



GHOST TOWER OF THE WITCHLIGHT FENS

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You set out to recover the stolen case. You tracked the goblins to their lair and found the courage to face them in battle. Whether you were victorious or found defeat, you knew that if you pressed on alone, you wouldn't return with the prize you were sent to recover. So you withdrew and walked the long road back to civilization. During that trek, you determined to find stalwart adventurers who would lend cold steel and deadly spells to your cause. Surely in Fallcrest you'd find the allies you need. But then, you never know what you'll come across on the road home.

HEROIC

1-10

“Ghost Tower of the Witchlight Fens” is an adventure for one 1st-level character. This adventure picks up the story that began in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game* (the Red Box) and tells the story of your character’s return to civilization’s doorstep and the detour you take along the way.

USING THIS ADVENTURE

One great thing about the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* game is that there is always room for more stories. Using the *Player’s Book* in the Red Box, you’ve probably already created a character, and now you’re itching for more adventure. You might not yet have an interest in Dungeon Mastering (and that’s fine), but you haven’t yet found a group of players or a DM with a game you can join. Or, maybe you’d like to be a DM but haven’t yet assembled a group of players. Finally, maybe you have found a group and you’re ready to venture into the “Twisting Halls,” but you’re hungry for more and don’t want to wait until the next game session to keep playing. Whatever your story might be, this adventure is for you.

GETTING STARTED

“Ghost Tower of the Witchlight Fens” picks up mere hours after your first expedition. You are just bedding down for a rest before continuing on your way to Fallcrest, where you hope to recruit other adventurers who can help you recover the stolen case. If you haven’t used the *Player’s Book* to create your character, you should do that before getting started here. Whether you’re brand new or you’ve been a *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* player for years, once you have a 1st-level character, you’re ready to start this adventure.

PLAYING THE ADVENTURE

“Ghost Tower” follows a structure similar to the adventure in the *Player’s Book*. Start with entry 1. Read the italicized text and any instructions that follow. Choose the option that matches what your character would do, and then turn to the numbered entry as directed.

As you proceed through the adventure, you’ll find several opportunities to test your mettle against monsters. Certain entries will instruct you to turn to a Tactical Encounter. Each encounter presents instructions for the monsters so that you’ll know what they do on their turns.

Also, you’ll notice that each encounter includes a small map. These ‘tactical maps’ are from the map included in the Red Box. Use the shown map section for the combat.

After each encounter, you have a chance to take a short rest. Remember that during a short rest, you can spend as many healing surges as you like. Also, you regain any encounter powers you used. There won’t be time during this adventure to take an extended rest.

ENCOUNTER FORMAT

Each encounter follows the same format.

Setup tells you what’s in the encounter and how to start it. It lays out the starting positions for the creatures and the situation you need to overcome.

Monster Statistics Blocks are the character sheets for the monsters that appear in the encounter. Refer to them when the monsters take their turns.

Tactics explains what the monsters want to accomplish and how they fight.

Features of the Area describes special terrain and important or unusual items in the encounter. These might be patches of rough ground that slow

down movement or walls that can be climbed, for example. The lighting in the area usually is defined here, too.

Conclusion tells you what happens after the combat ends.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTERS

During the fight, you move and act for your character normally. You also move the monsters and carry out their actions. To help manage the combat encounters, follow these guidelines.

Setup: Before the encounter begins, find the featured map section. Select a token for each monster. If you don’t have tokens for those exact monsters, that’s OK. Just substitute any similar token, noting which ones refer to which creatures. Then follow any other setup instructions.

Initiative: Once you’ve set up the encounter, make initiative checks for your hero and for each monster. Record the results on scratch paper. Creatures act from highest initiative result to lowest.

Actions per Turn: All creatures get to use a standard action, a move action, and a minor action on their turns. These actions can happen in any order, but each one must be finished before starting the next one. (You can’t attack in the middle of moving, for example, because attacking is a standard action and moving is a move action. You need to finish the movement before doing anything else). Monsters tend to focus all their actions on offense. They use their standard actions to attack and their move actions to get into better positions to attack. A monster that has a melee attack will move next to you, but a creature with a ranged attack will try to keep some distance away so it can use its ranged attack safely.

Opportunity Attacks: Monsters avoid opportunity attacks when possible. This means that if a monster is adjacent to you and wants to make a ranged attack, it will first shift 1 square away and then attack. You should follow the same advice and avoid doing things that let monsters have opportunity attacks against you!

Tactics: When you face multiple enemies who can make melee attacks, they will move or shift so they can flank you.

Check the Rules: If you're not sure how something works, just look it up. The adventure will help you find any information you need.

PART 1: A CRY FOR HELP

1

You were sure you knew the way back to town—just follow the tracks to the crossroads, and then it's only a short trek to Fallcrest. Rain ruined that plan. A sudden cloudburst washed away the tracks, and at some point you got turned around. It will be best to make a fresh start in the morning, so you found a dry place to camp, made a meal of the trail rations in your pack, and drifted off to sleep.

"Bandit scum! You'll not take me alive!"

Those shouted words rouse you at once. It's dark. The campfire has died down to glowing coals, so you've been asleep for hours, but the night is still dark. Did you dream that voice or was it real?

If the sound was real, someone may be in trouble. If you help, that person might help you find your way back to Fallcrest or even offer you a reward for your aid. Then again, it might have been your imagination.

Do you shrug off the noise as a dream and go back to sleep? Go to 2.

Do you want to listen or look around? Go to 3.

Do you leap to your feet and rush toward where you think you heard the sound? Go to 6.

2

It was probably your imagination. You roll over and go back to sleep. Your eyes are just drifting shut when you hear a scream. You know it's not your imagination now! Someone is in trouble.

Do you pause to see if you hear or spot anything else? Go to 3.

Do you leap to your feet and rush toward where you think you heard the sound? Go to 6.

Do you wait for the sounds to die down? Go to 7.

3

Unsure of what you heard, you focus on your surroundings before proceeding.

Make a Perception check to see whether you hear or see anything else.

Did you get a total of 12 or better? Go to 5.

Did you get a total of less than 12? Go to 4.

4

You don't hear or see anything.

Do you check it out anyway? Go to 6.

Do you wait it out? Go to 7.

5

You hear sounds of fighting coming through the trees and you catch glimpses of a slim figure battling several smaller ones.

Do you move to investigate? Go to 6

Do you wait it out? Go to 7.

