

The Lost Tomb

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A Short 1st Level Adventure for 3-4 Players and new GMs.

Designed for use with

ShadowDark RPG



To run this adventure, you will need the free ****Shadowdark RPG QuickStart Rules****, which includes all the essential mechanics and guidelines for exploring the grim world of Shadowdark. Whether you are new to the system or a seasoned player, the QuickStart rules offer everything you need to dive into classic dungeon crawling with a modern edge. Be sure to download the Shadowdark RPG QuickStart Rules from ****www.thearcanelibrary.com**** before starting your adventure. This supplement expands on those core rules, offering new encounters, treasures, and deadly challenges for your players.



The map was created using DNGFOG

www.dungeonfog.com

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Contents

How to Run This Adventure.....	4
Tips for New Game Masters.....	5
Overview	6
Random Encounters.....	6
The Lost Tomb Map	7
Starting text:.....	8
Entrance	9
Trap Room.....	10
Water Room.....	11
The Divide	14
Hallway	16
Alcove Room	17
Throne Room.....	20
Secret Chamber	22
Conclusion.....	23
New Magic Items	24

How to Run This Adventure

When running a tabletop RPG adventure, it's important to describe the world in a way that engages your players while keeping the game moving. To help you with this, boxed text (like the example below) is used for read-aloud descriptions. This text is meant to be read directly to the players when they enter a new area or encounter something significant.

Example of Read-Aloud Text:

The stone corridor opens into a vast chamber, its air thick with the scent of dust and decay. Flickering torchlight reveals a **golden amulet**, shaped like an eye, resting atop a **stone pedestal**, its surface cracked with age. Shadows dance along the walls, stirred by an unseen breeze.

Key Features of Read-Aloud Text

It's written from a second-person perspective ("you enter the chamber") so players can easily picture what their characters experience.

Bolded words highlight objects of interest — things that are obvious at a glance and may be interacted with for more details.

It does NOT include hidden information (such as secret doors or traps). If the players need to search for something, you describe it only if they investigate the right place.

How to Handle Bolded Objects

When players examine an object in bold, you provide additional details. If the object has special information, it will be formatted like this:

Golden Amulet → This finely crafted pendant resembles a stylized eye, its surface polished to a mirror sheen. The metal feels unnaturally warm to the touch. → DC 12 Intelligence Check: The amulet bears the symbol of a one-eyed demon lord that is worshipped by a local cult.

Stone Pedestal → The pedestal is ancient, its edges chipped and weathered. Faint carvings along its base depict figures bowing before a towering, one-eyed entity.

There is no need for a skill check to learn the basic details about an object, but some deeper knowledge or hidden lore may require one. The required DC (Difficulty Class) is listed after the → symbol along with the ability required.

Tips for New Game Masters

Included in this adventure are some helpful tips marked with ★ *GM Tip*.

These tips are specifically designed to help new Game Masters (GMs) feel more comfortable and confident while running the adventure. They provide helpful hints and reminders that will guide you through common challenges or overlooked details. Whether it's something easy to forget in the excitement of the game or an idea to enhance the experience, these tips are meant to help you keep the game flowing smoothly and ensure everyone has a great time.

Overview

Background

Zardok the Vile was feared not only for his cruelty but for his appetite, he believed consuming his enemies granted him their strength, an offering to Veylara, the Whispering Hunger. When he was finally slain, his loyal warriors, fanatics who shared his dark faith, drank poison to follow him into the afterlife, their bodies sealed in his crypt alongside Doomfang, his cursed blade.

But death was not the end for Zardok. Veylara's blessing warped him into a twisted undead creature, cursed with eternal hunger. For centuries, he has survived by devouring the giant spiders that infest his tomb, but their flesh no longer satisfies him. He hungers for the taste of the living. His skeletal warriors remain at his side, guarding the crypt, waiting for their master's first true feast in centuries.

Danger Level. Unsafe. Check for an encounter every 3 crawling rounds.

Light. There is total darkness in the tomb.

Ceilings. Unless otherwise noted, all ceilings are 10' high.

