



Demon Family Tree

Demons exist in every crack and crevice of the globe. In Japan they are called oni, in India devas, in England bogies and in Scotland gyres; but by any name, fiendish spirits are up to no good. Demonologists throughout the ages have tried to sort out a hierarchy of demons, leaving a morass of definitions in their wake. It is generally agreed that, although certain similarities exist, we pitiful humans have no way of knowing whether we are dealing with a good spirit or an evil one. To be on the safe side, one should expect the worst. According to Guazzo's *Compendium Meleficarum* (1608) there are six families, or genera, of demons.

Fiery: The first are demons who dwell in the upper air and will not touch ground or cause trouble until the Last Judgment.

Aerial: The second are devils who stir up the atmosphere and cause turbulence, storms, hurricanes, and thundering tempests as they try to destroy mankind. These creatures may descend into Hell and will make themselves visible to humans if called upon to do so.

Terrestrial: Living in forests, glens and knolls, these hellions lay in wait for unexpected passersby. One is apt to find them in a lonely field or behind a rocky outpost, giving false directions to lost travelers. Of all the families, these demons are the most common; they live secretly among people, mimicking their habits and befriending them in order to learn their darkest secrets and betray them.

Aqueous: Living in oceans, rivers, and streams, these powers of darkness raise storms at sea, sink ships, and drown swimmers. Associated with mermaids and the sirens from the Iliad, they frequently appear in seductive female forms. Their leader is the ignominious beast Leviathan.

Subterranean: This batch of demons lives in caves and caverns and harasses miners and other workers who toil beneath the earth. They are the source of earthquakes, wildfire, and dry, hot winds that scourge the earth.

Heliophobic: The final breed of demons are the most malicious. Homicidal and merciless, these demons only appear at night and, with one blast of their noxious, icy breath, will kill a person who has the misfortune of running into them.

Within these families of demons are subcreatures who have populated bad dreams and haunted human beings for centuries, some of which serve a specific purpose.

Heathen activities such as dancing, blasphemy, promiscuity, miserliness, tyranny, laziness, gambling, and pride all have their patron demons. Diseases like asthma, croup, insanity, and indigestion are also caused by particular devils, as are phobias of heights, water, and flying. In fact, almost every blight on the face of the earth can be attributed to some sort of evil spirit of the same name. Of the millions of demons, a few stand out in their foul ignominy.

Ahrimanes

In a Persian tale that influenced development of the Christian idea of evil, the Ahrimanes are angels that followed their leader, Ahriman, to stage a revolt against the principle of good, known as Orzud or Ormazd. Ahriman and his followers were expelled and went to live on earth, where they were rejected. As revenge, Ahrimanes injured the earth's inhabitants. They now live in the space between the stars and the earth.

Beast 666

According to the book of Revelation, the end of the world will be heralded by the unleashing of a horrible demon into the world. In one final, desperate attempt to reassert himself, the Devil will send a false prophet - the Antichrist - and the Beast 666, a ferocious apocalyptic creature who rises from the sea ridden by the whore of Babylon. Beast 666 is a scarlet-hued monstrosity with the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the jaws of a lion. It sports ten horns and seven heads, and spews blasphemy and haughty words from each of its seven mouths. It will have power over the world for forty-two months, and within that time dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to behold the beast, because it was and is not and is to come'. (Revelation 17:8). The Beast will lay waste to all around it, visiting plague and destruction on the lives of mankind and defeating the power of the saints. In time, the Beast will be accompanied by the false prophet, or Antichrist, who will trick people into believing that he is the Messiah. The Antichrist will fashion brazen images of the Beast, commanding the masses to adore it. He and the Beast will brand their followers with the mark 666 upon their forehead or hand, and anyone who resists will be slaughtered.

