

# RĀ'S AL GHŪL

FIRST APPEARANCE *BATMAN* #232 (June 1971)

STATUS Villain (deceased) REAL NAME Unknown

OCCUPATION International terrorist BASE Mobile HEIGHT 6ft 5in

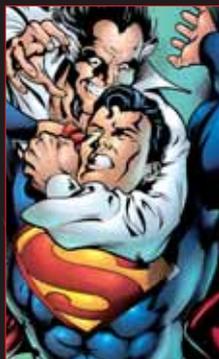
WEIGHT 215 lbs EYES Blue HAIR Gray with white streaks

SPECIAL POWERS/ABILITIES A master swordsman and ruthless hand-to-hand combatant, Rā's al Ghūl has lived for many centuries, amassing great wealth and power, as well as a treasure trove of knowledge, during his near-eternal existence.

**LAZARUS PITS**  
*Like a macabre fountain of youth, these fiery pits sustained Rā's al Ghūl's incredible vim and vigor.*



**MASTER SCHEMER** *Not content with making Batman's life miserable, the Demon's Head has involved other super heroes, including the Man of Steel, in his "world-saving" plots.*



#### KEY STORYLINES

- *BATMAN* #232 (JUNE 1971): Rā's al Ghūl makes his first appearance, kidnapping the Boy Wonder to force Batman to do his bidding!
- *DETECTIVE COMICS* #700 (AUGUST 1996) As the multipart "Legacy" storyline begins, Rā's al Ghūl uses the ancient Wheel of Plagues, responsible for Gotham City's Clench outbreak, to unleash an even worse contagion!
- *BATMAN: DEATH AND THE MAIDENS* #1-9 (OCTOBER 2003–JUNE 2004) Nyssa, daughter of Rā's al Ghūl, plots her father's demise in order to take over his worldwide criminal empire! Is this the end for the Demon's Head, or the beginning of another villainous dynasty?

**ALTHOUGH NOT TRULY IMMORTAL**, the international terrorist Rā's al Ghūl was one of the most long-lived men on the planet. In Arabic, his name translates as "The Demon's Head," a fitting sobriquet for someone so sinister. Rā's al Ghūl's primary purpose during his extended life was to restore the Earth's ecological balance. Unfortunately, this seemingly altruistic goal led to him committing global genocide to reduce mankind's polluting numbers.

#### KYLE RAYNER

For centuries, Rā's al Ghūl maintained his existence by periodically immersing himself in "Lazarus Pits," pools filled with an alchemical mix of acids and poisons excavated above the electromagnetic ley lines crisscrossing the Earth. Following his emergence from the liquid in the Lazarus Pits Rā's al Ghūl would, for a short time, be consumed with insane fury. For this reason, Rā's demanded solitude when rejuvenating himself.

Rā's al Ghūl's schemes to restore Earth to an Eden-like splendor have been thwarted time and again by *BATMAN*. The Dark Knight first met the enigmatic eco-terrorist when Rā's al Ghūl, desiring an heir for his crime empire, kidnapped *ROBIN* in an attempt to coerce the Dark Knight into marrying his daughter, *TALIA*.

Naturally, *Batman* refused, and although he had deep feelings for the beautiful *Talia*, he continued to oppose Rā's al Ghūl schemes.

Rā's al Ghūl's most ambitious attacks upon humanity occurred with his creation of the Ebola Gulf-A plague that decimated the population of Gotham City. This plague, dubbed the "Clench" due to its victims' writhing ends, was halted by the Dark Knight and his squires, who later learned that Rā's al Ghūl had deciphered the virus's genetic code from an ancient "Wheel of Plagues." With it, Rā's al Ghūl would have unleashed even more virulent contagions if not for the intervention of the Bat-Family.

Rā's al Ghūl continued to seek a suitable heir, even considering the musclebound terrorist *BANE*, before *Talia* spurned this potential suitor. The dejected *Bane* then set about sabotaging Rā's al Ghūl's Lazarus Pits to get revenge.

**SWORDPLAY** *A renowned swordsman with centuries of fighting experience, Rā's has challenged Batman to duels on many occasions in order to put the Dark Knight's mettle to the test.*



**BODYGUARD** *Ubu shadows every move Rā's makes. Ubus are chosen in mortal combat matches and will give their lives to protect the Demon's Head.*



**DAUGHTER DEAREST** *Nyssa succeeded where others could not, ending the long life of the Demon's Head!*

Meanwhile, Rā's al Ghūl created worldwide anarchy with his electronic "Tower of Babel," which rendered all languages unintelligible until the *JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA* destroyed it. *Talia* left her father's side soon after, hired by *Lex Luthor* (see *LUTHOR*, *LEX*) to run his company *LexCorp*.

It then transpired that Rā's had fathered another daughter, *Nyssa*. Unlike her sister *Talia*, *Nyssa* hated her father, and tried to brainwash *Talia* into killing him. What no one realized was that Rā's was grooming *Nyssa* to inherit his empire and had engineered events to force *Nyssa* to kill him! With Rā's now dead, his daughters departed to make mayhem and shake the world from its apathy, their way of furthering their father's legacy. *Nyssa* retains control over one final life-renewing Lazarus Pit, located somewhere in the Balkans. *SB*