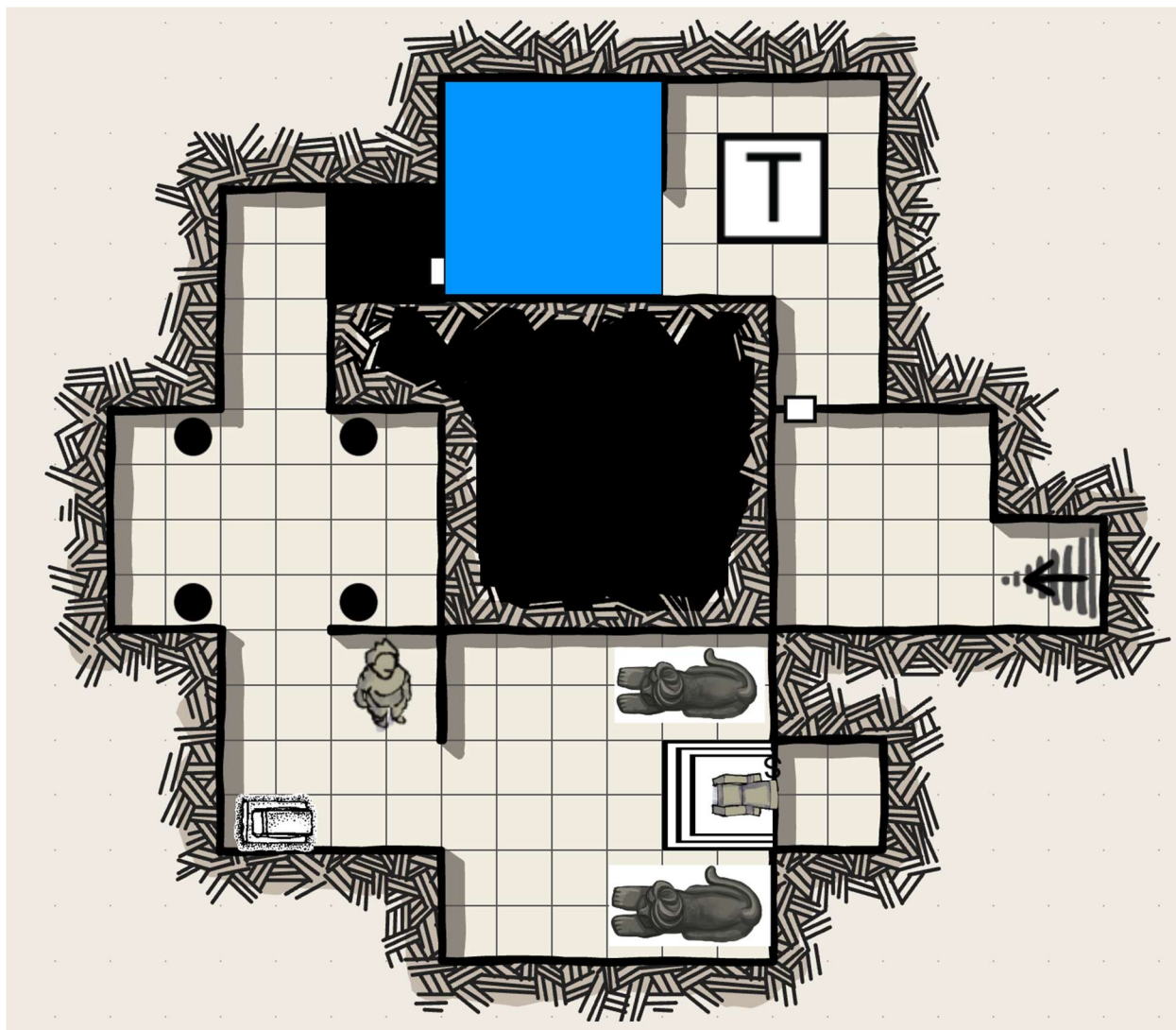
Random Encounters

D6	Details
1	A gust of wind extinguishes all non-magical light sources.
2-3	One Giant Spider (Only Water Room or later. Otherwise, nothing happens)
4-5	One Stingbat (Only The Divide or later. Otherwise, One Giant Spider)
6	One Skeleton (Only Alcove Room or Later. Otherwise, One Giant Spider or One Stingbat, GM's Choice)

Stats for the monsters can be found in the Gamemaster's Quickstart Guide.

Giant Spiders: Page 35, Spider Swarm: Page 36, Skeleton: Page 35, Stingbat: Page 36

The Lost Tomb Map



Starting text:

As you descend the worn stone steps into the abandoned tomb, a cold draft carries the musty scent of dust and decay. **Faded glyphs and intricate carvings** of forgotten tales line the moss-covered walls, their meanings lost to time. Your torchlight flickers, casting restless shadows as your footsteps echo ominously in the darkness.