6

You race through the trees. The branches whip at your face and arms. Sounds of fighting grow louder. You burst from the forest and into a clearing where you see an elf warrior squared off against several small, reptilian humanoids.

The humanoids are kobolds—despicable scavengers little better than vermin. The elf has been holding her own so far, but there are still five of them and only one of her. She needs your help.

Go to **Tactical Encounter 1: Kobold Bandits** on page 15.

7

The battle is over. You arrived too late. Along with several kobold corpses, you find the body of a slim elf. A longsword and a short sword lie on the trampled grass. As you take in the scene, you notice a scroll tucked into the elf warrior's belt.

Upon examining the scroll, you see that it is a map. You recognize enough features to be pretty sure that the map portrays a nearby region called the Witchlight Fens. It shows a tower at the swamp's edge, but you've never heard of a tower in that area. Notes scribbled in the margin identify it as one of three legendary "ghost towers" and indicate that the elf was headed there to retrieve something valuable.

You were too late to help the elf, but perhaps you can avenge her death by completing her task.

Do you search out the location shown on the map? Go to 12. (Ignore any references to Sareth or “the elf” from this point on.)

Do you head back to your camp? Go to 91.

8

The elf cleans her blades with a soft cloth. When she finishes, she says, “Thank you for your assistance. I don’t think I could have beaten all of them alone. You fought well. My name is Sareth.”

She inspects you for a moment, then says, “You’re lost, aren’t you.” She does not wait for your answer. “Perhaps I can repay my debt and put you on the right path? I have an important mission before me, and I find myself unequal to the task.”

Do you prompt her for more information? Go to 9.

Do you accept her offer to help you find your way? Go to 10.

Do you return to your encampment? Go to 11.

9

“You do not lack for courage,” she smiles. “I go to claim my birthright, a sword once used by my mother until it was stolen from her by a wicked blackguard. My mother searched the land to recover our ancestral blade, but to no avail. Her dying wish was for me to reclaim what is rightfully mine.

“I have searched these lands, following many rumors about the thief’s fate. Eventually I learned that he died many years ago and was interred in a secret tower on the edge of the Witchlight Fens. This tower is rumored to be one of three legendary “ghost towers.” I intend to go there, break in, and take back my mother’s blade. It’s no easy task, and I understand if you refuse.”

She pauses before adding, “Ahh ... you probably have a mission of your own. Once I complete my quest, I would gladly help you complete yours.”

You were headed back to Fallcrest to recruit adventurers who could help you, and the elf is offering to help. You’ve seen her fight well; she could be a useful companion.

Do you turn down her offer? Go to 91.

Do you accept her offer? Take on the quest to recover Sareth’s sword and go to 12.

QUEST: RECOVER SARETH’S SWORD

You complete this quest when you recover Sareth’s weapon from the Ghost Tower.

10

“The least I can do is put you on the right path.” She gives the battlefield one last look before saying, “follow me,” and leading the way back into the woods. After a few minutes, she turns and asks, “Are you sure I can’t persuade you to help me with my mission?”

Do you hear her out? Go to 9.

Do you refuse? She shows you a footpath that she promises will connect to a major road. “From there, walk west and you will be in Fallcrest in no time. Safe journey!” Go to 91.

11

You bid the elf farewell and turn back to your encampment. Before you can take five steps, she calls out, “Wait, please. I need your help. Just hear me out.”

Do you listen to her tale? Go to 9.

Do you refuse? She lets you leave and troubles you no more. Go to 91.

PART 2: THE GHOST TOWER

12

You travel deeper into the wilderness, where the trees and underbrush are more tangled. The soggy ground sucks at your boots and slows your approach. Gnats swarm around you, biting at your exposed skin. Just when the situation could not become much worse, with the afternoon sun slipping away, you see a gleaming white tower through the foliage. Its walls glow in the diminishing half-light.

The tower is in ruins. It clearly stood taller once and was part of a larger group of buildings, but time and the elements have toppled the tower’s upper floors and reduced the other structures to rubble. A sinister atmosphere hangs in the air.

Sareth pushes forward a bit further until she comes to a stop about 40 feet from a heavy, wooden door barring the entrance. She pauses and looks to you for the next step.

Do you want to wrack your memory for any details about the tower? Go to 13.

Do you want to look around for hidden dangers or entrances? Go to 14.

Do you want to sneak up to the door? Go to 15.

Do you walk up to the door? Go to 21.

13

You think back, trying to remember anything that might involve a tower on the Witchlight Fens.

Make a History check to see whether you recall any information about the place.

Did you get a total of 19 or better? Go to 16.

Did you get a total of less than 19? Go to 19.

14

You look around from your vantage to spot any hidden dangers or secret entrances.

Make a Perception check to see whether you notice anything.

Did you get a total of 19 or better? Go to 17.

Did you get a total of less than 19? Go to 20.

15

You creep toward the door, moving as quietly as you can.

Make a Stealth check to move quietly.

Did you get a total of 12 or better? Go to 18.

Did you get a total of less than 12? Go to 21.

16

It all comes back in a rush. You remember hearing a story years ago about a wicked, dark paladin named Parald who made a name for himself by hunting and killing elves. A cavalier named Richard chased him down and defeated him in single combat. It's said the body was stolen before it could be burned.

Go to 12 and choose another option.

17

You don't see any hidden entrances, but you do spot a corpse lying on the ground. Green bones are heaped in piles nearby.

Make a Religion check to see whether you detect anything strange about the corpse or bones.

Did you get a total of 8 or better? Go to 22.

Did you get a total of less than 8? Go to 21.

18

You reach the door. All is quiet.

Do you inspect the door? Go to 23.

Do you try to push it open? Go to 25.

Do you try to pick the lock? Go to 24.

19

Nothing comes to mind about the tower or its supposed inhabitant.

Go back to 12 and choose another option.

20

You don't see anything unusual.

Go back to 12 and choose another option.

21

The door looms before you, but you detect movement from the corner of your eye.

You've attracted the attention of horrid, undead monsters. Go to **Tactical Encounter 2: Undead Rise** on page 18.

22

You are certain neither the corpse nor the bones are what they seem. A slight twitch is all it takes to reveal the cadaver is a zombie and the bones are undead skeletons—and they're rising to attack!

Go to **Tactical Encounter 2: Undead Rise** on page 18.

23

The old wooden door stands closed. You inspect it for traps and locks.

