



PARAGON

11-20

IN THE DEPTHS OF AVARICE

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THE BLACK-SHEEP son of prominent aristocrats, Valmour Tessount found himself written out of his father's will when his hedonistic behavior shamed his family once too often. In an uncharacteristically public display, the senior Tessount announced that he would bequeath his entire estate to Valmour's younger brother Sanoped. In response, Valmour pilfered a sizable cache of gems from the family vaults, took up the path of the warlord, and embarked on a life of debauchery and ill-fated adventures. Now, the prodigal son has a chance to restore his fortunes, but a deadly curse stands between him and the wealth he claims as his birthright.

"In the Depths of Avarice" is an adventure for 13th-level PCs.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

When Valmour's father recently passed away, the estranged warlord returned to the family estate to pay his respects. Only then did he discover that the senior Tessount had left a small tract of land to his wayward son—the site of a failed copper mine now known as Tessount's Folly.

Late one evening, while inspecting the deeds of property, Valmour noticed that one of the documents had begun to peel apart with age. Within the layers of faded parchment, he discovered a map to a secret location hidden beneath the mine—the resting place of an ancient prophet whose tomb was said to be marked by a statue of solid gold.

Valmour's father was legendary for his avarice, and the son sadly inherited every bit of his father's greed. Ecstatic with his discovery, Valmour celebrated with a night of drinking and a hiring spree that saw him and half the men of the nearby villages head into the hills.

Valmour and his makeshift mining crew set up a suitable camp and began the process of opening up the long unused mine. For several weeks, work went smoothly. However, in his initial drunken revelry, Valmour let slip one too many references to the secret tomb he sought. These rumors reached the ear of a necromancer and alchemist named Eibon D'yingor—leader of a secret cult of Vecna. The dark rituals of the cult demanded a constant acquisition of relics of power—relics often found in tombs such as Valmour had spoken of. The next morning, Eibon and a number of cultists hired themselves to Valmour as mineworkers.

The following week, Valmour sent eight crews down to inspect the mine's deeper, more isolated

shafts. By evening, Eibon's crew had failed to return. A rescue team under the leadership of Valmour's experienced crew chief Skahlton Gaigr was sent into the mine to recover the missing men. By the time the sun rose, it was apparent that they, too, had gone missing. Though subsequent searches have been made, no trace has been found of either group.

Now, Valmour's workers grow wary. Fearing some dark horror lurking within the abandoned mine, many of them have taken their wages and fled. Running rapidly low on funds and desperate to locate his hidden fortune, Valmour seeks to hire adventurers to discover the fate of the missing workers, and to rid the mine of the unseen threat that claimed them.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

When the PCs arrive at the mine, Valmour informs them of his dire situation and asks their aid in finding his missing workers. Though he professes his belief that they might have been caught in a cave-in or slain by stirges, the warlord-turned-pro prospector withholds his darkest suspicion—that his crew chief Skahlton Gaigr has discovered the location of the golden statue, and that even now, he works to secure and steal it.

While Valmour is no stranger to combat, he fears that both mine crews are now under Gaigr's command. Secretly, Valmour hopes that the PCs will find, confront, and dispose of the treacherous crew chief, allowing him to claim his golden prize. However, the truth behind why the miners went missing is far more complicated.

As the PCs enter the mine to talk to workers who were the last to see the missing work crew, the caverns are shaken by a mysterious explosion. After rescuing a trapped crew, the PCs are tipped that one of Eibon's followers is responsible, but by the time they catch up with their quarry, they find him already dead. The PCs must then face the creatures that killed him—horrifically transformed miners from Gaigr's crew.

In the aftermath, the PCs discover a map leading to an unknown lower section of the mine. There, they find a terrified miner who reveals a harrowing tale of ancient magic that transformed his crew into monstrosities.

Descending into a deep chasm, the PCs face the undead creature spawned by Gaigr before discovering an ancient ossuary protected by horrid skeletal guardians. In the middle of the ossuary stands the fabled golden statue. However, the tomb beneath the statue has had its ancient seal broken, a foul curse bestowed upon those who defile it.

An investigation of the tomb reveals that the prophet's skull has been removed, and that the potent curse can only be undone by restoring and resealing the tomb before it destroys all living creatures within the mine. The PCs must track down the thieves (Eibon and his cultists), now seeking a route to the surface even as the tomb's ancient guardians come to life.

At the same time, Valmour's impatience finally drives him into the mine after his golden prize. In the climax of the adventure, the prophet's curse transforms Valmour into an agent of vengeance—killing all those within the tomb to keep its secrets safe.

PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

The scenario assumes that the PCs are in a town close to the mine, perhaps resting up after a previous adventure. Through an envoy, Valmour hires the party to solve the mystery of the disappearing miners.

If you don't want to have the PCs hired directly by Valmour, the following hooks can bring the party into the adventure.

Divine Emissary: The PCs have connections to a church or similar agency hard on the trail of a covert cult of Vecna. The PCs learn that several cultists have joined a small mining operation, but it isn't known how many are involved, or why. The PCs approach Valmour to offer their aid in finding his missing miners, but their primary goal is to discover what the cultists are up to.

Sibling Rivalry: Valmour's foppish brother Sanoped inherited the bulk of his father's estate, and he is curious as to his brother's sudden interest in what he believed was a worthless inheritance. After hearing that Valmour has lost miners, he hires the PCs to quietly investigate in the hope of discovering his shiftless brother's secret.

Deserters: The PCs encounter a group of miners who have fled Valmour's operations in fear. If you run this hook in a town, the miners are holed up in a cheap inn, drowning their fearful memories in drink and telling any who will listen about the horrors of Toussant's Folly (all imaginary).

If the PCs meet the miners on the road, they simply warn the party to turn back. If pressed for more information, they offer to trade their tale for a meal, then head off to seek safer work elsewhere.

THE QUESTS

"In the Depths of Avarice" offers the PCs a chance to earn XP for a major and minor quest.

Major Quest—Restoring the Tomb

The PCs must retrieve the high prophet's skull (page 77), return it to the ossuary, then seal the tomb once more.

Reward: 3,000 XP and the cash promised by Valmour.

Minor Quest—The Miners' Fate

The fate of the missing miners (good or bad) is desperately awaited by their fellows aboveground. If the PCs ensure that Daigelus (area 10, page 63) makes it safely back to the surface to tell his tale, they earn a minor quest reward.

Reward: 700 XP.

Beyond the fact that two crews are missing, any information the miners offer should be suspect at best.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins when the PCs arrive at Tessout's Folly to meet with Valmour. The mine site is located at the end of a dirt trail leading up into the cliffs a few miles above the Aufeis River valley. The trail is decades old, but it bears the recent marks of ironclad wagon wheels and pack mule hooves. The path winds through forgotten apple orchards that slowly thin to low shrubs, the mossy dirt hardening

to loose scree. In the shadow of the sweeping cliffs stands the weathered ruin of an abandoned mining town. On the outskirts, three dozen drab canvas tents mark the site of Valmour's camp. Behind the tents, the cliff face is rent by a wide timber-framed passage descending into darkness.

As soon as the PCs near the camp, two guards call out to them, asking their business and ushering them onto the grounds. Valmour appears shortly thereafter. Approaching the PCs with a stoic expression, he studies them carefully before offering a firm handshake. When introductions are finished, he invites the PCs into his tent to discuss the details of their employment.

An Insight check made against Valmour's Bluff (+9) allows the PCs to sense the prospector's well-composed fear. Under the current circumstances, Valmour trusts no one, especially vagabond adventurers looking to turn a quick coin. However, his situation is desperate, and the PCs are a logical—and expendable—investment

"I thank the gods you've come," Valmour says evenly. "Several days ago, I lost an entire crew in the lower mine, but have since found no trace of their fate. The rescue party that followed them vanished in the same way, with no sign found of attack or natural disaster. They are good men, most with families, and many of the other miners now refuse to enter the shafts for fear of what befell both crews. I need your help."

Valmour gives the PCs a crude map of the mine and tells them to meet with the members of two crews in the upper level (currently the only workers who will still enter the mine). Some of them were among the last people to see the first missing crew.

Valmour offers the PCs 4,000 gp for the job, though he stresses the difficulty of his current financial situation due to his recent troubles. A DC 21 Diplomacy check sees him up the offer to 5,000 gp. However, he only has funds to pay 2,000 gp up front, with the remainder (part of a desperate loan Valmour has taken from his brother) arriving in a week.

At this point, allow the PCs to make Insight checks against Valmour's Bluff check. A character who beats his check senses that his concern for his miners is genuine. However, if his check is beaten by 5 or more, the PCs also realize that his concern hides an ulterior motive. The PCs can attempt to gain more information, but not from the distrustful prospector.

SKILL CHALLENGE: THE MINING CAMP

As you wander the camp in preparation for your descent into the mine, you realize that Valmour's fear is symptomatic of the unease his workers feel—and that the prospector appears to know more than he lets on.

This skill challenge allows the PCs to gain further information by spending time in the mining camp as they prepare to investigate.

Setup: The PCs have had a long journey to the mine site, and they rest for a few hours while they make plans to enter the mine. During this time, they wander the camp, talking and listening to the frightened miners.

Level: 12

Complexity: 1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate, Religion.

Bluff (DC 16): A PC can undercut Valmour's secrecy by hinting within the camp that the prospector knows more about the lost miners' fate than he lets on. The PC hears whispered rumors as a result. This check can be made any number of times, but after the first failed check, the DC increases to 21.

Diplomacy (DC 10): The PC candidly offers sympathy for the recent events at the mine, attempting to create a bond of trust with the remaining miners. Once a successful Diplomacy check is made, any subsequent Intimidate checks made in the challenge take a -2 penalty.

Insight (DC 10): In casual conversations with the miners, the PC picks up hints of the cult's presence within the camp.

Intimidate (DC 21): Instead of extending a hand of friendship to the miners, the PC attempts to unnerve or badger them. Once a successful Intimidate check is made, any subsequent Diplomacy checks made in the challenge take a -2 penalty.

Religion (DC 10): The PC hears of the missing miners' appearance, and is told of specific symbols adorning their clothes and skin. With a successful check, the PC recognizes the symbols as religious in nature, and associated with secrets and prophecy.

Secondary Skills: Arcana, Athletics.

Arcana (DC 21): The PC demonstrates mystic knowledge and lore, inspiring confidence in the miners that the party can end the unseen threat. Using this skill doesn't count as a success or failure for the challenge, but the next Diplomacy or Insight check made in the challenge gains a +2 bonus.

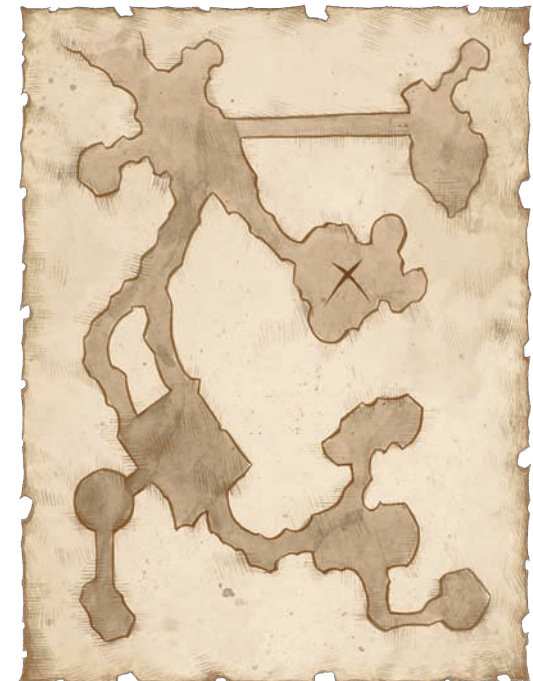
Athletics (DC 21): The PC attempts to gain the respect of the miners with a social display of strength such as arm wrestling or helping with work around the camp. Using this skill doesn't count as a success

or failure for the challenge, but the next Diplomacy or Insight check made in the challenge gains a +2 bonus.