Hilda, a worried dwarven woman, sent you on this journey to find her missing husband, Bren, and his brother, Tabor. A week ago, Bren discovered this tomb while searching for an old mine entrance. He rushed home, gathered some supplies and his brother, then returned to the tomb. Neither he nor Tabor had returned since. Before you left, Hilda pressed her **lucky ring** into your hands—a family heirloom gleaming faintly in the torchlight—as payment for braving the dangers ahead.

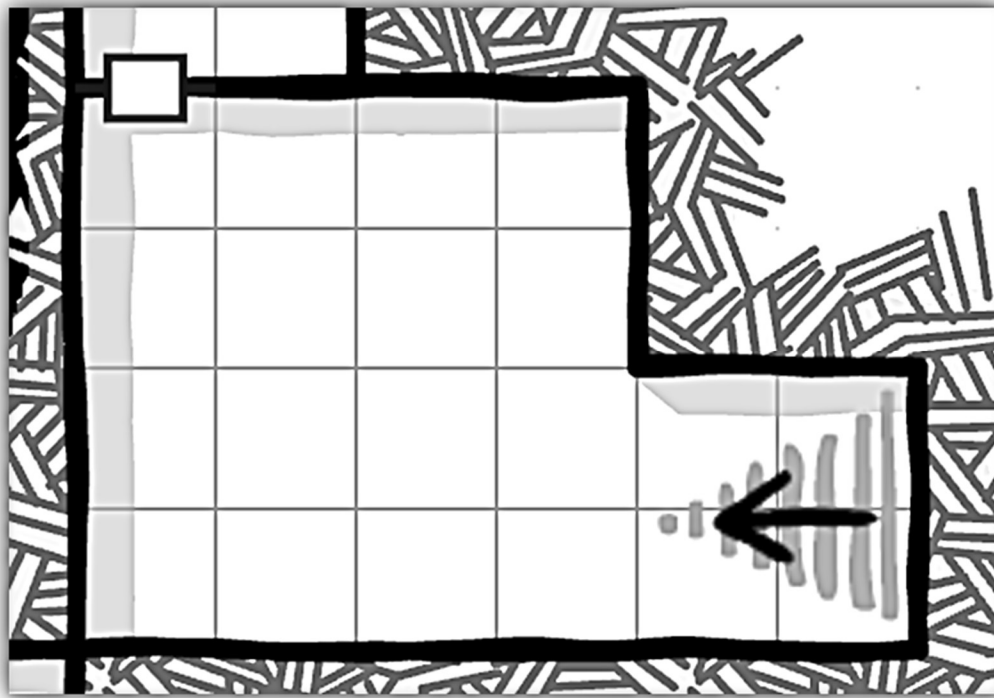
Faded glyphs and intricate carvings → These carvings show men fighting in battles. Most of the carvings and glyphs are faded and damaged by time. → DC 15 Wisdom Check: The player notices that some of the figures in the carving appear to be biting other soldiers. (They are eating them).

Lucky Ring → The ring is a **Ring of Protection**.

★ *GM Tip:* You can hand the players the card for the magic ring if you print it out or just have the player write it on their character sheet.

★ *GM Tip:* Ask the players a few questions to get them thinking about the adventure: Who is holding the torch? What is their marching order down the steps? The stairway is wide enough for characters to walk down the stairs in pairs if they would like.

★ *GM Tip:* Start your timer for the torch. The torch will last an hour in real time.