The door is locked but not trapped. Go back to 18.

24

You try to pick the lock.

Make a Thievery check to see whether you can bypass the lock.

Did you get a total of 12 or better? Go to 27.

Did you get a total of less than 12? Go to 21.

25

You try to smash down the door.

If you haven't triggered **Tactical Encounter 2** yet, go immediately to 21.

Otherwise, **make a Strength check** to smash down the door. If Sareth is with you, add a +2 bonus to your check.

Did you get a total of 12 or better? Go to 27.

Did you get a total of 12 or less? The door doesn't budge. Go back to 18.

26

You fit the key into the keyhole and turn it. The door opens.

Go to 27.

PART 3: INSIDE THE GHOST TOWER

27

Stepping through the door puts you in a small chamber about 30 feet wide and 30 feet deep with stone doors set in the center of each wall. Each door was constructed to resemble a leering idiot's face. The toothy grin and crazed eyes offer an unsettling welcome.

The darkness makes the details hard to see.

To progress further, you need to come up with a light source. If you have an adventurer's kit, it should contain two sunrods. A sunrod illuminates all squares within 20 of you and shines for four hours, which is more than enough time to explore this dungeon. If you don't have a sunrod and Sareth is with you, she pulls out a sunrod of her own.

As you move into the room, a hissing sound from the chamber's center is accompanied by a rush of black smoke. A second later, the smoke clears to reveal a hulking warrior clad in full plate armor and wielding a longsword. Something is not quite right about the warrior; you can see through it!

The warrior thunders, "So you've come to plunder my vaults? You will find only death!" Mad cackling bounces around the room as he fades from view.

If Sareth is with you, she moves to inspect the doors. Otherwise, you may do so. They are unlocked and untrapped.

Do you go through the east door? Go to 29.

Do you go through the north door? Go to 44.

Do you go through the west door? Go to 69.

28

You return to the antechamber where the strange faces staring out from the doors greet you once more.

Do you go through the east door? Go to 29.

Do you go through the north door? Go to 44.

Do you go through the west door? Go to 69.

29

You push the western door open and your light shines inside, revealing a narrow hallway that turns sharply to the right just a short distance ahead.

Do you move forward? Go to 30.

Do you go back and try another door? Go back to 28.

30

You cross the short hall quickly and peer around the corner into a larger, wider hall extending to the north. You stand at one end and in the distance, maybe 50 or so feet away at the other end of the hallway, you see another door. Grim statues line the walls to either side. Each is sculpted to appear as a devilish fiend with its fanged mouth wide open in a soundless scream.

Do you inspect the floor? Go to 31.

Do you examine a statue? Go to 32.

Do you walk up the hallway toward the far door? Go to 42.

Do you head back to the antechamber? Go to 93.

31

You examine the floor.

Make a Perception check to search the floor.

Did you get a total of 12 or better? Go to 36.

Did you get a total of less than 12? Go to 33.

32

The demonic statue is one of six along each wall. Their yawning mouths are opened as if screaming. It's cut from black stone and has an unsettling, lifelike quality.

Make a Perception check to examine the statue.

Did you get a total of 19 or better? Go to 37.

Did you get a total of less than 19? Go to 34.

33

The old stone tiles are dusty and dirty. Nothing about them seems out of the ordinary.

Go to 30 and choose another option.

34

The statue is both creepy and expertly made. Aside from that, nothing about it seems out of the ordinary.

Go to 30 and choose another option.

35

The trap resists your effort at dismantling it.

You failed the check but you didn't spring the trap. Go to 30.

36

The old, stone tiles are dusty and dirty. They seem harmless enough ... but the dark gaps between them are odd. It is as though the tiles were not mortared into place and might move if stepped on.

You're pretty sure the tiles are trapped.

Do you want to disable the trap? Go to 40.

Do you want to cross the room by leaping over the trapped tiles? Go to 41.

Otherwise, go to 30 and choose a different option.

37

The statue's grim character and exquisite craftsmanship nearly made you overlook the dart cleverly hidden inside the statue's mouth. Sticky paste covers the dart's needlelike tip.

You're pretty sure this room is a trap.

Do you want to disable the trap? Go to 40.

Otherwise, go to 30 and choose a different option.

38

A satisfying click rewards your effort. You think you've dismantled the trap.

Go to 43.

39

Your hand slips and pushes on a hidden panel.

Go to 42.

40

You creep forward, moving carefully so as not to spring the trap. When you draw near enough, you get to work on dismantling the device.

Make a Thievery check to disable the trap.

Did you get a total of 19 or better? Go to 38.

Did you get a total of less than 19 but at least 15? Go to 35.

Did you get a total of less than 14? Go to 39.

41

You head across the room, keeping your eyes fixed on the suspicious tiles. When you draw near, you jump, aiming to leap across them.

Make an Athletics check to leap across the trapped tiles.

Did you get a total of 20 or higher? Go to 43.

Did you get a total of 19 or less? Go to 42.

42

You triggered a trap! The statues swivel quickly on their bases until they face you. Tiny darts shoot from their mouths.

Make the following attack against yourself and Sareth if she's present.

Poison Dart (poison) ♦ Encounter

Trigger: A creature triggers the trap in the room.

Attack (Free Action): Close blast (all creatures in hallway);

+4 vs. Reflex

Hit: 10 poison damage.

Did you drop to 0 or fewer hit points? Go to 92.

Otherwise, you've survived the trap; go to 43.

43

You cross the hallway and reach the door at the far end. A cursory look reveals the door is unlocked.

Do you go through the door? Go to 94.

Do you go back to the first room and try another door? Go back to 93.

44

You push open the northern door and it swings out onto a cavernous chamber. There is no floor, just a yawning pit that drops about 30 feet to a bed of stakes bristling above queer mist that clings to the bottom. Spanning the 30-foot-wide pit is a narrow stone walkway that's about 5 inches wide. It ends at a ledge where you see another door.

There are a few routes across this room, though none look safe or easy.

Do you crawl across the walkway? Go to 45.

Do you walk across the walkway? Go to 46.

Do you climb down to the pit bottom? Go to 47.

Do you go back and try another door? Go to 28.

45

You drop to the ground and inch across the walkway, moving 10 feet at a time. You cross 20 feet, then 30 feet, but suddenly you feel light-headed.

Go to 48.

46

You step out onto the walkway, being careful to maintain your balance.

Go to 49.