Success: The PCs gain the miners' trust, revealing additional information.

The undercurrent of fear among the miners turns on suspicions not of monsters or magic in the mine, but foul play among the workers themselves. Though most of the workers know each other from the mining towns that dot this region, a number of recent hires were strangers who kept to themselves. A large number of these outsiders were among the groups that disappeared.

A few miners also speak of rumors that Valmour knows the mine contains something far more valuable than ore. Indeed, most of the work the miners have done so far seems to have less to do with seeking new veins than with exploration of the old caverns that failed when the mine was first built.



Failure: The PCs fail to gain the miners' trust, and must uncover the plot behind the disappearances as they investigate.

THE WATCHER

Though most of the cultists are among the missing miners, a single scout has remained in the camp as a spy. As the PCs engage the miners in the skill challenge, he watches closely. Shortly before the skill challenge ends, he slips away to head into the mine, intent on getting a message to Eibon warning that the PCs are coming.

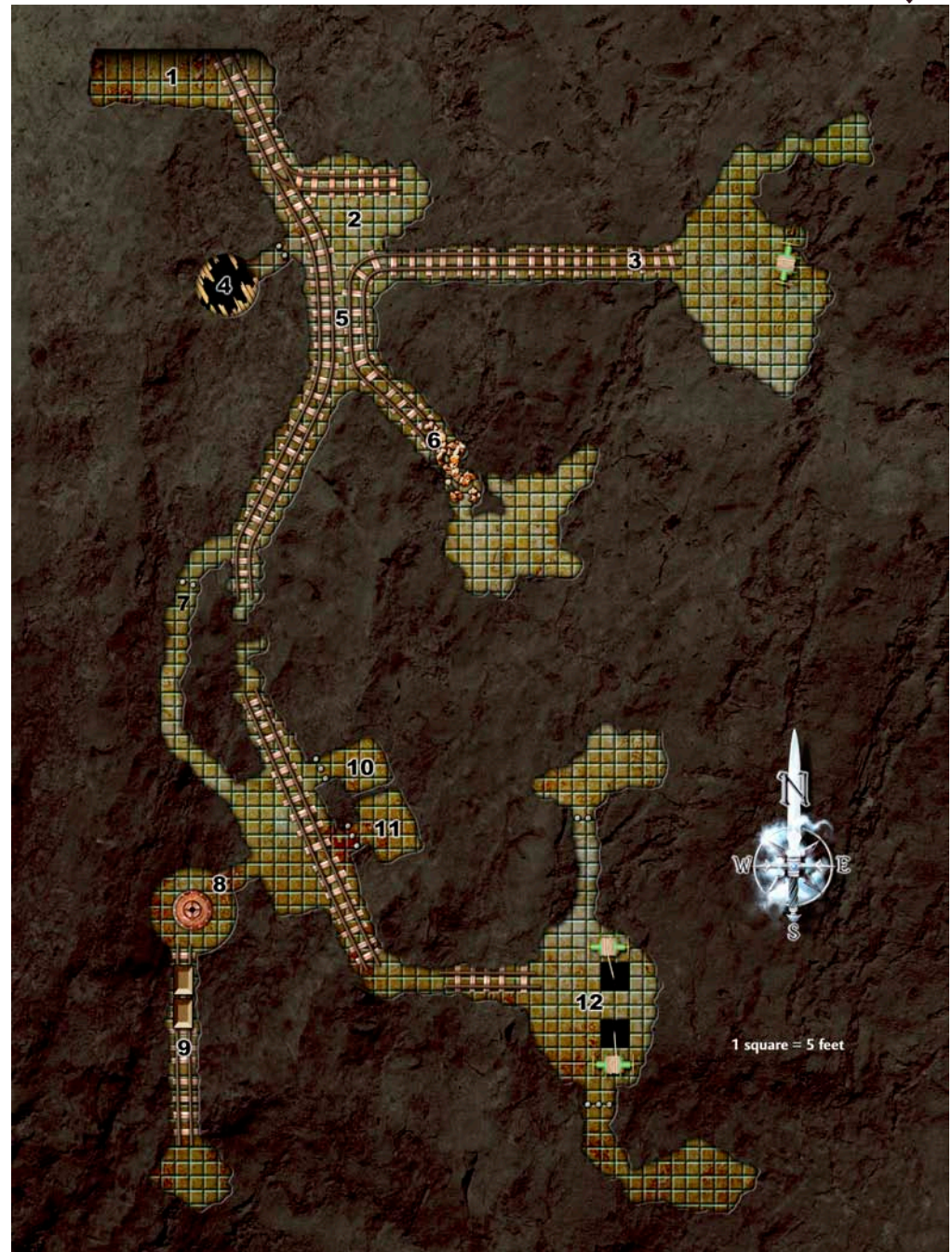
Eibon and his followers have set up alchemical explosives and triggers designed to collapse the shafts in case they are pursued. The spy moves one of those devices, hoping to trap the PCs in a cave-in when they seek out the crew currently working in area 6. However, the trap is accidentally activated by the miners shortly after the PCs enter the mine.

FEATURES OF THE MINE

The rock within the upper mine is mostly black and grey gneiss streaked with thick glittering veins of quartzite and copper ore. In the spring, melting ice from the surrounding cliffs leaks into the passages, staining the floors with streaks of greenish-blue copper oxide. Most of the upper mineshafts are wide and square cut, supported with rough timber beams. Several shafts are laid with rusted but still serviceable mine cart rails.

The following features are common throughout the mine.

Illumination: None.



Iron Grates (I): Iron safety grates are installed throughout the mine to prevent injuries from collapses and falls. Top latches hold the grates closed, but they can be opened easily from either side.

Winches (W): Many sections of the mine feature passages too cramped, too steep, or too unstable to accommodate mine carts. Instead, ore is loaded into thick leather sacks fitted with iron clasps, then hauled up using winch-operated pulley lifts strung with coarse rope. The winches and rope have been recently installed, and can handle up to 5,000 pounds of weight. The Strength check necessary to winch an object or creature up or down is equal to 1 for every 50 pounds of weight lifted.

Signs: Hand-painted signs placed throughout the mine provide warnings and instructions for the miners working there. The major shafts are labeled with a single capital letter. Other signs mark open shafts, loose cables, unsafe track, dead ends, and stirge nests. Certain signs have been marked by the cultists, covertly indicating their route to the statue.

TESSOUNT'S FOLLY

1. THE ENTRANCE

The entrance to the mine is a 10-foot-by-10-foot shaft shored with rough timbers. The passage slopes gently downward, a set of iron tracks running along its center. The floor is slippery where recent rains have washed in through the entrance. Guide ropes run along spikes set into either wall.

Navigating the passage without the ropes requires a DC 12 Acrobatics check. A character who fails this check slides out of control down the shaft, crashing into a crate in area 2 and taking 1d6 damage.

2. SUPPLY ROOM

This chamber stores supplies for the upper level.

This crude supply room is filled with blankets, oil, lanterns, rope, picks, shovels, mining helmets, goggles, work gloves, and six small casks of rock salt. Three shafts exit the room. Branded into the crossbeam above each shaft is a capital letter, running A, B, and C from east to west.

3. MINESHAFT A

Twenty miners are working to restore this section, their repairs almost complete. When the PCs enter, the suspicious miners ask their business. They are visibly relieved when told that Valmour has hired the party to investigate the recent troubles, but their fear does not lessen.

If the PCs ask about the missing crews, one of the miners shakes his head.

“Gairg was as good a miner as they come. What happened to his rescue team, I don’t know. That first bunch was green as new grass, though. City boys who ran out of regular work and figured they’d go underground. I figure they took a wrong turn down a deadfall shaft. Just a shame Gairg and his crew got lost looking for them.”

If the explosion in mineshaft B occurs before the party comes here (see area 6), these miners panic and run for the surface. The PCs can find them (with a number of other miners from the camp) at area 1 thereafter.

4. THE DROP

This passage ends abruptly at the entrance to a vertical shaft hastily boarded over. A posted sign reads: DEAD LIFT! 100 FT DROP! DO NOT ENTER!

The sign isn’t kidding. Anyone foolish enough to descend the shaft (Athletics DC 25 to climb) finds that it leads to a large chamber filled with rusted equipment. Along the far wall, a huge hole opens up, leading to the lair of a purple worm that forced the abandonment of this section when the mine was first in operation. A poorly written warning chalked on the cave wall reads “BEEWAR! GIUNT PURPEL WURM!” Other passages trail out from the worm’s lair, but these are beyond the scope of this adventure. (If the PCs insist on investigating, have them see signs that an elder purple worm occupies these caverns. This should be a sufficient deterrent to keep them out of this section of the mine.)

5. MARKED TRAIL

The roof of the passage drops here. A sign reads: DANGER! LOW CEILING!

A DC 16 Perception check notes that the “C” on the sign has been marked with a subtle underline scratch. This marks the route Eibon and his cultists used to get to the ossuary. The PCs arrive here at the moment when the miners in area 6 accidentally trigger the alchemical explosives set by the cult spy.

Even as you look around, a sudden blast of sound echoes through the floor and walls. Loose stone spills from the ceiling as a heavy cloud of dust shoots out from mineshaft B.

6. A TIMELY RESCUE

The second team that the PCs seek is trapped on the other side of a deadly mineshaft collapse.

Dust still fills the air where a fall of rocks and shattered timbers blocks the passage ahead.

Perception Check

DC 16: *From behind the pile of rubble, you hear voices calling for help.*

DC 21: *The aging timbers and the rubble around them show signs of having been burned and shattered, collapsing to bring the walls down. However, though the fall was severe, the structural integrity of the rock above and the remaining posts seems sound.*

The rock fall is safe to dig. It takes 1 hour for the PCs and the miners to pull away enough rock to open a passage that the trapped workers can squeeze through. During the excavation, one of the PCs notices a leather pouch with a torn strap at the edge of the rubble. The cultist spy lost it here as he fled when the miners spotted him.

Within the pouch are found mundane personal items, along with a poorly aged book detailing ancient theories of prophecy and divination. Within the book is tucked a note that reads:

“Our path is marked. Seek the signs. – E.”

The note was written by Eibon, and refers to the signs the cultists have marked to show their route through the mine.

The rescued miners are grateful for the PCs’ aid. In the aftermath, they tell of seeing one of their fellow miners prowling around the upper shaft just a few minutes before the explosion. (The cultist spy fled just before the approaching PCs would have seen him.) They describe the explosion that brought the timbers of the walls down, starting the collapse.

The miner they saw was one of the new hires who made up most of the missing eighth crew. These workers confirm the story of the crew in the A shaft,

telling the PCs that the eighth crew were as aloof as they were inexperienced.

The miners want only to return to the surface, and leave as soon as the PCs have no more questions for them.

7. COLLAPSING TUNNEL

While preparing to seize the mine, the cultists sabotaged several sections with alchemical explosives of Eibon’s own design. With their support beams burned and blasted through, the walls and ceiling of a mine-shaft collapse. The alchemical devices are triggered by an elaborate system of tripwires, set so that fleeing cultists can trigger them manually or activate them from a distance with mine carts.

The tripwires are labeled T on the area map. The collapse areas are marked C. Once the explosions

are done, the tunnel is at no risk of further collapse (Perception DC 16), though Medium creatures must squeeze through the passage in the aftermath.