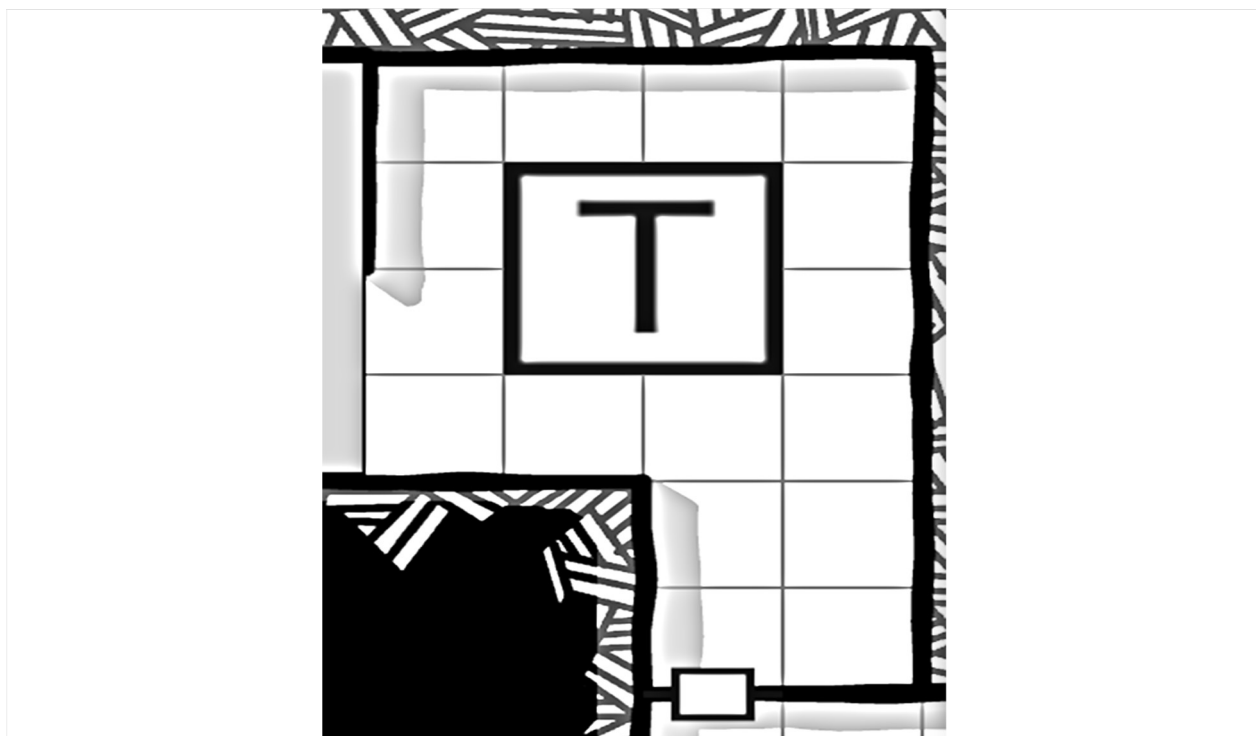
Entrance:

As you reach the bottom of the stairs and step into the dark chamber, the air is thick with dust and decay, clinging to the ancient stone walls. The 20-by-20-foot room stretches before you, its edges barely visible in the flickering torchlight. Footprints disturb the thick layer of dust, proof that someone passed through recently.

A sense of foreboding settles over you as your eyes land on an **old stone door**, slightly ajar, its rough surface worn by time. Nearby, a **crowbar** lies abandoned, its metal faintly gleaming — left behind in haste or frustration, a silent clue to past struggles.

Old Stone Door → Carved into the door is some words: “Here lies Zardok the Vile, his cruelty was only matched by his devotion to darkness.” → DC 15 Intelligence Check: Zardok was a warlord and cannibal that terrorized the people of this land centuries ago.

Crowbar → Dwarven made, but bent and damaged beyond repair.



Trap Room

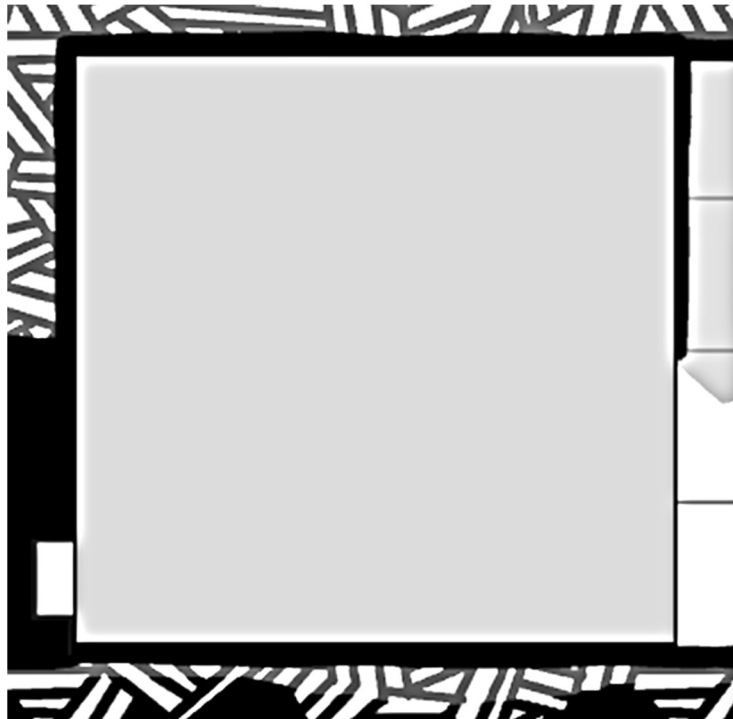
As you traverse the hallway, the oppressive stillness amplifies each footstep against the ancient stone walls. The passage opens into a cavernous 20-foot-square chamber, where the air hangs heavy with the stench of death, clinging to the walls like a grim reminder of unseen horrors.