47

Rather than test your balance with the walkway, you opt to crawl down the wall and cross the pit's bottom.

Go to 50.

48

Your head spins, and you feel the walkway lurch beneath you.

You identify a curious odor—a sour stink that wafts up from below.

Do you want to identify the odor? Go to 51.

Do you want to keep crawling forward? Go to 57.

Do you want to head back? Go to 28.

49

The walkway is narrow, and it requires intense concentration to maintain your balance.

You can balance as you make your way across the walkway.

Make an Acrobatics check to maintain your balance as you move across the walkway.

Did you get a total of 12 or higher? Go to 55.

Did you get a total of 11 or less but more than 6? Go to 52.

Did you get a total of 6 or less? Go to 64.

50

You drop over the ledge and start climbing down.

Make an Athletics check to climb down the wall.

Did you get a total of 12 or higher? Go to 56.

Did you get a total of 11 or less but more than 6? Go to 53.

Did you get a total of 6 or less? Go to 64.

51

You focus on the smell to see whether you can identify the odor.

Make a **Dungeoneering check** to identify the odor.

Did you get a total of 12 or higher? Go to 59.

Did you get a total of 11 or less? Go to 54.

52

You make no forward progress.

If you came here from 49, go back to 49.

If you came here from 55, go back to 55.

53

You make no progress.

If you came here from 50, go back to 50.

If you came here from 58, go back to 58.

54

You don't recognize the smell.

Do you want to keep moving forward? Go to 57 if you're on the ledge or 61 if on the pit's floor.

Do you want to turn back? Go to 28.

55

You get halfway across the room. You must maintain your balance if you would reach the other side.

Make an Acrobatics check to maintain your balance as you cross the rest of the walkway.

Did you get a total of 12 or higher? Go to 68.

Did you get a total of 11 or less but more than 6? Go to 52.

Did you get a total of 6 or less? Go to 64.

56

You reach the pit's muddy bottom. Swirling mist rises from the floor, shrouding the stakes hammered into the earth. There's a strange odor here, a sour stink that makes you dizzy.

Do you want to try to identify the odor? Go to 51.

Do you want to cross the pit floor? Go to 61.

57

You push on, creeping across the narrow walkway. Nausea overtakes you for a moment and threatens to topple you from the walkway.

Make an Endurance check to resist the nausea.

Did you get a total of 12 or higher? Go to 68.

Did you get a total of 11 or less? Go to 62.

58

You reach the far wall at the pit's bottom. The door is still above you; you need to climb up to it.

Make an Athletics check to climb the wall.

Did you get a total of 12 or higher? Go to 68.

Did you get a total of 11 or less but more than 6? Go to 53.

Did you get a total of 6 or less? Go to 65.

59

You identify the vapors as being a pocket of fouled, poisonous air common to deep caves.

Are you are on the ledge? Go to 60.

Are you are on the pit floor? Go to 67.

60

If you hold your breath, you should be able to avoid the worst of the vapor.

Make an Endurance check to resist the nausea.

Did you get a total of 8 or higher? Go to 68.

Did you get a total of 7 or less? Go to 62.

61

You move across the pit's floor, being careful to avoid the stakes. By the time you get halfway to the other side, however, you feel sick. Your head spins and your stomach lurches.

The mists are poisonous, and they attack you (and Sareth if she's present).

Poison Gas (poison) ♦ Encounter

Trigger: A creature crosses the pit's bottom.

Attack (Free Action): Area burst (all creatures at bottom of pit); +4 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 10 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

Miss: 5 poison damage.

If the gas hits, make saving throws until the ongoing poison damage ends.

Do you have at least 1 hit point? Go to 58.

Did you drop to 0 hit points or fewer? Go to 92.

62

Another wave of nausea hits you, and you feel yourself slipping into unconsciousness.

Make a saving throw to catch yourself.

Did you get a 10 or higher? Go to 63.

Did you get a 9 or less? Go to 64.

63

You catch yourself and cling to the walkway. After a few moments, your head clears enough for you to cross the rest of the distance without trouble.

Go to 68.

64

You slip from the ledge and fall into the pit.

You take 3d10 damage from falling into the stakes plus 1d8 poison damage from the poison on the stakes.

Do you have at least 1 hit point? Go to 66.

Did you drop below 0 hit points? Go to 92.

65

You get about 10 feet up the wall when your hands slip.

You fall and take 1d10 damage. Go to 58.

66

You pull yourself free of the stakes and regain your feet.

Do you want to move forward across the pit's bottom? Go to 61.

Do you want to climb back up to the ledge where you came in? Go to 44 and choose another option.

67

If you hold your breath, you should be able to avoid the worst of the vapor.

You gain a +2 bonus to Fortitude and saving throws against poison attacks or effects until you exit this room. Go to 61.

68

You reach the far ledge and find a closed door waiting for you.

Do you open the door? Go to 94.

Do you go back to try another route? Go to 93.

69

Beyond the eastern door, a spiral staircase burrows deep into the earth.

Do you search the steps? Go to 72.

Do you descend the stairs? Go to 70.

Do you go back and find another route? Go to 28.

70

You head down the stairs, following the steps as they wind down and down. After a few minutes, you feel as though you have made little progress.

Do you want to search the steps? Go to 72.

Are you trained in Arcana? Go to 79.

Do you continue down the stairs? Go to 83.

Do you turn back and look for another route? Go to 93.

71

You stand in the staircase, with steps extending both upward and downward.

Do you want to continue down the stairs? Go to 83.

If you haven't searched yet, do you want to? Go to 72.

If you haven't used Dungeoneering yet, do you want to? Go to 85.

If you haven't used Arcana yet, do you want to? Go to 79.

Do you go back and look for another route? Go to 93.

72

You descend the stairs a short way while searching the walls and steps for traps and secret doors.

Make a Perception check to search for secret doors or traps.

Did you get a total of 24 or higher? Go to 80.

Did you get a total of 19 or higher? Go to 78.

Did you get a total of 18 or less? Go to 73.

73

A thorough search reveals nothing but cold stone walls and identical steps heading up and down.

Go to 71.

74

If there is magic here, it is well hidden. You detect nothing with your magical senses.

Go to 71.

75

You can't tell whether you're making progress or not.

Go to 71.

76

Your magical senses reveal nothing.

Go to 71.

76

You fail to disable the glyph.

Do you want to try again? Go to 88.

Otherwise, go to 71.