8. DEAD SPY

The PCs go deeper into the caverns to pursue the cult scout who collapsed the tunnel before them. When they find him, however, he is beyond interrogation.

Tactical Encounter: “Dead Spy” (page 69).

9. STIRGE NEST

In the years since Tessount’s Folly was abandoned, a colony of stirges has established itself in the depths. A sign above the tunnel entrance reads “DANGER.”

Tactical Encounter: “Stirge Nest” (page 70).

Collapsing Tunnel **Level 13 Lurker**
Trap **XP 800**

An alchemical explosion causes a tunnel to collapse.

Hazard: When triggered, the rock of the collapsing shaft fills the area with attacks.

Perception

- ◆ DC 18: The character sees a tripwire that activates the collapse.
- ◆ DC 23: The character notices tripwires running across the mine tracks, allowing them to be triggered by rolling a mine cart across them.

Initiative +3

Trigger

The trap is triggered when a creature or mine cart moves through the squares where the tripwire is laid. When triggered, the trap rolls initiative. Between the trigger and the attack, characters in the area know that the tunnel is collapsing. On its turn, the collapsing tunnel attacks a random square in the encounter area

Attack

Standard Action **Area burst 2**

Targets: All creatures in burst

Attack: +16 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d12 + 8 damage

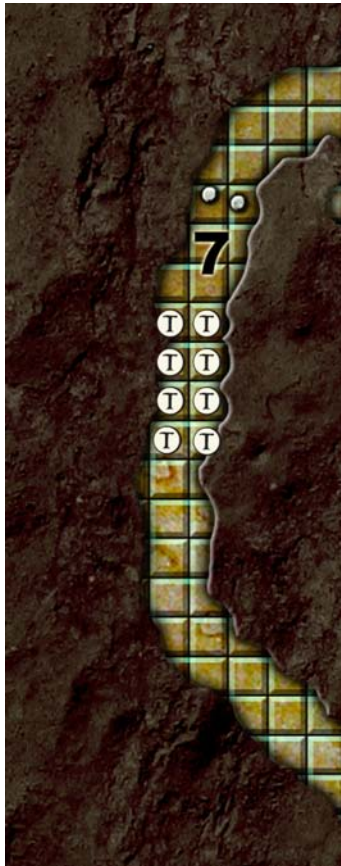
Miss: Half damage

Effect: The burst area becomes difficult terrain.

Sustain Standard: The collapsing tunnel attacks each round until it has attacked every square in the area.

Countermeasures

- ◆ A character who makes a successful Athletics check (DC 5; DC 10 without a running start) can jump over the tripwire without triggering it.
- ◆ A character adjacent to the tripwire can delay the trap with a DC 18 Thievery check.
- ◆ A character adjacent to the tripwire can disable the trap with a DC 23 Thievery check.
- ◆ If an opponent attempts to trigger the trap with a mine cart, a character adjacent to the cart can attempt to stop or derail it with a DC 23 Strength check.
- ◆ A character who makes a successful DC 23 Dungeoneering check (a minor action) can determine the area the trap will attack on its next turn.



10. THE SOLE SURVIVOR

Hiding in the darkness here is Daigelus, a human miner who was the sole survivor of a ghastly massacre.

The tunnels here have fallen into dire disrepair, but tracks in the dust and rubble show where more than one person has recently passed this way.

Perception Check

DC 21: *A shaking figure cowers in a shadowy corner, eyes wide with fear.*

As soon as anyone spots Daigelus, he screams in fear and attempts to flee. If restrained, the terrified miner struggles desperately to free himself, bursting into pitiful threats and pleas for a merciful death. Daigelus can be calmed with a DC 20 Diplomacy check (DC 15 if a PC also offers him a drink for his nerves). If the PCs can calm him, the miner tells them he was a member of the rescue crew and recounts his harrowing tale:

"I was on crew with bossman Gairg when we was sent by Valmour to find lost miners. There was big chasm in the lower chambers, deep ones where the crawlies live. In the bottom, we found another passage with runes and skulls, bossman said it weren't on map. Then we came to room filled with bones. I started shaking. In the middle was huge gold demon, 20 feet tall at least and breathing smoke like dragon. Then something rose out of bones. There was screaming everywhere but I didn't look back. Ain't nobody got out but me."

TWISTED DOMINATION

Twisted domination is a malevolent curse used by the ancients to protect their tombs. Over the course of 1 hour, any creature afflicted with the curse is transformed into a twisted one—a hideous reflection of the creature's original form. The subject of the curse has its body warped and misshapen, with stringy muscle bending it into a simian stoop. Its cracked and callused yellow skin twitches unnaturally, as if unseen creatures were crawling beneath it. The eyes of a twisted one go black as it gains darkvision, and it can sense the direction and distance to the remains of the creature whose tomb it protects.

A twisted one's sole purpose is to defend a tomb and protect the remains interred there. The twisted ones in the mine believe that the master of the tomb hidden there—an ancient high prophet—is fated to one day rise as the herald of a glorious new age, and that his resting place must be protected at all costs. Once transformed, afflicted creatures attack any and all possible threats to the tomb, fighting any attempt to disturb their master's remains.

The curse can be negated with a Remove Affliction ritual or similar effects. Additionally, affected creatures in the mine return to normal once the high prophet's remains are returned and the tomb is sealed once more.

Player characters afflicted with twisted domination can attempt to counter the domination effect. This allows them to act independently, though they retain darkvision, the curse's horrid form, and the ability to sense the location and direction of the prophet's remains. A successful DC 21 Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma check stops the domination effect for 1 hour. After this time, the effect resurges unless another check is made.

Though twisted domination functions as a disease, it is a magical curse that affects even nonliving creatures.

Daigelus was a less than inspiring conversationalist even before the horror he witnessed. Fortunately, his desire to escape the mine means that he answers any questions he can if it means getting an escort out.

What brought Gaigr down here? “Bossman was following a path he knew, like maybe he’d been there before. At least till we got to the chasms.”

Where are these chasms? “Chasms is down the shaft lifts on the lower level, but they off limits ’cause of them crawlers.”

What are the crawlers? “Crawlers is big worm things that sneak up and eat folks. They smart, hide all over lower mine.”

What was the gold demon? “Weren’t no real demon, but a great big gold statue. Bossman ran toward it, but there was the smoke.”

What about the smoke? “Smoke had a funny smell. Everyone else sounded like they was choking but I didn’t look. Just kept on running.”

In addition, Daigelus can describe the location of the lift in area 12, though he will not accompany the PCs there. He tells the PCs, “We switched signs on

them lifts so nobody follow us. One say it broken, but it ain’t.”

If Daigelus is escorted back to area 5, he makes his own way safely to the surface.

11. DEAD END

The tracks end at a wooden mine cart bumper fitted with massive rusted springs. At the top of the shaft, a gear crank connects to a long chain fitted with a fist-sized hook for hauling full carts back up to the surface. A squat narrow passage leads to the west, a sign above it reading: BEWARE! FALLING RUBBLE!

A DC 16 Perception check notes that the last letter “E” on the sign has been carefully outlined with faint scratch marks. The marks are a clue left by the cultists to take shaft E.

A DC 22 Perception check notes that the sign covers a narrow alcove carved out of the rock. Hidden within the alcove are two small cases. One holds a strange collection of lenses (worth 1,000 gp), while the other holds dozens of small metal pieces that assemble into a mechanical device used for reading star patterns (worth 4,200 gp). Both these devices are Eibon’s, stored here for safekeeping.

12. THE LIFT SHAFTS

The passage opens into another supply cavern. Wooden shelves hold simple metal tools for fixing carts, as well as a number of picks, candles, lanterns, ropes, and helmets. Several carts stand in one corner in various states of repair. Mineshafts exit from either end of the room, marked F and G.

Along the far wall, a pair of winch-operated pulley lifts are mounted over two 5-foot holes in the cavern floor. The lift shafts are labeled E and H. The lift on shaft E seems to be at the bottom of the shaft, and its rope is slack. A sign over shaft E reads: WARNING, NEEDS REPAIR. The lift at shaft H is at the top.

If the PCs didn’t get Daigelus’s warning, a DC 16 Perception check notes that the pulley above shaft H is damaged, while the pulley for shaft E is in good working order. If a character steps onto lift H, it gives way. The character must make a DC 21 Acrobatics check or follow the broken lift down to the bottom of the pit 50 feet below. The character takes 5d10 damage and ends up in area 13.

13. LOADING ROOM

Ore was once loaded onto mine carts in this small chamber. As the PCs explore, they are attacked by a pack of deadly destrachan corrupted by the foul energy of the tomb.

Tactical Encounter: “Loading Room” (page 71).

The shaft to the south of this area runs approximately 2,000 feet, twisting, dropping, and rising through the mines over the break indicated on the map.

Twisted Domination

The symptoms of cackle fever include high fever, disorientation, and frequent bouts of hideous laughter.

The target is freed from the curse. **Initial Effect** The target treats its allies as enemies for the purpose of making opportunity attacks. While within 1 mile of the tomb that is the source of the twisted domination, the target must make opportunity attacks against any creature except those also afflicted with twisted domination, or other guardians of the tomb.

Level 12 Disease

Wisdom check improve DC 16, stable DC 10, worsen DC 9 or lower

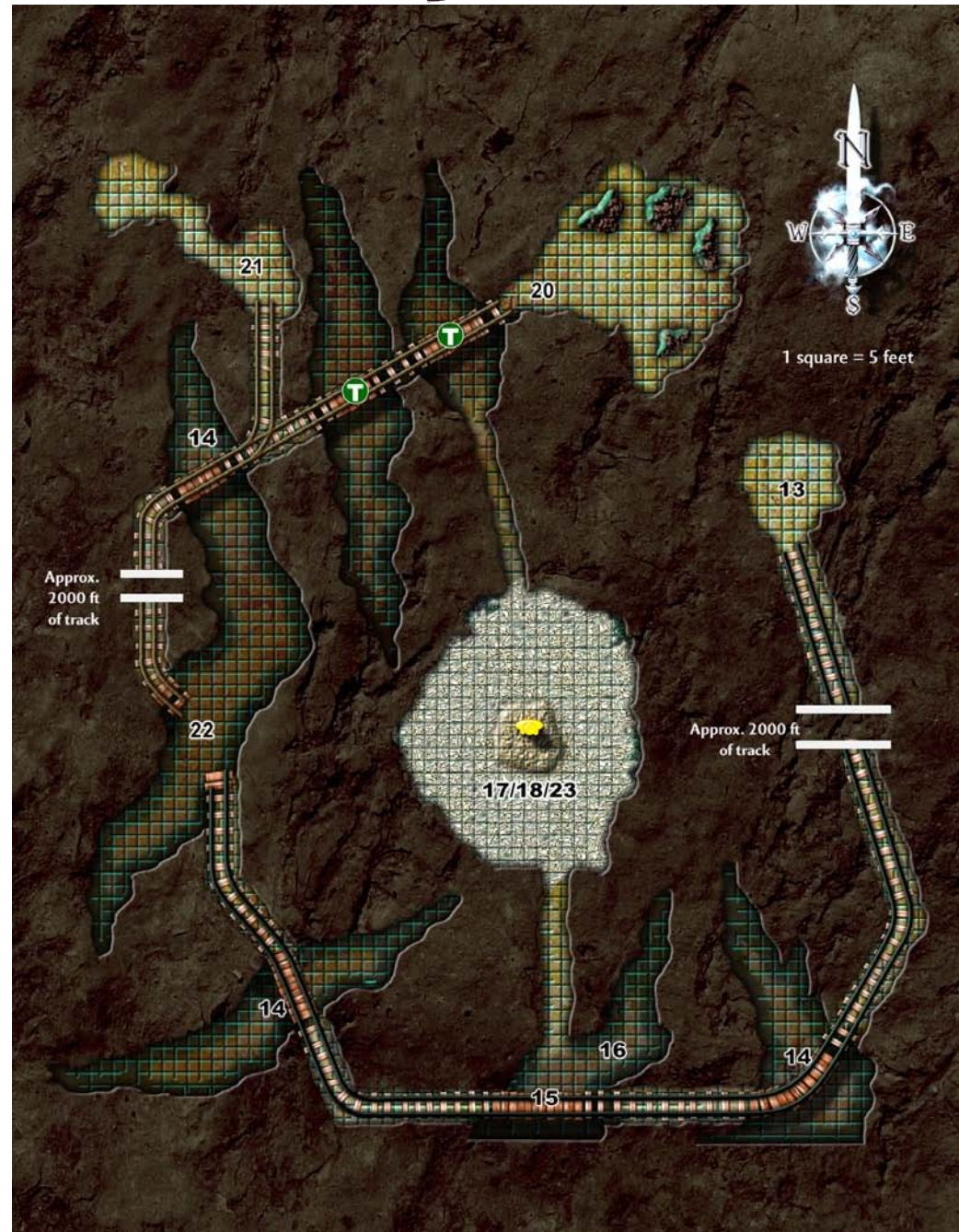
Initial Effect In addition to the initial effect, the creature must move immediately to within 1 mile of the tomb. The creature must stay within 1 mile of the tomb as long as the curse affects it. **Final State** In addition to prior effects, the creature is dominated and considers all creatures that are not guardians of the tomb its enemies. The creature takes hostile action against any such creatures that are within 1 mile of the tomb.



