

“I wanna play, don't you?”

—Stated by a Dolly right before it tried to swipe Straum the Thief's face off with its fingernails.

Summary:

“Here is my account of the Horror creation known as Dolly. Dolly is a vicious little thing. I'll be very happy if I never encounter one again, let alone the twenty in Kaer #837 that ambushed the party I was in, swarmed us, and finally killed three of my friends. I will miss them dearly. Please do what you will with this information. But be careful the next time you travel down the dark tunnels of unexplored kaers or caves: Especially if you hear high pitched giggles off in the distance. The dollies may want to play with you.”

—Borgus Freyjlach, Dwarf Traveled Scholar, Wizard, and Scribe at the Library of Throal.

Dollies, cute and deadly, are Horror constructs: Things that are made by Horrors and used to strike further fear into the populace of Barsaive. Resembling porcelain dolls, they range from one and-a-half to three feet in height. Their flesh is powder white, sometimes pale gray, and there is a hint of rouge on their cheeks. Some look pristine, while others look tattered and worn with cracks in their “skin”, rumpled and burnt clothes, disheveled hair, and missing or broken appendages. Most of the time, their clothes look new, but there are still imperfections on the body. When a Dolly is hurt, black ichor oozes out of the wound; when one is destroyed, it crumbles into an ashen powder. The only remnants are strips of cloths and strands of their fibrous hair.

The Dollies origins are unknown. However, some theories suggest that the souls of children, who lived in the defiled kaers where Dollies roam, are trapped within their cute and sinister frames. Survivors of attacks have said they heard a distinct sigh, or wheezing noise escaping the Dolly's body when it was destroyed.

Neither dead nor living, Dollies possess intellect. Calculating, they use simple tactics when attacking unwary kaer goers. Not conversationalists, Dollies say the same things over and over, such as: The cute but deceptive, “Wanna play?” and “No fair, you cheated!” The latter phrase is employed when the Dolly receives a sound hit.

Dollies are diminutive in size and physically weak. What they lack in strength and bulk, they make up for in speed and numbers. Dollies usually attack in groups of fifteen to twenty, and have two known attacks: A bite and a nailswipe. When using the nailswipe, their tiny fingernails extend into two-inch claws. Also, their nails ooze a black substance like tree sap. The

goo acts as a mild poison that causes acute nausea, shivers, muscle cramps, and abdominal pain. While the pain goes away quickly, the other effects linger for hours and sometimes up to a couple of days.

Finally, the Dollies seem to have some form of social structure. While all of the dollies that attacked us were female in form and dress, there was one who was distinctly male. The male seemed to use the others as fodder, and it would only attack as a last resort. The Dolly Master, as I have dubbed it, is tougher than the other Dollies. It has the ability to cast spells, although the effects wear off quickly. He can cast some form of fear-inducing spell as well as a hypnotic one. One of my companions, a Windling Illusionist, succumbed to the Dolly Master's charm spell, and turned on us. While he managed to fling an Ephemeral Bolt at Destard, another companion, he did not seriously hurt him. When the charm spell wore off, the Windling swore up and down that he could not remember any time spent under the Dolly Master's control.

Killing the Dolly Master while the other Dollies are wreaking havoc does not stop their tirade. However, the remaining constructs do seem a bit out of sorts. They become erratic and unorganized. That is all the information I have on these little terrors. There were no other horrors or constructs in the Kaer where we encountered the Dollies. The Horror who made them must have left the caverns of the dead place long ago, forgetting its creations.

Rules:

Dollies are horror constructs. They attack in groups, ranging from about 15 to 25. With these numbers they can easily overwhelm a party. I suggest having Dollies attack in waves of five, either every round, or every other round. This way a party has a chance of successfully repelling the attack. However, whether or not the Dollies will overwhelm the players depends on the size of the party, and what circles the players are.

The adventure I ran consisted of six people: Three were NPC's (they were mundane), and the players were either 1st or 2nd circle adepts. They encountered twenty Dollies and one master. No one died, but many were severely wounded. Again, determine the strength of your players before putting them in a situation where 25 of the little nasties are gunning for them.

The Dolly Master will not attack unless directly threatened. Instead, he will remain in the background charming and fearing group members. Also, Dollies will not flee if the battle is going against them; they continue to fight until destroyed. However, the Dolly Master will retreat if he sees his little dollies being obliterated.