77

The glyph proves resilient to your magical manipulations.

Do you want to try Thievery? Go to 88.

Otherwise, go to 71.

78

The stairs and walls seem normal, but out of the corner of your eye you see something waver.

You are sure there's a trap here of some kind and that it is probably magical in nature.

Are you trained in Arcana? Go to 79.

Otherwise, go to 71.

79

You cast out your magical senses to detect the presence of magic and identify its effects—if indeed there is magic here.

Make an Arcana check to detect and identify magic.

Did you get a total of 19 or higher? Go to 86.

Did you get a total of 18 or less? Go to 74.

80

You run your hand across the wall and feel something unusual. When you put pressure on that spot, you hear a click. The panel swings open to reveal a silvery glyph.

The glyph may offer a way beyond the endless staircase.

If you are trained in Arcana and want to identify the glyph's function, go to 87.

If you would rather try to disable the glyph, go to 88.

Otherwise, go to 71.

81

You are sure you have made no progress at all.

You gain a +2 bonus to Perception checks while you remain on the stairs. Go to 71.

82

Inspecting the glyph with your magical senses reveals that it powers the illusion which masks this place.

You can use Arcana to unravel the glyph's magic. Go to 89.

Or, you can use Thievery to disable the glyph. Go to 88.

Otherwise, go to 71.

83

You follow the stairs as they descend deeper and deeper. You feel a pressure behind your eyes and the hairs on your body stand on end.

You triggered a magical trap!

Psychic Staircase
(psychic, teleportation)

Encounter

Trigger: A creature descends the staircase.

Attack (Free Action): Area burst (all creatures in stairwell); +4 vs. Will

Hit: 10 psychic damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).

Miss: 5 psychic damage.

If the trap hits, make saving throws until the effect ends.

Do you have at least 1 hit point? Go to 90.

Did you drop to 0 hit points or fewer? Go to 92.

84

Energy pulses out from the glyph and goes to ground through your hand.

You take 10 psychic damage.

Did you drop to 0 hit points or fewer? Go to 92.

Do you want to try Thievery (again)? Go to 88.

Otherwise, go to 71 and choose another option.

85

You try to gauge whether you're making any progress, relying on your experience with underground exploration to guide you.

Make a Dungeoneering check to ascertain whether you've actually made any progress.

Did you get a 19 or better? Go to 81.

Did you get an 18 or less? Go to 75.

86

An illusion confuses your senses, masking the true appearance of this staircase.

You gain a +5 bonus to Perception checks made on the staircase. Go to 71.

87

You examine the glyph with your magical senses.

Make an Arcana check to identify the glyph.

Did you get a 19 or better? Go to 82.

Did you get an 18 or less? Go to 76.

88

You try to sabotage the glyph to interfere with its functions.

Make a Thievery check to disable the glyph.

Did you get a 19 or better? Go to 90.

Did you get an 18 or less but more than 13? Go to 76.

Did you get a 13 or less? Go to 84.

89

You manipulate the glyph's magic to unravel the illusion.

Make an Arcana check to disable the glyph.

Did you get a 19 or better? Go to 90.

Did you get an 18 or less but more than 13? Go to 77.

Did you get a 13 or less? Go to 84.

90

A ghostly door materializes on the staircase. A moment later it turns solid, as real as the walls and steps themselves.

Do you go through the door? Go to 94.

Do you go back to try another route? Go to 93.

91

You can't help but feel you have missed out on an opportunity.

At your next opportunity, you push on to Fallcrest and the adventure ends. If you'd like to keep playing, go back to the last entry and make a different choice.

92

Darkness closes over you and you know nothing more.

Alas, you have perished! That ends this adventure. If you'd like to try again, go back to 1 and see if fate treats you kinder this time. Perhaps you'll fare better with a different type of character, or by making bolder (or more cautious!) choices.

93

You give up on this path for now and head back to the antechamber. You move through the areas you have traveled through until you come to the door leading into the antechamber.

Go to 28.

94

You have breached the tower's defenses and arrived at its inner sanctum.

Somewhere ahead is the blackguard's tomb and the treasure you seek.

Go to **Encounter 3: Hall of the Blackguard** on page 20.

95

You ventured into the Ghost Tower, overcame its guardians and traps, and wrested the treasure from the villain. You're a hero! Congratulations on a job well done!

If Sareth survived and is with you, she guides you back to Fallcrest as promised. There you and she can find more adventurers to help recover the stolen case from the goblins. Even if Sareth didn't survive or stay with you, you eventually make it back to Fallcrest, where you find help to complete your mission.

If someone already plans to be the Dungeon Master, you can help out by recruiting more players. You can also help new players and the DM by answering questions your fellow players might have.

If you plan to be the Dungeon Master, it's time to gather your players. As encouraged in the Red Box, the adventuring group should venture into the Twisting Halls (found in the *Dungeon Master's Book*) once they create their characters using the *Player's Book*. When you've completed that adventure, be sure to check out "Dungeon of the Ghost Tower," available from *D&D Insider*. It carries the story forward to explore what lies at the bottom of the spiraling stairs and reveals many secrets about the mysterious case and Traevus's interest in it.

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer who has contributed design to or developed almost two hundred roleplaying game titles for *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* and other games. Some of his more recent work for Wizards of the Coast can be found in the *Dark Sun Campaign Setting*, *Psionic Power*, *Monster Manual 3*, and *Player's Handbook 3*. In addition, he's a regular contributor to both *Dragon* and *Dungeon* magazines. Robert lives, works, and will probably die in Tennessee.

1: KOBOLD BANDITS

When you push through the trees, the elf warrior shoots a glance your way and shouts, “Your assistance would be welcome at any time, adventurer.”

The lead kobold brandishes its short sword and hisses, “Another one. Kill them both, my pets, and Szartharrax will reward us all!”

SETUP

You (PC)

Sareth the elf warrior (S)

4 kobold tunnelers (1-4)

1 kobold quickblade (5)

Make a DC 11 Stealth check. If you succeed, you have surprised the enemies, which lets you take one action before anything else happens. After you take your action or if you didn’t surprise the enemies, roll initiative for you and all other creatures. Record the results from highest to lowest.

Unless you attack Sareth, she is an ally to you. If you paused to make a Perception check before triggering the encounter, Sareth has 23 hit points left. If you went back to sleep before triggering the encounter, Sareth has only 12 hit points.