14. THE CHASMS

A gaping chasm 40 feet deep opens up before you, the cart tracks crossing it on a series of wooden supports forming a rickety bridge. These are bound to thick pylons hammered into the cavern walls.

The miners avoid the chasms, as many are the hunting grounds of balhannoths (*Monster Manual*, page 24), the “crawlers” that Daigelus warned of. Characters delving into a chasm not marked as an encounter area have a 1 in 10 chance of encountering 1d4 hungry balhannoths.





15. THE DESCENT

As the PCs enter this area, they see the cultists' ladder descending from the rail to drop 40 feet into the chasm. The ladder can be descended easily (a DC 5 Athletics check).

16. THE RESCUE PARTY

At the bottom of the chasm, the PCs make their way toward the ossuary. Skahlton Gairg and the rescue party, transformed to horrid undead, have a welcome prepared.

Tactical Encounter: "The Rescue Party" (page 72).

17. THE OSSUARY

This great chamber of bones holds the gold statue that Valmour seeks. However, the cultists have already been here, unsealing the tomb whose evil has tainted the mine.

Tactical Encounter: "The Ossuary" (page 73).

18. THE TOMB OF THE HIGH PROPHET

The chamber beneath the golden statue is a 50-foot-deep, 20-foot-diameter glass cylinder—the high prophet's tomb. Descending without ropes or magic requires a DC 26 Athletics check.

The glass walls of the cylinder are faintly etched with hundreds of mystical runes. Beyond the glass is a wall of tightly packed bones, the charnel floor of the chamber above descending to a depth of 50 feet here. At the base of the cylinder floats a black iron sarcophagus, suspended upright by an unseen force. Beneath the sarcophagus, you see a small pile of ash and bones.

A DC 21 Arcana check reveals that the runes describe the power and wrath of a being called Oenamagros, the high prophet. Oenamagros died before he was able to reveal his greatest prophecy.

A DC 26 Arcana check reveals the full story:

Upon his death, Oenamagros's mage-priest servants bore his remains to a secret tomb, so that when the time of the new prophecy came, the high prophet could be called forth to speak the wisdom of the ages and open the way to the future. Using powerful rituals, his servants placed wards on his tomb that would curse any creature attempting to call forth the prophet before his time. In the end, Oenamagros would rise once again to complete his final prophecy and usher in a new age of wisdom.

When the PCs inspect the sarcophagus, read the following:

The perfectly symmetrical sarcophagus is cast to resemble three humans facing outward. Their arms are locked, bodies and heads meshed into a single being. The figure is garbed in strange robes and hundreds of metal rings. A crack along the side of the sarcophagus suggests that it can be opened.

The sarcophagus swings open at a touch, but there is nothing inside.

The pile of ash and bone on the floor is all that remains of the high prophet. The bones bear etchings similar to those on the glass walls of the tomb, and they are inlaid with silver. Though the remains appear to account for an entire skeleton, there is no sign of the prophet's skull anywhere in the chamber.

19. CORRIDOR GUARDIANS

A pair of cultists holds this passageway against the PCs, but they are not the only threat.

Tactical Encounter: “Corridor Guardians” (page 75).

The shaft beyond the encounter area runs approximately 2,000 feet over the break indicated on the map.

20. SABOTAGE

The passage opens into another deep chasm. The only apparent exit is by way of climbing the wall to the east and ascending 40 feet to the cavern above. There, you see cart tracks running southwest.

It takes a DC 18 Athletics check to scale the chasm walls up to the level of the tracks. The crumbling western face of the cavern cannot be climbed.

On the east side of the chasm is an abandoned dig site spread with rusted iron bars and abandoned machinery. The cart tracks here have not been used in years, though they appear sturdy enough.

A DC 5 Acrobatics check (DC 15 if running) allows a character to move along the tracks without falling. However, after fleeing this way, the cultists sabotaged two sections of trap (marked “T” on the map) with alchemical acid.

Any Perception check made from the cavern reveals that the tracks are safe. Only a Perception check made within 5 feet of a section of sabotaged track can detect the trap. Each trap is detected and triggered separately.

Collapsing Tracks Trap

Level 9 Warder
XP 400

The tracks of the mine carts loom over the black chasm below.

Trap: Though the track here appears trustworthy, it has been sabotaged to make characters walking along it drop through and fall into the depths.

Perception

- ◆ **DC 21** A character within 5 feet of a section of sabotaged track catches sight of where alchemical acid has eaten away at the metal bindings of the track supports.

Trigger

The trap attacks when a creature enters its square.

Attack

Immediate Reaction **Melee**

Targets: All creatures within 5 feet

Attack: +14 vs. Reflex

Hit: The target slips through the collapsing rails and falls to the bottom of the chasm, taking 4d10 damage and falling prone.

Miss: The target manages to hang onto the tracks and can clamber to safety on either side of the break.

Countermeasures

- ◆ Before the trap is triggered, a character can use the rusted iron bars in the cavern to shore up a section of damaged track with a DC 22 Dungeoneering check.
- ◆ A character who makes a successful Athletics check (DC 12 or DC 22 without a running start) can jump over a section of sabotaged track without triggering it, or can jump across a section of track that has already collapsed. A DC 5 Acrobatics check (DC 18 if running) allows a character to move along the tracks without falling.
- ◆ Characters on either side of a section of collapsed track can lash a rope across the gap with a pair of DC 21 Athletics checks. A character can then climb across the gap with a DC 12 Athletics check.



21. LAST STAND

The PCs find themselves caught between the surviving cultists (fleeing with the high prophet’s skull) and the twisted ones seeking its return.

Tactical Encounter: “Last Stand” (page 77).

22. BROKEN TRACK

The section of track that once bridged this chasm has collapsed. Descending and ascending the chasm walls requires two DC 18 Athletics checks.



23. RETURN TO THE PROPHET'S TOMB

The PCs attempt to return the skull to the tomb and undo the evil corrupting the mine. However, Valmour has followed the party down from the surface and fallen victim to the tomb's dark curse.

Tactical Encounter: "Return to the Prophet's Tomb" (page 80).

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs defeat Valmour and his servants, they can restore the high prophet's skull and other remains to the sarcophagus and reseal the chamber. This successfully lifts the curse and restores any surviving twisted ones to their original form. If Valmour survives his ordeal and is returned to normalcy, he orders the mine closed and sealed. In any event, the remaining miners return to their homes, leaving Tessount's Folly behind.

DEAD SPY

Encounter Level 12 (3,500 XP)

SETUP

5 twisted one pickfighters (P)

Within a disused ore crusher, the PCs find the cult spy responsible for collapsing the tunnel. However, the dead scout is actually being used as bait by the foul creatures that lurk here—five twisted ones, formerly members of Skahlton Gairg’s rescue crew.

Perception Check, as the PCs approach

DC 5: *An agonizing scream echoes from somewhere ahead, then abruptly goes silent.*

The characters approach to find blood spread across the tunnel floor. The blood trail continues around a corner and into another passageway. A sign above reads: CAUTION!

When the PCs can see into this area, read:

Cart rails circle the perimeter of this round chamber, exiting out two shafts—one labeled “C”; the other, “D.” In the center of the room sits a great iron crusher wheel attached to an ore hopper. The wooden gears that once drove it have all but rotted away. Atop the wheel, the crumpled form of a human male is drenched with blood.

Perception Check

DC 22: *In the shadows along the wall, you see the skulking forms of several hunched and deformed humanoids. Their meaty fists clutch crude miners’ picks.*

5 Twisted One Pickfighters (P) Level 12 Skirmisher

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 700

Initiative +10 Senses Perception +12; darkvision

HP 118; Bloodied 59; see also *curse carrier*

AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 26, Will 22

Speed 6

⬇️ Pickaxe (standard; at-will) ♦️ Weapon

+17 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.

⬅️ Curse Carrier (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦️ Charm,

Polymorph

Close burst 1; +15 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).

Careful Weave (move; at-will)

An adjacent enemy slides into the twisted miner’s space, and the twisted miner shifts 2 squares.

Sense Master

A twisted one can sense the distance and direction of the creature or remains whose tomb it is driven to guard.

Alignment Evil Languages Common

Skills Dungeoneering + 12, Stealth +13

Str 17 (+9) Dex 21 (+11) Wis 13 (+7)

Con 14 (+8) Int 12 (+7) Cha 7 (+4)

Equipment pickaxe

TACTICS

The twisted ones wait for the PCs to enter the room in an attempt to surround them and block their escape. They make pickaxe attacks as they speak in halting tones, shouting that all defilers must be destroyed in the name of the high prophet. The twisted ones fight to the death, spreading their foul curse even as they fall.

DEVELOPMENT

The sound of combat in this area puts the stirges in area 9 on alert.

PCs inspecting the bodies of the twisted ones can make a DC 16 Arcana or Heal check to determine that these are humans under the affect of a dark curse. A DC 16 Perception check indicates that these



creatures were normal miners before they were transformed.

One of the twisted ones bears a map showing a section of the mine not on the map Valmour gave the PCs—the deeper tunnels where Valmour believed the tomb might be found. A DC 21 Perception check indicates that both maps were drawn by the same hand (Valmour’s), confirming that the prospector has been less than forthright with the party. The map shows a section of the mine where the cart tracks cross the chasms.

TREASURE

The dead cultist spy wears an elaborate platinum holy symbol of Vecna worth 2,000 gp, and carries a jeweled dagger worth 500 gp.

STIRGE NEST

Encounter Level 10 (2,400 XP)

SETUP

This set of tracks descends 50 feet down a steep shaft that ends in a 20-foot-wide cavern. A mine cart lies on its side at the bottom of the tracks. The miners have been in no hurry to explore this area or to clear out the stirges that inhabit it.

- 1 dire stirge (D)
- 3 stirge swarms (S)

The dire stirge lurks 30 feet from the entrance to area 8, but it has full concealment behind an outcropping of rock until a PC passes beneath it.

