you down, and you won’t get up again.”

The Wretched are not like the others. They do not **hunt the living for sustenance**, nor do they **seek to spread the Blight**. They were something different, something **terrible**, even before the infection took them.

They were the **starving**.



The Wretched are what remains of those who lasted too long in isolation, in quarantined villages where no food remained, where men and women turned upon one another in desperation. Their bodies are **emaciated to the point of breaking**, their bellies grotesquely swollen from their last, terrible feast. Their mouths hang open, filled with jagged, broken teeth, their skeletal fingers twitching with a hunger that **can never be sated**.

Unlike other Blighted, the Wretched do not immediately attack the living—they attack **anything they believe is food**. This is their greatest weakness, and it can be exploited. If you are carrying fresh rations, you have already become their target—**drop food and they may fixate on it instead of you**. If no food is available, **loud noises can cause them to panic**, breaking their coordination and making them easier to dispatch. Do not let them **latch onto you**—once they grab hold, they do not release easily, and their frenzied hunger makes them **faster than they appear**. Most importantly, if a Wretched is **already feeding, do not engage**. They will not stop until their hunger is momentarily sated—use this time to escape.

The only mercy of the Wretched is that they **cannot resist food**. If flesh—be it human or animal—is already available, they will abandon their chase. But beware, for once a Wretched has started eating, it does not stop—not until there is nothing left to consume.

Stat Block

Medium Undead, unaligned

Armor Class:	11 (tattered clothing)
Hit Points:	30 (4d8 + 12)
Speed:	35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	6 (-2)	3 (-4)

Damage Immunities: Poison

Condition Immunities: Poisoned, Exhaustion, Frightened

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 8

Languages: —

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

Traits

- **Ravenous Frenzy:**

If another undead ally is within 5 ft. of its target, the Wretched makes attack rolls with advantage, driven into a frenzy by competition for prey.

- **Pounce:**

If The Wretched moves at least 15 ft. straight toward a creature and hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a **DC 12 Strength saving throw** or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, The Wretched can make one additional bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Actions

- **Frenzied Claws:**

Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Damage: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

- **Bite (*Bonus Action, only after successful Pounce*):**

Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone target.

Damage: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

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