TACTICS

The kobolds see an opportunity to gain status in their master’s eyes by waylaying two travelers. Their greed outweighs their cowardice, so they press the attack. Meanwhile, Sareth would dispatch or drive off these enemies as quickly as possible.

Sareth: Sareth uses her standard action to use *longsword* against an adjacent tunneler. She then spends her move action to shift 1 square toward you. Sareth will then use *longsword* against other tunnelers, shifting toward you all the while. Once she drops the last tunneler, she closes on the quickblade and uses *two-weapon rend*. She reserves *elven accuracy* for this attack to make sure she can deal the extra damage.

Kobold Quickblade: The kobold quickblade spends its first move action to use *fleet feet* to end his shift in a square adjacent to you. It then uses *short sword*. If the kobold hits you with this attack, don’t forget to add the 6 extra damage since it shifted 3 squares. Then, it uses its minor action on *shifty* to shift 1 square away from you.

The quickblade uses *fleet feet* to maneuver around you and boost its damage when it uses *short sword*. If Sareth also attacks him, he makes one parting shot at you or Sareth (roll any die—on an odd result it attacks you, on an even result it attacks her) and then retreats. The quickblade also flees if all the tunnelers are dead.

Kobold Tunnelers: One tunneler uses *shifty* to move away from Sareth and then uses a move action to move 6 squares further. It then uses *javelin* against you. The other three (or fewer) use *shifty* to maneuver into flanking positions against Sareth and use their standard actions to make melee *javelin* attacks.

The one tunneler who pulled back makes a ranged *javelin* attack and then charges you on its next turn. The remaining tunnelers press their melee attacks against Sareth until only one remains. This kobold then uses *shifty* to pull back and use its ranged basic attack. The tunnelers flee if the quickblade drops to 0 hit points.

Sareth (S) Medium fey humanoid, elf	Level 1 Striker	
HP 27; Bloodied 13; Surges 8; Surge Value 6	Initiative +4	
AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 13	Perception +7	
Speed 7	Low-light vision	
TRAITS		
Combat Advantage		
Once per round, Sareth deals 1d6 extra damage against a creature granting combat advantage to her.		
Wild Step		
Sareth ignores difficult terrain when she shifts.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⊕ Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage.		
⊕ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage.		
† Two-Weapon Rend ♦ Encounter		
Effect: Sareth uses <i>longsword</i> and <i>short sword</i> against the same target. If both attacks hit, the target takes 4 extra damage.		
TRIGGERED ACTIONS		
Elven Accuracy ♦ Encounter		
Trigger: Sareth makes an attack roll.		
Effect (Free Action): Sareth rerolls the attack roll and uses the second result.		
Skills Nature +8, Stealth +10		
Str 12 (+1)	Dex 18 (+4)	Wis 14 (+2)
Con 15 (+2)	Int 10 (+0)	Cha 12 (+1)
Alignment unaligned	Languages Common, Elven	
Equipment hide armor, longsword, short sword, adventurer’s kit		

PLAYING SARETH

If Sareth survives and you agree to help her, you can play her as an additional character. Sareth is what is called a companion character. Companions are like regular characters but are simplified to make them easier to play. For as long as she remains with you, you control her actions and she is an ally to you. Keep her statistics block (on page \$@) handy for reference in combat.

During a combat encounter, Sareth uses *longsword* to attack the closest enemy each turn. If she faces a creature other than a minion, she uses *two-weapon rend* with *elven accuracy* to ensure a hit. When possible, she maneuvers into flanking position so she can get combat advantage. If she drops to 7 or fewer hit points, she uses her *second wind*.

Aside from the fact that you're attacking the goblins, Sareth doesn't know you, so she's not going to take excessive risks to save your life. However, if you fall unconscious and have not yet used your *second wind*, she may spend a standard action to make a DC 10 Heal check to allow you to do so, if she can do it without provoking opportunity attacks. She will not give you her equipment, and she expects an equal share of treasure.

During a short rest, Sareth spends healing surges to bring herself back to at least 24 hit points. She prefers to keep at least one surge in reserve for combat.

Outside of combat, Sareth grants you a +2 bonus to skill checks when she's present. If the text calls for a skill check, only you need to make the check. If you succeed, it counts as a success for both you. If your check fails, you both fail.

Kobold Quickblade (5) Small natural humanoid (reptile)	Level 1 Skirmisher XP 100
HP 29; Bloodied 14	Initiative +5
AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +1
Speed 6	Darkvision
TRAITS	
Quick Blade	
If the kobold shifts on its turn, the next melee attack it makes on its turn deals 2 extra damage per square shifted.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage.	
MOVE ACTIONS	
Fleet Feet ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The kobold shifts 3 squares.	
MINOR ACTIONS	
Shifty ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 17 (+3) Wis 13 (+1)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Draconic
Equipment leather armor, light shield, short sword	

CONCLUSION

The encounter ends when all the kobolds drop to 0 hit points, or when you flee, or when you and Sareth both drop to 0 hit points.

If the elf warrior is at 0 or fewer hit points, you can stabilize her by making a DC 15 Heal check (as a standard action). During the short rest, have her spend healing surges to regain lost hit points.

Did the elf die? Go to 7.

Did the elf survive? Go to 8.

Did you drop to 0 or fewer hit points? Go to 92.