Perception Check, when a PC passes beneath the dire stirge

DC 21: *Clinging to the rock above you is a horrid batlike creature with four wings and a long stinging beak.*

When the first PC reaches the halfway point of the mineshaft, read:

A strange buzzing rises from the end of the tunnel. From out of the shadows comes an immense swarm of flying creatures with four batlike wings.

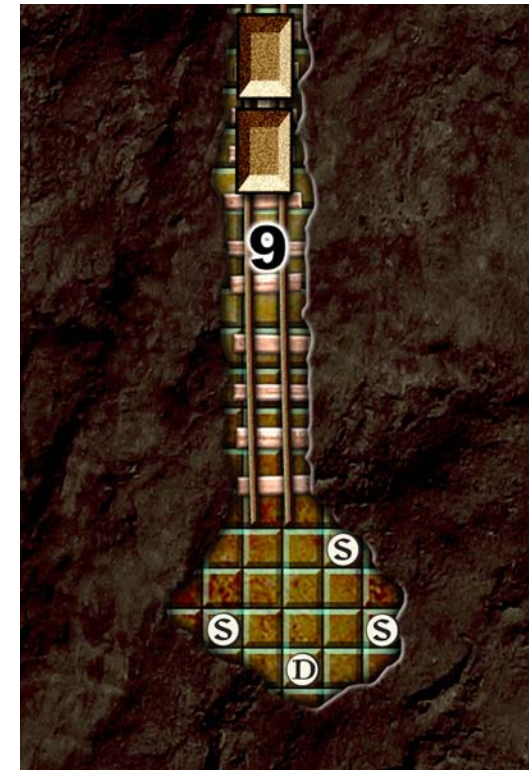
The dire stirge attempts to stay in hiding until the stirge swarms engage the PCs. Do not place its miniature unless it is spotted or until it attacks.

Dire Stirge (D)		Level 7 Lurker
Small natural beast		XP 300
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +3; darkvision	
HP 60; Bloodied 30		
AC 21; Fortitude 17, Reflex 19, Will 16; see also bite		
Speed 2, fly 6 (hover)		
⊕ Bite (standard; at-will)		
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape) and takes ongoing 10 damage until it escapes.		
An dire stirge doesn't make attack rolls while grabbing a target and gains a +5 bonus to its AC and Reflex defenses.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Skills Stealth +11		
Str 10 (+3)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 10 (+3)
Con 12 (+4)	Int 1 (-2)	Cha 4 (+0)

3 Stirge Swarms (S)		Level 12 Brute
Medium natural beast (swarm)		XP 700
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
Swarm Attack aura 1; the stirge swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its turn in the aura.		
HP 141; Bloodied 70		
AC 24; Fortitude 21, Reflex 24, Will 23		
Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks; Vulnerable 10 against close and area attacks		
Speed 2, fly 6 (hover)		
⊕ Bloodsucking Swarm (standard; at-will)		
+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Skills Stealth +14		
Str 8 (+5)	Dex 16 (+9)	Wis 10 (+6)
Con 11 (+6)	Int 1 (+1)	Cha 4 (+3)

TACTICS

The dire stirge targets a lightly armored PC and grabs to feed. The stirge swarms surround that same PC, making *swarm attacks* against characters attempting to attack the dire stirge. If the PCs flee this area, the stirges follow into area 8 but will not pass beyond that point.



TREASURE

At the bottom of the shaft is the mummified corpse of an adventurer killed here years before. His rotting leather backpack contains 440 pp.

LOADING ROOM

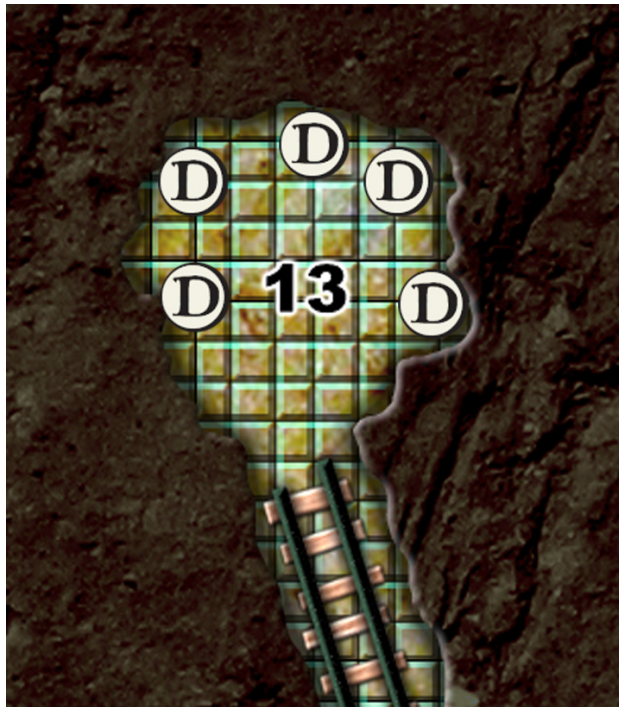
Encounter Level 12 (3,300 XP)

SETUP

5 twisted destrachans (D)

The shaft ends in a loading chamber containing four mine carts, a few pickaxes, and an empty ore bin. To the south, tracks lead into a dark tunnel marked with a sign bearing the letter “J.”

Perception Check, if a PC investigates the sign
DC 10: The letter “J” on the sign has been underlined with 2 distinct scratch marks.



The sign is a clue left by the cultists to take the shaft to the second chasm.

A few minutes after the PCs enter the room, their presence attracts the attention of a pack of destrachan warped by the curse of the tomb.

When the destrachan appear, read:

From the shadows to the south, five eyeless creatures race shrieking toward you, their limbs and spines twisted and bent.

If the PCs make a successful Dungeoneering check to recognize the destrachan (or if the party has faced these creatures before), they recognize that their forms have been warped by some unnatural power.

5 Twisted Destrachans (D)		Level 10 Artillery
Large aberrant magical beast (blind)		XP 500
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +12; blindsight 10	
HP 86; Bloodied 43; see also <i>curse carrier</i>		
AC 23; Fortitude 25, Reflex 22, Will 21		
Immune gaze		
Resist 10 thunder		
Speed 6, climb 3		
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will)		
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.		
⚡ Sound Pulse (standard; at-will) ♦ Thunder		
Range 10; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 thunder damage.		
⚡ Bellowing Blast (standard; recharge ⓂⓂⓂ) ♦ Thunder		
Close blast 5; +14 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).		
⚡ Curse Carrier (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Charm, Polymorph		
Close burst 1; +13 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).		
Sense Master		
A twisted one can sense the distance and direction of the creature or remains whose tomb it is driven to guard.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Deep Speech	
Skills Bluff +10, Stealth +14		
Str 18 (+9)	Dex 18 (+9)	Wis 14 (+7)
Con 20 (+10)	Int 7 (+3)	Cha 10 (+5)

Cave-In Hazard	Level 13 Lurker XP 800
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The destrachans’ sonic attacks set off a chain-reaction collapse in the cavern.

Hazard: When triggered, rocks and debris fall from above to fill the area with attacks. It attacks a different part of the area each turn, on its initiative.

Perception

♦ DC 26: After one of the destrachans misses with its *sound pulse* attack, a successful Perception check notes that the attack has cracked and weakened the cavern walls.

Initiative +6

Trigger

The cave-in is triggered the third time any destrachan misses with its *sound pulse* attack. Between the trigger and the cave-in’s attack, characters in the area know that a cave-in is beginning. On its turn, the cave-in attacks a random square within the encounter area.

Attack

Standard Action **Close burst 1**

Targets: All creatures in burst

Attack: +16 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d12 + 8 damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Effect: The burst area becomes difficult terrain.

Sustain Standard: The cave-in attacks each round, targeting a different square.

Countermeasure

♦ A character who makes a DC 31 Dungeoneering check as a minor action can determine the square the trap will attack on its next turn.

TACTICS

The twisted destrachans attack at range with *sound pulse* for as long as possible, using *bellowing blast* only if surrounded. Their blindsight gives them a warning of any impending cave-in, allowing them to avoid areas about to collapse. These creatures are driven to protect the tomb, and they fight until slain.

THE RESCUE PARTY

Encounter Level 11 (XP 2,800)

SETUP

Gairg, slaughter wight (S)
2 miner battle wights (B)

On the floor of the chasm leading to the ossuary, the party is set upon by former crew chief Skahlton Gairg and two miners from the rescue party. Killed by the bone nagas, the three were subsequently raised as horrid undead by the necromancer Eibon. They now defend this area against all intruders.

When the PCs cross the chasm floor read:

To the south, the chasm continues on into darkness. To the north, a boardwalk of rough wooden planks leads to an open passageway, shattered wood littering the ground where the entrance was once sealed. Walls of smooth stone run north, a sharp contrast to the rough rock of the rest of the mine.

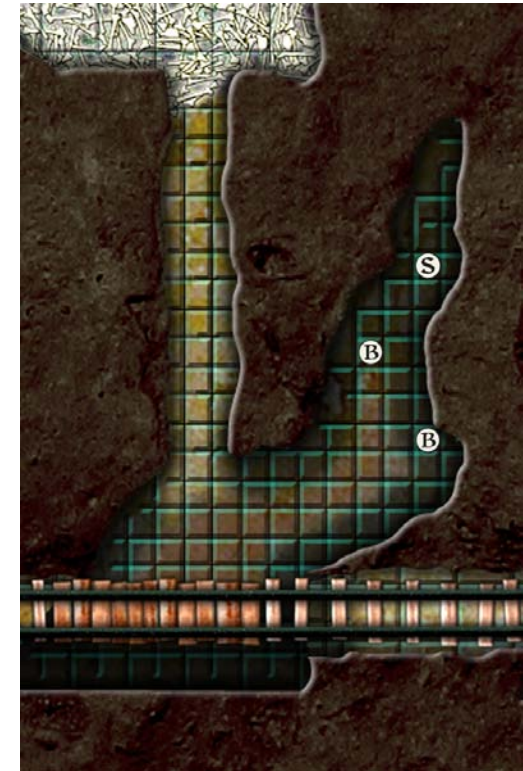
Suddenly, a roar comes from out of the shadows as three shrieking wights race toward you.

TACTICS

Gairg and the battle wights attack as soon as the first PC comes down the ladder from area 15, focusing on that target for as long as it takes the rest of the party to descend. Gairg makes claw attacks against the strongest-looking melee combatants while the battle wights focus on more lightly armored foes. If a battle wight immobilizes a PC with its *soul draining pickaxe*, it follows up with *soul reaping*. All the wights fight until destroyed.

Gairg, Slaughter Wight (S)	Level 18 Brute
Medium natural humanoid (undead)	XP 2,000
Initiative +14	Senses Perception +13; darkvision
HP 182; Bloodied 91; see also <i>death wail</i>	
AC 30; Fortitude 30, Reflex 27, Will 26	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 necrotic;	
Vulnerable 10 radiant	
Speed 7	
⬇ Claw (standard; at-will) ⬆ Healing, Necrotic	
+21 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 necrotic damage, the target loses 1 healing surge and is weakened (save ends), and the slaughter wight regains 15 hit points.	
⬅ Death Wail (when reduced to 0 hit points) ⬆ Necrotic	
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +21 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 4 necrotic damage. Undead allies in the burst can make a basic attack as a free action.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common
Str 26 (+17)	Dex 20 (+14) Wis 9 (+8)
Con 22 (+15)	Int 12 (+10) Cha 18 (+13)

2 Miner Battle Wights (B)	Level 9 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (undead)	XP 400
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +3; darkvision
HP 98; Bloodied 49	
AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 18, Will 22	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic;	
Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 5	
⬇ Soul draining Pickaxe (standard; at-will) ⬆ Necrotic, Weapon	
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target loses 1 healing surge and is immobilized (save ends).	
↗ Soul Reaping (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ⬆ Healing, Necrotic	
Ranged 5; affects an immobilized target only; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 necrotic damage, and the battle wight regains 10 hit points.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Intimidate +14	
Str 20 (+9)	Dex 13 (+5) Wis 9 (+3)
Con 18 (+8)	Int 12 (+5) Cha 20 (+9)
Equipment pickaxe	



TREASURE

A search of Gairg's body in the aftermath of combat finds a wallet embossed with his name. Within the wallet are a *potion of vitality* and ten fire opals worth 300 gp each.