Two sets of footprints disturb the dusty floor—one leading straight ahead before vanishing abruptly, the other veering west along the south wall toward a looming doorway. As you focus on the entrance to the west, a faint, rhythmic patter fills the chamber, eerily resembling rain—a haunting sound in a place where the sky is long forgotten.

1st set of footprints → Heads North 5ft towards the center of the room then stops.

In the center of this room is a 10ft pit that is filled with spikes. There is an illusion of a stone floor over the pit. Any character that walks into the area needs to make a DC 12 Dexterity check or fall into the pit, taking 1d6 points of damage. At the bottom of the pit is the dead body of Bren. If searched, Bren is carrying a dagger, 3 torches, 6sp, plus flint & steel.

2nd Set of footprints → Run West along the South wall through the entrance.



Water Room

As you enter the entrance to this chamber, the sound of dripping water echoes off the walls. The 20-by-20-foot room boasts finely crafted stone walls, evidence of skilled workmanship. Yet above, the natural ceiling looms 30 feet high, its surface rough and riddled with **countless small holes**. Water trickles down in a steady rain, rippling across the dark pool that covers the floor.

At the water's edge, a **dwarf's half-submerged body** drifts, his limbs swaying gently in the water. The air is thick with moisture and death, the scent of damp stone clinging to your lungs.

Countless small holes → The holes appear to be about 3" in diameter on average.

Dwarf's half-submerged body → This is the body of Tabor. He is dead. There are two holes in the side of his neck that are inflamed and swollen → DC 12 Intelligence check: Tabor died from poison. On the body are a dagger, backpack, 60ft of rope, 3sp.

As the party examines the body of the dwarf, read:

As you crouch over the dwarf's lifeless body, a faint but unmistakable *click-click-click* echoes from above. A chill races down your spine. Slowly, you lift your gaze—just in time to see two enormous, chitinous forms skittering down the wall, their many eyes gleaming hungrily in the dim light. Their fangs twitch with anticipation, venom glistening as they close in.

★ *GM Tip:* Keep the same initiative and just add the spiders in when the turn order gets to you.

★ *GM Tip:* Remember to roll for random encounters every 3 rounds, even during combat. If you roll a 1, roll on the Random Encounters Table on Page 6.

★ *GM Tip:* Remember to roll a Morale check (DC15 Wisdom save) for the giant spiders when one of the spiders is killed. On a failure, the remaining spider(s) will flee up the wall and into one of the holes in the ceiling.



If the players examine the water, read:

As you peer into the water, the murky surface ripples, revealing a faint glint of metal beneath the depths. Squinting, you make out the outline of a **heavy metal door** set into the western wall. The water sways gently, distorting the image, but the door remains unmoving.