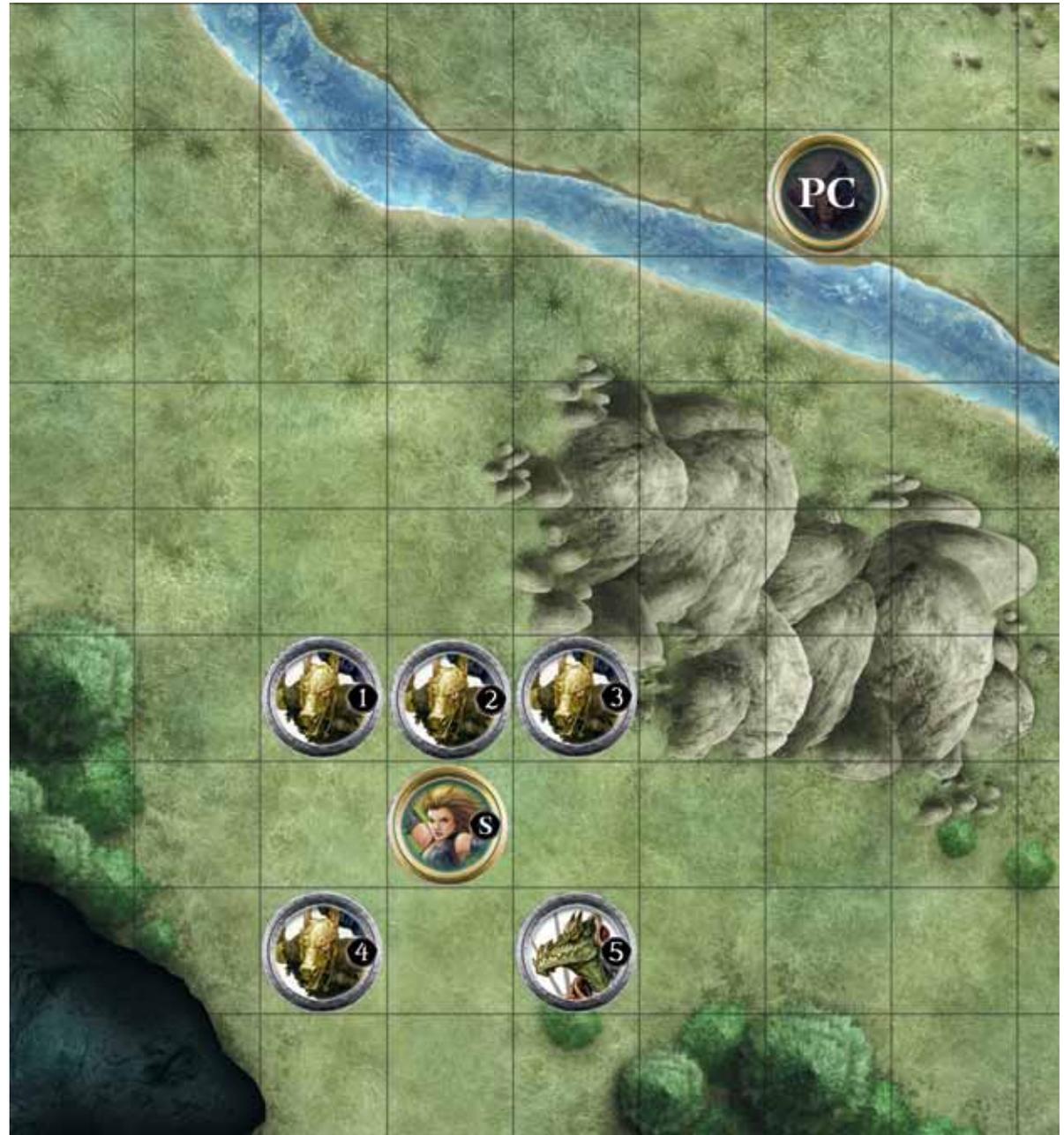
4 Kobold Tunnelers (1-4) Small natural humanoid (reptile)	Level 1 Minion Skirmisher XP 25 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	Initiative +5
AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +1
Speed 6	Darkvision
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4 damage.	
⊕ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Ranged 10/20 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4 damage.	
MINOR ACTIONS	
Shifty ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
Narrow Escape ♦ At-Will	
Trigger: A close or an area attack hits or misses the kobold.	
Effect (<i>Immediate Interrupt</i>): The kobold rolls a saving throw.	
If it succeeds, it shifts 3 squares.	
Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Draconic
Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins	

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: It is night. The full moon provides dim illumination. If you don't have low-light vision and you didn't bring a lit torch or sunrod with you, then you take a -2 penalty to attack rolls until you light a torch or strike a sunrod.

Trees: A creature gains cover while occupying a square containing trees.

Boulders: The boulder pile grants cover to Medium or larger creatures and superior cover to Small creatures. A creature can climb onto a boulder's space by making a DC 8 Athletics check.



ENCOUNTER 2: UNDEAD RISE

You turn and see the bloated corpse struggling to its feet. Beyond it and a few paces behind, the bone piles assemble into skeletons armed with rusting blades and crude bows.

SETUP

You (PC)

1 grasping zombie (1)

2 decrepit skeletons (2-3)

Place your token where indicated. Then do the same for the monsters. If Sareth is present, place her in any unoccupied square within 2 squares of you.

If you succeeded at the Religion check called for in entry 17, you are not surprised. Otherwise, the monsters gain surprise and use their one action to stand up.

TACTICS

The zombie is nearly mindless, while the skeletons possess animal cunning. The undead employ simple tactics.

Zombie: If the zombie is prone, it uses a move action to stand up and then makes a charge attack against the closest enemy. If the zombie was already standing, it moves toward the closest enemy and uses *zombie grasp* if it ends its move adjacent to you or Sareth.

For the rest of the combat, the zombie moves to stay adjacent to an enemy if necessary and then uses *zombie grasp* to grab an enemy. If it's already grabbing a creature, it instead uses *slam*.

Skeletons: The skeletons use their first action to stand up if they aren't already standing and then use *shortbow*. They target an enemy not adjacent to the zombie first. Before their attack, they shift 1 square away from the closest foe, and then use their move action after the attack to shift again.

For the rest of the encounter, the skeletons use *shortbow* each turn, always shifting to stay back from enemies until they start their turn adjacent to an enemy. At that point, they use *short sword*. When a skeleton makes a melee basic attack, it also shifts to flank the target when possible.

Grasping Zombie (1) Medium natural animate (undead)	Level 1 Brute XP 100
HP 33; Bloodied 16	Initiative -1
AC 13, Fortitude 14, Reflex 11, Will 11	Perception -1
Speed 4	Darkvision
Immune disease, poison	
TRAITS	
Zombie Weakness	
Any critical hit to the zombie drops it to 0 hit points immediately.	
Zombie Rejuvenation	
Unless it was a result of a critical hit, a zombie reduced to 0 hit points rises with 1 hit point at the end of its next turn. A zombie at 0 hit points can be permanently prevented from rising in this way by dealing damage to the corpse.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Slam ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d12 + 3 damage (or 1d12 + 8 to a grabbed target).	
† Zombie Grasp ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +4 vs. Reflex	
Hit: The target is grabbed (escape DC 14).	
Str 16 (+3)	Dex 8 (-1) Wis 8 (-1)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 1 (-5) Cha 3 (-4)
Alignment unaligned Languages –	

2 Decrepit Skeletons (2-3) Level 1 Minion Skeleton Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 25 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	Initiative +3
AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 13	Perception +2
Speed 6	Darkvision
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic;	
Vulnerable 5 radiant	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The skeleton shifts 1 square before making its attack.	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4 damage.	
↘ Shortbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The skeleton shifts 1 square before making its attack.	
Attack: Ranged 15/30 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4 damage.	
Str 15 (+2)	Dex 17 (+3) Wis 14 (+2)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 3 (-4) Cha 3 (-4)
Alignment unaligned Languages –	
Equipment longsword, shortbow, 20 arrows	

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Tower: Although the battle map shows the tower as having a collapsed wall, the walls and door of the Ghost Tower are solid and intact. No creatures or characters can enter the 4-squares-by-4-squares area of the tower during the fight.