According to the prophecy, the Day of Reckoning will dawn in a place called Armageddon: the false prophet, the Beast 666, and the legions of evil will do battle with the Son of God, seated 'faithful and true' upon his dazzling white horse, and an army from heaven bedecked in gleaming white linen. In the long awaited final triumph of good over evil, Judgment Day will come and the false prophet and Beast 666 will be captured and hurled into a boiling lake of fire and brimstone. The Devil will be chained and locked in Hell for a term of a thousand years, and all true believers who refused to succumb to the Beast will be saved.

Djinns

Also known as jinns or jinnii, some of these Arabian spirits are good and others are bad. The evil ones enter the body through all five orifices, going straight for the head to drive their victims mad. The good ones can be persuaded to grant favors and wishes. They are related to another band of Persian monstrosities, the div. The Djinns' tendency to enter a human through the mouth or nose has led to the precaution of covering one's mouth when yawning or coughing and saying 'gesundheit' or 'God Bless You' when another sneezes.

Elves

Related to and often confused with fairies and goblins, elves are created from the root of the magical mandrake plant. If treated well, they can be wonderful helpmates, amassing great wealth and power for their master. If treated cruelly, an elf will see that its owner gets his or her just desserts - often in a violently grotesque fashion. Occasionally, elves collaborate with witches, especially in swapping one of their own children, otherwise known as changelings, with newborn

human infants. Hopdance is a famous Scottish elf who goads people into frenzied dancing and orgiastic frivolity

Fairies

Fairies, known in different parts of the world as nymphs, little people, trolls, or spirits, these creatures play a vital role in popular superstitions. Their origins are most likely pagan, and thus they have been demonized by organized religions. As a group, they are usually diminutive and capricious, as likely to lend a hand as they are to torment and tease. For the most part, these entities live in the natural places they protect: trees, fields, forests, rivers, banks, bridges, and stony ledges for example. They are easily whipped into a fury if proper respect is not paid to their home, but their wrath can be avoided with gifts of food, flowers or coins. They adore lovers, music, dance, and laughter, but once crossed can be vicious enemies. They are often responsible when something is missing, as they look at any human possession as fair game. The more malicious kinds will kill or maim a human, but only if the person stupidly blunders into their territory without heeding their rules or paving the way with a small gift. They can be warded off with iron or steel since they abhor any element of industry or violence. According to some, these little people are actually fallen angels who were saved from Hell by Christ. As the angels fell, Christ lifted his hand to stop the least responsible beings at the earth's surface, thus some vestige of goodness has remained in them.

Fates

These three hags are memorialized in Homer's Odyssey. One spins the yarn of a person's life, one measures its length, and the last snips it off with her sharp shears. The demonologist Alphonsus de Spina believed the fates were not real women but demons.

Ghouls

Also known as ghosts, ghouls tend to haunt graveyard and unearth the freshly buried. In some Middle Eastern cultures, ghouls were thought to devour small children and corpses. These undead creatures also like dark lonely places such as mountain tops and windswept plains. Legend has it that dogs can see ghouls, which is why they occasionally bark at what appears to be nothing to the human eye. If you want to see a ghoul, stand behind a dog and look between its two ears down the middle of its head

Gremlins

Generally good-natured, gremlins usually behave badly when they are pulling a prank. Gremlins are goblins that haunt the air, traumatizing pilots and air travelers by suddenly swooping up from their underground pits around airports and landing strips and grabbing a plane's wing. They are green in color and covered with mossy hair, and they use their webbed feet to suction onto airplanes and other industrial machines. They empty full fuel tanks, disorient the gauges in the cockpit, and cause turbulence. An old wives' tale claims that when you hear thunder, the rumbling comes from the gremlins' favorite pastime, sky bowling. As technology advances, gremlins have found new arenas in which to play their tricks; computers, telephones, and televisions are only a few of the modern machines they now haunt.