THE OSSUARY

Encounter Level 13 (4,300 XP)

SETUP

- 2 bone naga guardians (N)
- 3 skeletal tomb guardians (S)

When the PCs can see into this area, read:

The straight-walled tunnel opens into a huge cavern whose floor is a macabre carpet of bones. What must be the skeletal remains of thousands of creatures are strewn from wall to wall, piled so thickly that there is no sign of the real floor beneath them.

In the center of the chamber rises a jet-black pedestal. On it stands a huge golden statue of a hideous demon, hunched and stooped. Gold chains as thick as a human wrist truss the statue to the outer cavern walls by its hands and feet, while a fifth gilded chain binds the creature to the pedestal floor by the throat. The expression on its face seems broken and defeated. Thin coils of sulfuric smoke vent from its nostrils and lips.

The bone nagas and the skeletons start the encounter deep within the field of bones. Do not place their miniatures unless they are spotted or until they attack.

When a PC comes within three squares of one of the creatures in the ossuary or passes the point marked 'X' on the map, read:

A blast of bone shards erupts all around you as five skeletal monstrosities burst up from the floor across the cavern. Two are coiled like bone snakes but have human skulls for heads, their empty eye sockets burning with pale green flame. The

other three are skeletal humanoid figures with four arms, each bearing a gleaming scimitar.

TACTICS

The bone nagas strike hard and fast, alternating between bite attacks to weaken targets and *death sway* to daze PCs attempting to keep their distance. Once a target is dazed, a bone naga continues with *death sway* attacks for as long as the foe remains so.

The skeletal tomb guardians stay in the midst of melee to maximize the effect of their *sudden strike* and make *cascade of steel* attacks as often as possible. If the PCs spread out, they choose lightly armored targets for twin *scimitar strike* attacks.

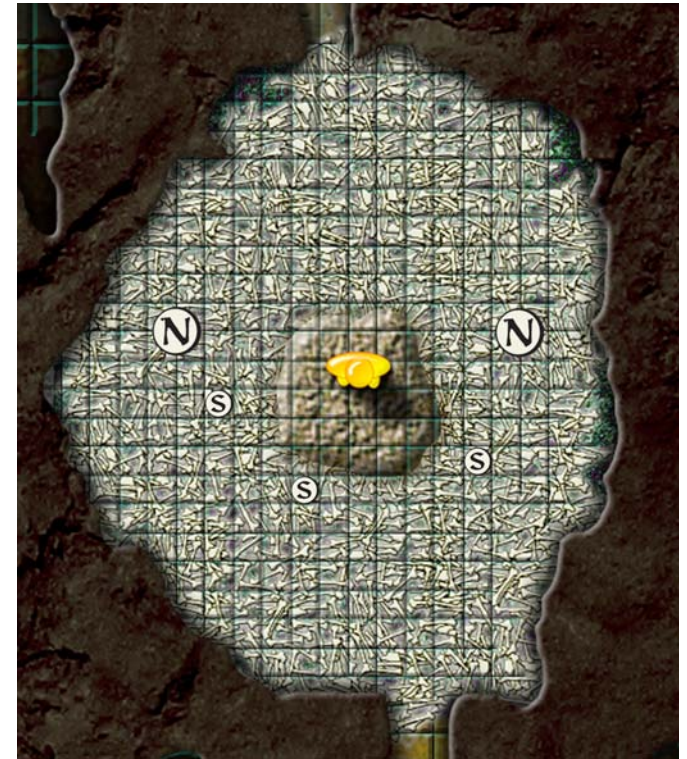
The creatures here fight within the area of the shallow pitfalls whenever possible, hindering the PCs' melee attacks. They know the locations of the deeper pitfalls scattered throughout the chamber, and move back after attacking in an attempt to lead a PC into these areas.

These guardians of the tomb fight until destroyed.

DEVELOPMENT

When the guardians of the chamber have been dealt with, the PCs can approach the golden statue that protects the tomb of the high prophet. When the cultists stole the prophet's skull, they unwittingly triggered a series of dark and powerful curses. Now a potent flesh-warping power threatens to corrupt would-be thieves and desecrators of the tomb. Any creature coming within 10 feet of the statue risks inhaling its noxious fumes. See the "Twisted Domination" sidebar on page 64 for more information.

The statue's neck chain connects to a great disc of stone set into the floor. The stone is slightly askew, revealing a dark



pit beneath. Around the lip of the capstone, ancient runes flare with a dull purple light.

The runes can be read with a DC 21 Arcana check:

Woe to those who seek to call forth the Prophet before the time of reckoning, for they bring upon the world a plague of curses. None shall find peace until the Prophet sleeps.

Beneath the capstone, a glass-walled cylindrical passage leads down to the tomb of the high prophet (see area 19 on page 67).

2 Bone Naga Guardians (N) Level 12 Elite Controller
 Large immortal magical beast (undead) XP 1,400

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +15; darkvision
Death Rattle (Necrotic) aura 2; enemies that start their turns in the aura are dazed.
HP 256; **Bloodied** 128
AC 28; **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 25
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 10 radiant
Saving Throws +2
Speed 7; burrow 7 (bone floor only)
Action Points 1

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
 Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends). *Aftereffect:* The target is weakened (save ends).

↵ **Death Sway** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
 Close burst 3; blind creatures are immune; +17 vs. Will; the target is dazed (save ends). If the target is already dazed, it takes 2d6 + 4 necrotic damage instead.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Draconic, Supernal
Skills Arcana +15, History +15, Insight +15, Religion +15
Str 20 (+11) **Dex** 14 (+8) **Wis** 18 (+10)
Con 24 (+13) **Int** 18 (+10) **Cha** 20 (+11)

3 Skeletal Tomb Guardians (S) Level 10 Brute
 Medium natural animate (undead) XP 500

Initiative +10 **Senses** Perception +12; darkvision
HP 126; **Bloodied** 63
AC 23; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 20
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 5 radiant
Speed 8

⊕ **Twin Scimitar Strike** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 The skeletal tomb guardian makes two scimitar attacks against the same target: +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage (crit 1d8 + 12). This also holds true for opportunity attacks.

⊕ **Cascade of Steel** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 The skeletal tomb guardian makes two *twin scimitar strike* attacks (four scimitar attacks total).

⊕ **Sudden Strike** (immediate reaction, when an adjacent enemy shifts; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 The skeletal tomb guardian makes a melee basic attack against the enemy.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –
Str 18 (+9) **Dex** 20 (+10) **Wis** 14 (+7)
Con 16 (+8) **Int** 3 (+1) **Cha** 3 (+1)
Equipment 4 scimitars

Demon Statue: Though this huge idol appears to be solid gold at first glance, a DC 21 Perception check reveals it to be bronze covered in gold leaf. Attempting to strip the gold leaf automatically infects a creature with twisted domination.

Northern Door: Set into the north wall of the chamber is an 8-foot-diameter round door of black iron. Though the door is closed, charring around its frame suggests that it was once protected by a magic seal that has been recently broken.

TREASURE

This chamber has seen the demise of many explorers over the years. Any search of the area reveals the remains of rusted armor and mundane weapons. A DC 16 Perception check made to search around the pedestal uncovers a +3 *pact blade falchion*.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Bone Floor: Bones cover the ossuary floor to a minimum depth of 1 foot. All areas within the chamber are difficult terrain.

In addition, the floor drops down in places, creating deeper pits of bone that can trap creatures attempting to move through them. These pits are marked on the map according to their depth (5 feet or 10 feet). A creature must make a DC 16 Acrobatics

or Athletics check to enter the area of a bone pit. On a failed check, the creature's movement is halted for that round. A creature halted in the area of a 5-foot-deep bone pit sinks to its knees and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls and defenses until its next move. A character in the area of a 10-foot-deep bone pit sinks to the waist and takes a -4 penalty to attack rolls and defenses until its next move.

As a minor action, a character can make a DC 21 Dungeoneering or Perception check to determine the location and depth of any bone pits in squares adjacent to him.

The bone nagas and skeletal guardians are unaffected by these effects, and can move across the bone floor at normal speed. Additionally, the bone nagas can move beneath the floor using their burrow speed.

CORRIDOR GUARDIANS

Encounter Level 12 (3,500 XP)

SETUP

- 2 cultist thugs (C)
- 2 boneclaw guardians (B)
- 4 flameskulls (F)

To cover his escape, Eibon left behind a pair of cultists to guard the tunnel north of the ossuary against whatever might try to follow. Halfway down the passage, the cultists have sheltered behind a crude bunker and choked the hallway with the corpses of former cultists transformed into twisted ones. They wait in a panicked state of alertness. As soon as they spot movement in the corridor, they open fire.

However, the real danger in this encounter lurks behind the fanatics. In the fifth round after the PCs enter combat, the high prophet's curse awakes guardians sealed for centuries in the corridor walls. These horrid undead burst out from within secret alcoves to slay any living creatures they encounter. The flameskulls emerge 4 squares behind the cultists' starting position from either wall, while the boneclaws emerge from the earth beneath the bones in the ossuary, behind the characters.

The undead guardians start the encounter out of sight. Do not place their miniatures unless they are spotted or until they attack.

When the PCs enter from area 18, read:

A long natural stone passage opens up ahead, blocked halfway by a makeshift bunker of bones and rubble. Two human males in miners' garb poke their heads up from behind cover to fire arrows.

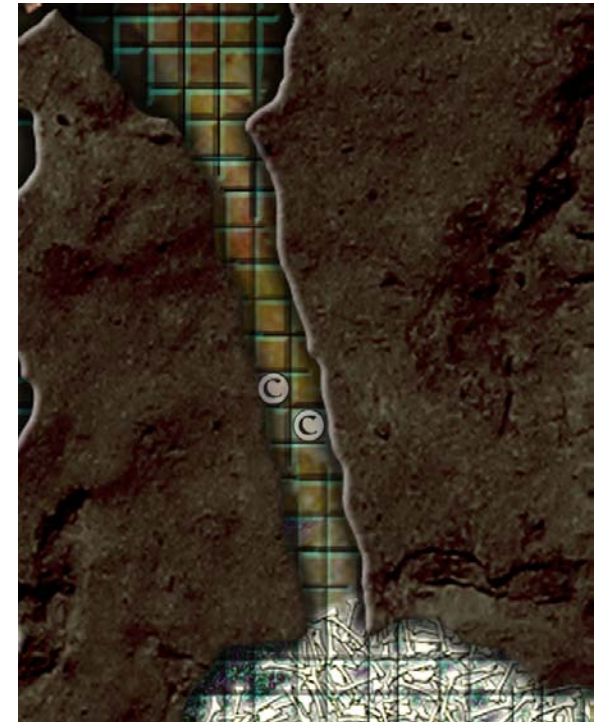
At the beginning of the 5th round of combat, read:

A heavy grinding suddenly echoes through the passageway. Behind the archers, the walls open up as two hulking creatures emerge from hidden alcoves. Their elongated claws reach for the terrified humans as four burning skulls rise to the air behind them.