CONCLUSION

The encounter ends when all the enemies drop to 0 hit points or when you and Sareth flee or both drop to 0 hit points.

Did you defeat the monsters? You find a key on a thin chain that was hung around one of the skeleton's necks. Go to 26.

Did you drop to 0 or fewer hit points? Go to 92.

If you ran away, you can return to the tower at some later time. Go to 91.



ENCOUNTER 3: HALL OF THE BLACKGUARD

Just as you move through the door, a hollow cackling sound fills the air. Whoever or whatever is in here is expecting you.

SETUP

You (PC)

Skeletal Blackguard (B)

5 tomb rats (1-5)

Your starting placement depends on how you reached #93. If you came by 42, then place your token in area A; if by 67, then place it in area B; and if you came by 89, then place your token in area C. Place the other tokens where indicated on the map. Use a normal skeleton token for the blackguard. Use rat tokens for four of the tomb rats and any other token of your choice for the fifth tomb rat.

When you first see the blackguard, read:

A fearsome figure dressed in black plate armor stands before you. Pale, blue flames dance along the blade of its longsword. The warrior lifts the visor of its helmet, revealing only a skull with glowing eye sockets. "Your presence in my tomb has awoken me from the grave. I can see that you have come for the sword. If you would have it... try to take it."

When the blackguard becomes bloodied, read:

The fire burning on the blackguard's blade explodes and sets fire to the horrid, undead creature. The flames scorch its armor and bones, causing it to shriek in pain. Still it fights on, and the flames might be almost as dangerous to you as they are to your foe.

TACTICS

The blackguard moves boldly into melee with the tomb robbers. The half-starved tomb rats rush to attack, drawn by the promise of fresh meat.

Blackguard: The blackguard moves to where it can use *fiery longsword*; it charges if necessary. Once adjacent to you, it stays adjacent for as long as possible. If Sareth is present and also adjacent to the blackguard, it uses *fiery assault* to make one attack against each of you. Otherwise, if Sareth is not adjacent to the blackguard, it uses both *fiery assault* attacks against you. Once you bloody the blackguard,

it uses *fiery outburst* and then follows up with *fiery doom* on its next turn. The blackguard fights until it is destroyed.

Tomb Rats: The tomb rats attack the closest living creature each round. They shift 2 squares before the attack to get flanking positions when possible, and they fight to the death.

Skeletal Blackguard (B) Medium shadow humanoid (undead)	Level 2 Elite Soldier XP 250
HP 48; Bloodied 24	Initiative +4
AC 18, Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +0
Speed 6	Darkvision
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant	
TRAITS	
☠ Menacing Presence ♦ Aura 1	
All unmarked enemies within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls on any attack that does not include the skeletal blackguard as a target.	
Speed of the Dead	
When making an opportunity attack, the skeletal blackguard gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals 1d6 extra damage.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⬆ Fiery Longsword (fire, weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d8 + 3 damage plus 1d6 fire damage.	
⬇ Fiery Assault ♦ Recharge 4 5 6	
Effect: The blackguard uses <i>fiery longsword</i> twice.	

⬅ Fiery Doom (fire, weapon) ♦ Encounter		
Requirement: The blackguard must be bloodied.		
Attack: Close burst 1 (enemies in burst); +5 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 2d8 + 6 damage plus 2d6 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).		
Miss: 2d6 fire damage.		
MINOR ACTIONS		
⬅ Compelling Word (charm) ♦ Recharge when first bloodied		
Attack: Close burst 5 (one enemy); +5 vs. Will		
Hit: The blackguard pulls the target up to 5 squares.		
TRIGGERED ACTIONS		
⬅ Fiery Outburst (fire) ♦ Encounter		
Trigger: The blackguard is first bloodied.		
Attack (No Action): Close burst 1 (creatures in burst); +5 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 2d6 + 3 fire damage.		
Miss: Half damage.		
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, the blackguard takes ongoing 5 fire damage. Whenever an enemy within the blackguard's <i>menacing presence</i> aura misses with an attack, it takes 3 fire damage.		
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 12 (+2)	Wis 9 (+0)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 10 (+1)
Alignment evil	Languages Common	
Equipment full plate, longsword		

5 Tomb Rats (1-5)	Level 1 Minion Skirmisher
Small natural beast	XP 25 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. Initiative +3	
AC 15, Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 12	Perception +5
Speed 6, climb 3	Low-light vision
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Bite ♦ At-Will	
Effect: Before the attack, the rat shifts up to 2 squares.	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 2 damage.	
Str 12 (+1)	Dex 17 (+3)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 2 (-4)
	Wis 10 (+0)
	Cha 6 (-2)
Alignment unaligned	Languages –

FEATURES OF THE AREA

North Altar: Radiant attacks made in squares adjacent to this altar deal 5 extra radiant damage.

West Altar: Fire attacks made from squares adjacent to this altar gain a +2 power bonus to the attack roll.

Curtains: Rotting curtains across the doorways block line of sight but not line of effect.

Basins: A creature that spends a healing surge while adjacent to either of the two basins also gains 5 temporary hit points.

Magic Circle: A creature in the magic circle's space gains a +2 bonus to defenses against attacks from creatures that are not natural.

CONCLUSION

The combat ends when both you and Sareth drop to 0 hit points or when the blackguard and rats all drop to 0 hit points.

The blackguard keeps 90 gp in a black iron box adjacent to the west altar. He also carries a level 3 common magic item (of your choice; pick something your character would like to have) and the sword that

once belonged to Sareth's mother. Sareth claims the weapon if she's here. Otherwise, it's yours. Treat it as a *magic longsword* +1.

Did you defeat the blackguard and his henchmen? Go to 95.

Did you (and Sareth) fall to 0 hit points? Go to 92.