Harpies

The harpies are hags from Hell, vicious shrews repulsive to behold. They torment their victim with unearthly screeches and wails, all the while scratching eyes out and tearing flesh with their hideously long fingernails. The Harpies were originally storm goddesses in ancient Greece or, some believe, aspects of the death goddess. Later myths depicted them as "body snatchers". Their number varied, up to eight (or even more). As "snatchers" they were described as monsters with female heads (fair-haired), claws, bear's ears, and vulture-like bodies.

There are almost as many parents listed for each as there are mythographers, so take what is listed here with a grain of salt! The three which are most agreed upon as Harpies are starred * below. The others are also included on many lists:

* Aiello (Means "Howler") Said to be the daughter of Electra and Thaumastus? She is the personification of the whirlwind. One of the two mentioned by Hesiod.

* Celaeno (Means "Screamer") She is the personification of heavily clouded skies. Daughter of Gaia?

Kelaino (Possibly an alternative form of the above.) No other information.

Lelaino No other information.

Nicothoe No other information.

* Ocypete (Means "Swift") Personification of storm winds. Daughter of Gaia? One of the two mentioned by Hesiod.

Podarge (Possibly another form of Celaeno) The only Harpy mentioned by Homer. No other information.

Other sources tell that the Harpies are hags from Hell, vicious shrews repulsive to behold. They torment their victim with unearthly screeches and wails, all the while scratching eyes out and tearing flesh with their hideously long fingernails. Ladies of the night, Harpies may initially take the form of beautiful women to seduce their victims into lustfulness; but inevitably, as passions mount, they will suddenly reveal themselves, more often than not causing the death of their victims. The wailing banshee that visits an Irish family to announce an impending death is a commonly seen Harpie.

Hellhound

The three-headed guard dog of the gates of Hell, the Hellhound is related to the Roman dog Cerberus who stood at the entrance to Hades. The dog's heads are a parody of the Holy Trinity. The Hellhound accompanies the Devil on his night hunts.

Hobgoblins or Goblins

Related to fairies and other little devils, goblins or cobolds, are predominant in England and Ireland. Rarely seen in cities, goblins are sooty-faced, hirsute creatures who loiter around rural villages and farmhouses causing trouble for the folks they live with. Blowing out hearth fires, knotting up ropes, and undoing chores are only a few examples of the pesky tricks these demons play. Their acts are hardly ever fatal, and if they happen to be in the mood, goblins will occasionally complete a task left undone.

Imps or Familiars

Imps take the form of small animals, rodents, insects or frog-like creatures. They are the errand-boys of witches, who send them off to execute a particular spell or charm. Because they are small, they are easily kept in boxes, bottles or pockets. Witches suckle them on a third teat, otherwise known as the Devil's Mark.

Incubi

An Incubus, meaning 'to lie on' is one of a horde of demons who take human shape and descend on sleeping women in the middle of the night, either raping them or inspiring lustful dreams and desires. Nuns and maidens are often the victims of the incubus's visit, and a pregnancy in a convent is usually the result of such a visit. Copulation with an incubus, reports claim, is a decidedly disgusting affair. The entity allegedly sports an immense frozen penis that he uses to tear viciously into the internal organs of his victims. If, as unbelievable as it may seem, a woman

invites an incubus to her bed, all members in the household will fall into a trancelike sleep, even the woman's mortal lover who may be snoring alongside her. In the Middle Ages, any baby born with a mental or physical deformity was considered to be the progeny of this vile union.

Knockers

Knockers are yet another tribe of little people who torment miners working underground in tunnels and caves. If a worker happens to catch sight of a Knocker or approach one, legend has it that he will come down with a painful rheumatism. If left alone, Knockers are generally considered harmless.

Luciferge

These hideous demons roam the earth searching for souls to kidnap and bring down to Hell. Equipped with razor-sharp talons and beaks they use to tear the soul from its body, they are the henchmen that come to collect on a deal made with the Devil. Their counterparts, the Malebranche, torment some of the worst sinners in Hell. These unnatural beasts have snakes coming out of their noses and ears and sport cloven hooves and tails like their beloved leader.