2 Cultist Thugs (C)		Level 8 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 350
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +9	
HP 87; Bloodied 43		
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 22, Will 19		
Speed 6		
⬇ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 2 damage.		
⤵ Shortbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 15/30; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.		
⬇ Deft Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
The cultist thug shifts up to 2 squares and then makes a short sword attack; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 2 damage.		
Combat Advantage		
The cultist thug deals an extra 2d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.		
Dark Boon (minor, usable only while bloodied; encounter)		
♦ Healing		
For as long as it is bloodied, the cultist thug gains regeneration 4.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common	
Skills Acrobatics +13, Athletics +12, Bluff +10		
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 18 (+8)	Wis 11 (+4)
Con 15 (+6)	Int 12 (+5)	Cha 12 (+5)
Equipment leather armor, short sword, shortbow, quiver of 30 arrows		

TACTICS

The cultists are dedicated to guarding this passage, but they pretend to accept an offer of truce from the PCs in order to draw them closer. They use their bows



unless the first PC closes to melee range before the undead appear, in which case they draw swords and fight from behind the cover of the bunker. When the undead attack, the cultists are killed immediately. Award a percentage of the cultists' total XP according to how much damage the PCs managed to deal to them beforehand.

The flameskulls take 1 round to destroy the two cultists, then they lob *fireballs* through the bunker toward the PCs. Thereafter, they focus on *flame ray* attacks, staying out of melee for as long as possible.

While the flameskulls kill the cultists, the boneclaws use their terrible reach to try and pin the PCs in the narrow passageway. Whether the PCs remain in the passageway, retreat to the ossuary, or

advance to the northern chasm, the boneclaws stay in the thick of combat to maximize their *relentless opportunist* attacks.

These guardians pursue the PCs into any other areas of the mine. They fight until destroyed.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Bunker: This low wall of bones and rubble provides cover. Climbing over the bunker costs 1 extra square of movement.

Bodies: The bodies of cultists transformed into twisted ones litter the passageway, all killed by arrows. Squares containing bodies are difficult terrain.

A DC 16 Perception check made to search the bodies of the twisted ones or the thugs reveals that they all have a brand at their chest marking them as cultists of Vecna.

Alcoves: The hidden alcoves in which the undead were stationed are draped with rotting shrouds and other funeral trappings (see “Treasure,” below). A DC 16 Religion check indicates that the boneclaws and the flameskulls were created from the remains of great warriors interred alive to guard the tomb.

4 Flameskulls (F)	Level 8 Artillery	
Tiny natural animate (undead)	XP 350	
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +11	
HP 70; Bloodied 35		
Regeneration 5		
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 23, Will 21		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 fire, 5 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant		
Speed fly 10 (hover)		
⊕ Fiery Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire		
Reach 0; +10 vs. AC; 1 damage plus 1d8 fire damage.		
↘ Flame Ray (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire		
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 fire damage.		
✱ Fireball (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire		
Area burst 3 within 20; +12 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 6 fire damage. <i>Miss:</i> Half damage. The flameskull can exclude two allies from the effect.		
Mage Hand (minor; at-will) ♦ Conjuration		
As the wizard power <i>mage hand</i> (PH 158).		
Illumination		
The flameskull sheds bright light out to 5 squares, but it can reduce its brightness to dim light out to 2 squares as a free action.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Infernal	
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 5 (+1)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 14 (+6)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 22 (+10)	Cha 20 (+9)

2 Boneclaw Guardians (B)	Level 12 Soldier	
Large shadow animate (undead)	XP 700	
Initiative +15	Senses Perception +12; darkvision	
HP 120; Bloodied 60; see also <i>necrotic pulse</i>		
AC 28; Fortitude 22, Reflex 25, Will 23		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant		
Speed 8		
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will)		
Reach 3; +18 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage		
↶ Necrotic Pulse (free, when first bloodied; encounter)		
♦ Healing, Necrotic		
Close burst 10; undead allies in the burst regain 10 hit points, and enemies in the burst take 10 necrotic damage.		
Relentless Opportunist		
If the boneclaw hits with an opportunity attack, it can make another opportunity attack against the same target during the current turn.		
Threatening Reach		
The boneclaw can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (3 squares).		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common	
Skills Intimidate +14, Stealth +16		
Str 15 (+8)	Dex 21 (+11)	Wis 10 (+6)
Con 14 (+8)	Int 10 (+6)	Cha 16 (+9)

TREASURE

A DC 21 Perception check made to search the alcoves uncovers a wealth of treasure buried with the dead. The PCs can claim three gold necklaces worth 1,500 gp each, six rings set with fire opals (500 gp each), three gem-studded bracelets (700 gp each), and a +3 *rod of reaving*.

LAST STAND

Encounter Level 14 (4,925 XP)

SETUP

- Eibon D'yingor (E)
- 3 cultist warlocks (W)
- 2 twisted one pickfighters (P)
- 5 twisted one minions (M)

This area suffered a recent collapse. Rubble now blocks an exit that once led to the northwest.

The cart track runs north to end in a rubble-strewn cavern. Though there is no sign of any recent mining operations here, numerous tracks can be seen in the dust of the floor.



Perception Check, as the PCs approach the northwest cavern.

DC 16: *From the darkness ahead comes a guttural howling and the sound of scraping stone.*

Eibon and his surviving cultists are pinned down in these caverns by a pack of twisted ones. The necromancer has stolen the high prophet's skull, the twisted ones howling as they tear at the rubble wall in an attempt to get it back.

When the PCs can see into this area, read:

A wall of rubble blocks the passage ahead, aging mine machinery crushed beneath it. Before the wall, misshapen creatures claw at the stones, howling as they try to tear their way through. At intervals, pulses of black light flare at holes in the rubble wall, knocking the twisted ones back. Someone is behind the rubble, and fighting for their lives.

Medium creatures can squeeze through the spaces in the rubble, but the warlocks have those points defended. Both sides are in a stalemate until the PCs arrive. As soon as the twisted ones are aware of the party's presence, they attack.

TACTICS

The twisted ones focus their initial attention on the PCs. The pickfighters take on the strongest-looking melee combatants, while the minions flank for combat advantage and to limit the PCs' movement.

Eibon and his warlocks squeeze through the rubble in the third round. The necromancer sizes up the situation immediately, shouting out that he and his force will aid the PCs (Bluff +14). Eibon and the warlocks make melee basic attacks against the

Eibon D'yingor (E)	Level 13 Elite Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, human	1,600 XP
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +11
Necrotic Bonds aura 5; an enemy in the aura suffering from ongoing necrotic damage is immobilized.	
AC 29; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 28	
HP 248; Bloodied 124	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
⊕ Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon +17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).	
⤵ Tendrils of Death (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic Ranged 10; two targets; the first target must be within 10 squares of Eibon, and the second target within 5 squares of the first target; +17 vs. Fortitude; the target takes ongoing 10 necrotic damage (save ends).	
⚡ Stolen Knowledge (standard; recharge ☐☐) ♦ Psionic Area burst 2 within 10; targets enemies; +18 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 psychic damage, and the target can't use daily or encounter powers (save ends).	
Bloodcut Armor (minor; while bloodied; daily) Eibon gains resist 10 to all damage until the end of his next turn.	
Fatal Rally (minor; encounter) Allies within 5 squares of Eibon can make a melee basic attack against an enemy within reach.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Arcana +14, Bluff +14, History +14, Religion +14	
Str 12 (+7)	Dex 13 (+7) Wis 21 (+11)
Con 12 (+7)	Int 17 (+9) Cha 16 (+9)
Equipment +3 <i>bloodcut leather armor</i> , light shield, +2 <i>magic mace</i> , <i>potion of vitality</i> , holy symbol of Vecna	

twisted ones for 1 round. They then turn their attacks against the PCs.

Eibon uses his *tendrils of death* against spellcasters and ranged combatants, laying into melee combatants with mace attacks.

The cultist warlocks stay out of melee range to use *desiccating curse*, then follow up with *scour the cursed* to maximize damage.

The twisted ones and the cultists all target the more powerful PCs, though the twisted ones focus their attacks on Eibon (still carrying the high prophet's skull) if he moves more than 10 squares away from the closest PC.

The twisted ones fight to the death. The cultists fight as long as they can hold their own against the party, but when the first warlock falls, Eibon and the others flee.

3 Cultist Warlocks (W)	Level 8 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 350
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +9
AC 20; Fortitude +18, Reflex +20, Will +22	
HP 63; Bloodied 31	
Speed 6	
⚔ Fell Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic +13 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares.	
⚙ Desiccating Curse (standard; at-will) Ranged 10; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to all defenses (save ends).	
➤ Scour the Cursed (standard; at-will) Ranged 10; +13 vs. Will; 2d6 + 3 damage, and if the target is subject to the penalties of <i>desiccating curse</i> , it takes an extra 2d6 damage.	
Inescapable Hex (immediate reaction, when an enemy within sight succeeds on a saving throw; at-will) The triggering creature must reroll the saving throw, using the second result.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Arcana +11, Bluff +12, History +11	
Str 12 (+5)	Dex 12 (+5) Wis 11 (+4)
Con 13 (+5)	Int 14 (+6) Cha 16 (+7)
Equipment leather armor	

2 Twisted One Pickfighters (P)	Level 12 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 700
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +12; darkvision
HP 118; Bloodied 59; see also <i>curse carrier</i>	
AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 26, Will 22	
Speed 6	
⚔ Pickaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +17 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.	
⚡ Curse Carrier (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Charm, Polymorph Close burst 1; +15 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).	
Careful Weave (move; at-will) An adjacent enemy slides into the twisted miner's space, and the twisted miner shifts 2 squares.	
Sense Master A twisted one can sense the distance and direction of the creature or remains whose tomb it is driven to guard.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Dungeoneering + 12, Stealth +13	
Str 17 (+9)	Dex 21 (+11) Wis 13 (+7)
Con 14 (+8)	Int 12 (+7) Cha 7 (+4)
Equipment pickaxe	

5 Twisted One Minions (M)	Level 12 Minion
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 175
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +12; darkvision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion; see also <i>curse carrier</i>	
AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 26, Will 22	
Speed 6	
⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) +16 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
⚡ Curse Carrier (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Charm, Polymorph Close burst 1; +14 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).	
Sense Master A twisted one can sense the distance and direction of the creature or remains whose tomb it is driven to guard.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Dungeoneering + 12, Stealth +13	
Str 17 (+9)	Dex 21 (+11) Wis 13 (+7)
Con 14 (+8)	Int 12 (+7) Cha 7 (+4)

MINE CART CHASE

At their first opportunity to get past the PCs, the cultists grab a mine cart and push off down the passageway. From there, they careen down the mineshaft to the south, hoping to lose the PCs before having to bail out at area 22.

There are plenty of carts left for the PCs to follow in. Each is 5 feet wide and 10 feet long, and can hold up to three characters. Characters in a cart can move past each other and are not considered to be squeezing for the purpose of combat. Each cart carries an alchemical lamp that provides bright light in a 5-square radius. The cultist's cart starts 10 squares ahead of the PCs' first cart. The PCs' carts start out 5 squares apart.

The break on the map covers approximately 400 squares (2,000 feet) of twisting mineshaft as it crosses numerous chasms. The mine cart chase is a combat in which the PCs and the cultists are stationary in their carts relative to each other, while the terrain moves past them at the cart's double-move speed of 50 squares per round. This gives the party 8 rounds of high-speed mine cart combat.

Each round, a character in each cart must make a DC 16 Dexterity check (a minor action) to keep the cart under control. No other characters can aid them on this check. On a failed check, the cart's speed slows by 5 squares for that round. That is, if a PC fails the check, his or her cart moves 5 squares back from the cultists. If the cultists fail the check, the PCs' carts advance 5 squares toward them. If all checks are successes or failures, the carts stay where they are relative to each other.

On a failed control check result of 9 or less (or on a roll of 1), one character in the cart (determined randomly) must make a DC 10 Acrobatics or Athletics

check or be tossed out of the cart. Characters who fall from a cart take damage according to the terrain they are passing through at the time, and are effectively out of combat as the carts speed away.

PASSING TERRAIN

At the beginning of each round, roll 1d6 to determine the terrain flashing past the runaway carts.

1d6	Check Track Terrain	Ranged Attack Penalty	Falling Penalty	Damage
1-2	Straight passage	+0	+0	1d10
3	Curved passage	-2	-2	1d10
4	Plunging passage	-4	-2	2d10
5	Open chasm	+0	+0	6d10
6	Curved chasm	-2	-2	6d10

The terrain affects the check made to avoid being thrown from a cart, imposes a penalty on ranged attack rolls, and determines the damage taken by a character who falls from a cart.

CLOSE CARTS

Carts that meet because one's movement is slower crash into each other, but this has no effect on combat or the check to avoid being thrown from a cart. Terrain imposes no penalty on melee attack rolls if two carts are close enough. If two carts meet, a character can jump from one to the other with a DC 10 Athletics check. Carts that come together move apart again depending on the results of control checks in the next round. However, a character with a rope can lash two carts together as a standard action.

SUDDEN STOP

At the end of the eighth round of the chase, the broken tracks at area 22 loom ahead. One PC in each

cart must make a DC 21 Strength check to pull the brakes and stop. One other character can aid the check. If the check fails, the cart plunges over and into the chasm, but all PCs can make DC 16 Acrobatics checks to bail out before the end. On a successful check, a PC takes only 1d10 damage from the jump. On a failed check, the PC goes over the edge and takes 6d10 damage from the fall to the chasm floor below. (Eibon makes the check with a +9 modifier to keep his cart from plunging over the gap. If he fails, all the cultists go over and take 6d10 damage.)

DEVELOPMENT

In the aftermath of combat, a DC 10 Perception check notes that Eibon's cloak conceals a dark steel case wrapped in a leather shroud. The case is inscribed with funerary runes that can be translated with a DC 16 Arcana or Religion check. They explain the cult's ongoing search for magical relics and Eibon's plans to use the prophet's skull as part of a dark ritual. The high prophet's skull lies within the case.

A journal that Eibon carries contains notes detailing his mostly accurate theories of how the tomb's curse functions. Use this to provide the PCs with the information in the "Twisted Domination" sidebar on page 64.

TREASURE

Eibon and his cultists carry a total of 250 pp between them. Eibon also wears +3 *bloodcut* leather armor and carries a *potion of vitality*.

RETURN TO THE PROPHE'T'S TOMB

Encounter Level 14 (5,000 XP)

SETUP

- 8 twisted shardmasters (S)
- 1 twisted foulmaw (F)
- 2 twisted hulks (H)
- Valmour, twisted one (V)

When the PCs make their way back to the ossuary to return the high prophet's skull to the tomb, they interrupt Valmour and a crew of miners attempting to claim the statue.

This encounter takes place in the ossuary. Place Valmour in the sea of bones near the base of the golden statue and place the remaining figures around him.

When the PCs return to the ossuary following the recovery of the high prophet's skull, read:

As you approach the ossuary, you are surprised to hear voices from ahead. Drawing close, you see figures hard at work around the statue. Valmour and a group of miners have managed to unhook the statue from its golden chains and are in the process of toppling it.

But before you can interrupt, Valmour suddenly screams. Wreathed in the acrid smoke vented from the statue's mouth, his skin begins to blister and boil. His bones warp as first he, then the others, are transformed into twisted ones by the power of the tomb's dark curse.

It takes 2 rounds for Valmour and his crew to undergo their hideous transformation.

When the transformation is done, read:

Eight of the miners emerge from the smoke with bone spurs jutting through their misshapen flesh. One has grotesque distended jaws and clutches a staff made of its own bones. Two have transformed to creatures of ogrelike proportions, muscle writhing beneath their skin. Valmour's misshapen body is wreathed in the glow of purple lightning as he suddenly wheels toward you. With a shriek, he and the others attack.

TACTICS

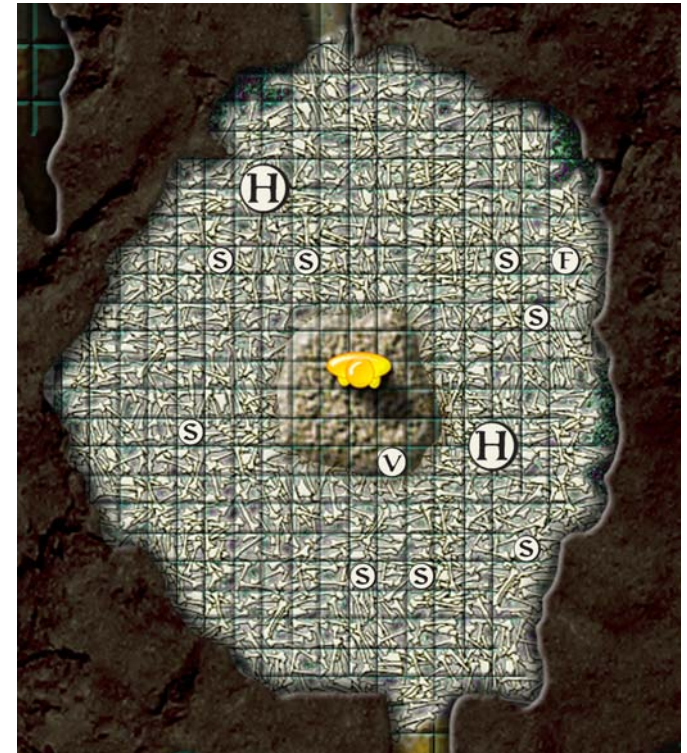
The twisted shardmasters circle the statue, making *bone shard* attacks against the closest PCs.

The twisted hulks wade into melee against the strongest-looking combatant, focusing *lobber* attacks on a single target in order to quickly bloody a PC and use their *bestow curse*.

The twisted foulmaw targets foes at range with *disrupting orb*, reserving its *corrupt breath* attacks until it is pressed by more than one foe.

Valmour uses his claws to mark a foe and follow up with an *enemy of the tomb* attack. He stays in the thick of combat, trusting his *arc of lighting* to harry foes who press him in melee.

Even if the PCs give up the skull, the creatures here are in the grip of a dark bloodlust. Though they can be knocked unconscious if the PCs want to spare them (whereupon they return to normal when the tomb is resealed), they otherwise fight to the death.



8 Twisted Shardmasters (S)		Level 10 Minion
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 125
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +10; darkvision	
AC 25; Fortitude 23, Reflex 24, Will 20		
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion; see also <i>curse carrier</i>		
Speed 7		
☞ Bone Shard (standard; at-will)		
Ranged 5/10; +15 vs. AC; 10 damage.		
☜ Curse Carrier (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Charm, Polymorph		
Close burst 1; +12 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).		
Sense Master		
A twisted one can sense the distance and direction of the creature or remains whose tomb it is driven to guard.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common	
Skills Athletics +11, Stealth +14		
Str 13 (+6)	Dex 18 (+9)	Wis 11 (+5)
Con 14 (+7)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 7 (+3)

RETURNING THE SKULL

The PCs must return the prophet's remains (including the skull) to the sarcophagus and close the capstone to end the curse. However, whether they do so before or after the threat of the twisted ones is eliminated is up to them. One character might elect to make a run for the tomb with the skull while the others take up defensive positions to prevent the twisted ones from following. Award the PCs full XP for this encounter however they end the twisted ones' threat.

TREASURE

Valmour's *ironskin belt* can be claimed by the PCs if he is slain. If he lives, he is so grateful for the PCs' intervention that he gives them the belt in exchange for saving him.

2 Twisted Hulks (H)		Level 12 Brute
Large natural humanoid, human		XP 700
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +9, darkvision	
HP 150; Bloodied 75; see also <i>curse carrier</i>		
AC 24; Fortitude 27, Reflex 22, Will 22		
Speed 7		
⊕ Clobber (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square; see also <i>bestow curse</i> .		
↓ Bestow Curse (free; when the twisted hulk's attack bloodies an enemy; at-will)		
Bloodied target only; +14 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination.		
↖ Curse Carrier (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Charm, Polymorph		
Close burst 1; +14 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).		
Sense Master		
A twisted one can sense the distance and direction of the creature or remains whose tomb it is driven to guard.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common	
Str 24 (+13)	Dex 14 (+8)	Wis 7 (+4)
Con 20 (+11)	Int 7 (+4)	Cha 14 (+8)

About the Author

Tim Hitchcock has been a prolific contributor to *Dungeon* for years now. This is his first 4th Edition adventure, which he designed with unfinished core books. The staff thinks that despite this handicap, Tim did a fantastic job. ✕

Twisted Foulmaw (F)		Level 11 Elite Artillery
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 1,200
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +10; darkvision	
HP 172; Bloodied 86; see also <i>curse carrier</i>		
AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 23, Will 26		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6		
Action Point 1		
⊕ Bone Staff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage.		
↘ Disrupting Orb (standard; at-will)		
Range 10; +14 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).		
↖ Curse Carrier (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Charm, Polymorph		
Close burst 1; +13 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).		
↖ Corrupt Breath (standard; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ Charm, Polymorph		
Close blast 5; targets enemies; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).		
✱ Twisted Connection (standard; recharge ☹ ☹)		
Area burst 1 within 10; targets enemies; +13 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 psychic damage, and one effect currently affecting the twisted foulmaw immediately ends on the foulmaw and is transferred to the target. If the effect has a fixed duration, that duration begins again on the new character.		
Distort Space (immediate interrupt, when the twisted foulmaw would be hit by an attack) ♦ Teleportation		
The twisted foulmaw teleports 2 squares and makes a <i>disrupting orb</i> attack against the attacker.		
Sense Master		
A twisted one can sense the distance and direction of the creature or remains whose tomb it is driven to guard.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common	
Str 12 (+6)	Dex 14 (+7)	Wis 11 (+5)
Con 14 (+7)	Int 16 (+8)	Cha 18 (+9)
Equipment bone staff		

Valmour, Twisted One (V)		Level 12 Elite Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 1,400
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
HP 236; Bloodied 118; see also <i>curse carrier</i>		
AC 27; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 23		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 5		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Claws (standard; at-will)		
+19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is marked (save ends); see also <i>enemy of the tomb</i> .		
↓ Enemy of the Tomb (standard; at-will)		
Marked target only; +19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is immobilized and takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends both).		
↓ Arc of Lightning (immediate reaction, when Valmour is hit by a melee attack; at-will) ♦ Lightning		
Valmour makes an attack against the attacker; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 5 lightning damage, and the target is slowed until the end of its next turn.		
↖ Curse Carrier (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Charm, Polymorph		
Close burst 2; +14 vs. Will; the target is cursed with twisted domination (page 64).		
Cursed Leader		
An ally that uses the <i>curse carrier</i> power within 10 squares of Valmour increases the power's area from burst 1 to burst 2.		
Ironskin Belt (minor; daily)		
Valmour gains resist 10 against all weapon damage until the end of his next turn.		
Sense Master		
A twisted one can sense the distance and direction of the creature or remains whose tomb it is driven to guard.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common	
Str 17 (+9)	Dex 16 (+9)	Wis 11 (+6)
Con 14 (+8)	Int 15 (+8)	Cha 16 (+9)
Equipment chainmail, <i>ironskin belt</i>		