When a doomed individual takes his last breath, the Malebranche leap on his soul with whoops of joy and carry it off to its horrible fate in a cloud of stinking, sulfurous smoke. Mourners present at the moment of death have been known to catch a whiff of the telltale odor of damnation.

Monsters

The following entities, Vampires, Werewolves and Zombies cannot technically be called demonic, as they are not sent by the Devil to tempt and torment the innocent, nor do they play a role in punishing sinners in Hell. However, being a foul and notorious group, they perpetrate violence and evil on the world and call upon dark forces for their powers. For this reason they are included here..

Nightmare or Mares

Waking with shortness of breath or heaviness in the chest is evidence of a visit by a nightmare demon. These heinous creatures attack at night, sitting on a person's chest and breathing putrid breath into their nostrils. Their exhaust causes horrible dreams; and if the person awakes while the demon is still present, he or she will be paralyzed under the weight of the monster.

Poltergeists

Also called 'jumping demons', these creatures reside in people's homes and play irritating tricks at night. They will break dishes, hide belongings, shake the walls, and turn lights and stereos off and on. Poltergeists like to creep up and rip the covers off sleeping victims. They also love to stand at the edge of the bed and tickle the bottoms of feet. Occasionally a poltergeist gets violent, resulting in injury to their victims or, more rarely, death. For the most part, however, poltergeists are harmless, albeit irksome and often terrifying household pests.

Succubi

The female counterpart of the incubus, a succubus (meaning 'to lie under') attacks innocent men in their sleep. The denizens of Lilith, succubi sit astride a man's prone body and have their way with him. Often taking the form of beautiful women, succubi will instantly turn into miserable hags if confronted with their real identities. Monks in monasteries are often visited by these troublesome spirits who inspire dirty dreams and tempt the brethren with their lusty ideas. In the Middle Ages, fearful monks tied crucifixes to their genitals before retiring at night as protection against nocturnal visits by succubi.

Vampires

A ruthless group of undead who surface only at night to suck the blood of the living. Once mortal, these corpses were raised from the dead and granted eternal life by the forces of evil; the catch is they must drink fresh, warm blood in order to survive. Virtually helpless during the day - sunlight is fatal - vampires sleep the sleep of the dead in hidden lairs, either in deep caves or in locked coffins, until sunset. They have the ability to transform themselves into many forms - bats, rats, wolves, shadows, even a sinister, creeping fog. Annals of vampiric legend and lore have been collected throughout the ages, and there have been many eyewitness accounts of their existence. Many rules and advisors have evolved about how to behave when confronted with a vampire - garlic, holy water, and the sight of the cross seem to ward them off - but the only sure way to do away with one of these ghastly beings is to find its lair by day, drive a wooden stake through its heart, and chop off its head. In what could be called vampiric tradition, certain Black Masses reportedly profane the Eucharist by celebrating a ceremony in which worshippers drink human blood from a gold vessel.

Werewolves

Lumped in the same category as vampires due to their ability to change shape, their nighttime proclivity, and their fondness for human flesh, werewolves are half-human, half-wolf creatures that have a penchant for juicy young maidens and farmers' livestock. They are especially powerful during full moons and occasionally stalk their victims in packs. In some traditions, one can become a werewolf by petitioning the Devil. In others, those bitten by a werewolf will metamorphose into one too. Werewolves return to their human form at dawn, so it is impossible for most normal folks to know who is and who isn't...

Zombies

Living corpses who find their origin in West Indian, Caribbean, and Voodoo legend, zombies are used by evildoers as servants. The zombie is actually a poor soul that, having just been buried, is unable to move peacefully into the afterlife because it is called forth by someone on earth. Once it answers, the zombie climbs out of its fleshly dug grave to heed its master's call, obeying whatever commands the master makes. With human nature being what it is, these orders are usually wicked. To ensure that their loved ones get safely into the afterlife, many West Indian cultures bury their dead face down, with their mouths full of dirt and their lips shut.