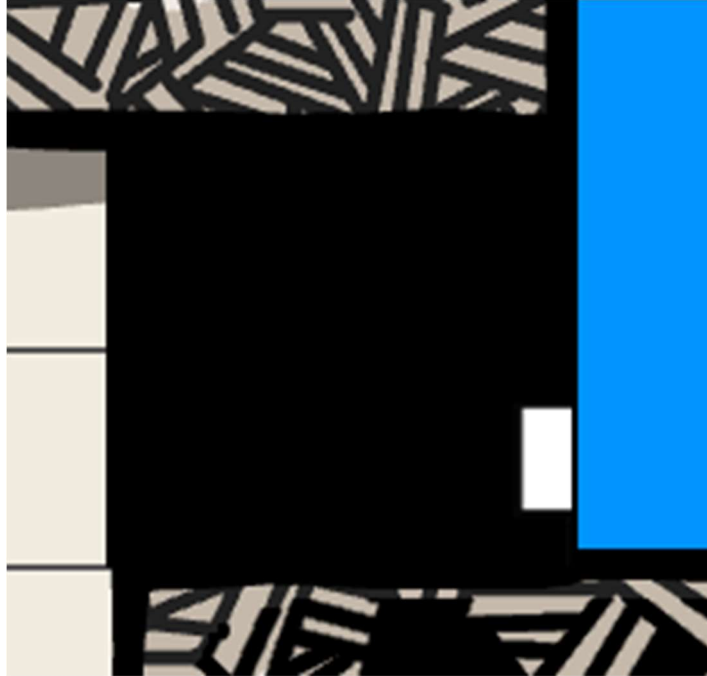
Heavy Metal Door → 10ft below the surface of the water. Its edges worn with age and corrosion. At its center, just visible through the shifting water, is a distinct imprint—a handprint, eerily precise, as if waiting for someone to press their palm against it.

If a character places their hand on the handprint, read:

As you press your hand against the handprint on the door, a flash of blue light streaks along its seams. A sharp **CLUCK** rings out, and suddenly, the door swings open with force. Water surges forward, vanishing into the endless blackness beyond.

As the water is rushing out into the Divide (See next room), the force of the water tries to pull the character along with it. Have the player roll a DC 12 Strength check. Success means the character keeps themselves from being pulled out the doorway. If they fail, the character is pulled out the doorway. Have the player roll a DC 12 Dexterity check to make a last second grab. Failure means the character is pulled into the void beyond the doorway and fall to their death in the huge crevasse.

★ *GM Tip:* If the character tied a rope to themselves and something solid, they should pass automatically. If another character is holding the rope, give the player Advantage on their rolls.



The Divide

A damp gust rushes past the open metal door, carrying the rancid stench of animal waste. Before you, a jagged **10-foot-wide chasm** stretches into the darkness, its depths filled with the eerie fluttering of unseen wings.

Across the divide, a shadowed **hallway** leads southward, beckoning you forward—if you can find a way across. The smell from below suggests whatever lurks there is anything but welcoming.

10-foot-wide chasm → The chasm stretches hundreds of feet up, down, left, and right. The only pathway seems to be the opening that is 10ft directly across the chasm.

Hallway → A 10ft hole in the wall directly across from the doorway. The hallway appears to head South appear passing through the wall.

A DC9 Strength check is required to run the chasm with a running start. Failure means the character plummets to its death in the darkness below.

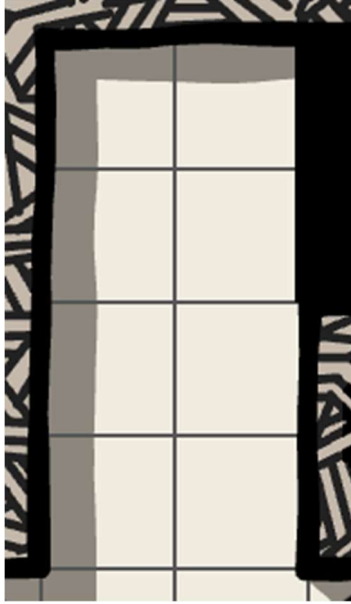
After the first player rolls (success or not), read:

A sudden disturbance ripples through the darkness below. A deafening *whoosh* fills the air as hundreds of stingbats erupt from the depths, their leathery wings beating furiously as they spiral upward into the black void above. The air churns with their frantic movement, the sound of chittering and shrill screeches echoing all around.

Amid the chaos, two of the creatures break away from the swarm, darting through the openings. Their piercing red eyes lock onto you as they let out shrill cries. In a blur of movement, they swoop in, diving straight for the attack!

★ *GM Tip:* Remember to roll a Morale check (DC15 Wisdom save) for the stingbats when one of the them is killed. On a failure, the remaining stingbat(s) will flee up out the doorway and up the chasm.





Hallway

The narrow hallway extends 20 feet before opening into a humid chamber, the air thick and clinging to your skin. Damp clusters of pale, glistening **eggs** rest against the stone walls, their slick surfaces reflecting the dim light. Wisps of delicate, silvery spider webs stretch across them, clinging to the damp shells like gossamer shrouds. Some strands sway slightly, disturbed by the faintest movement in the stale air.

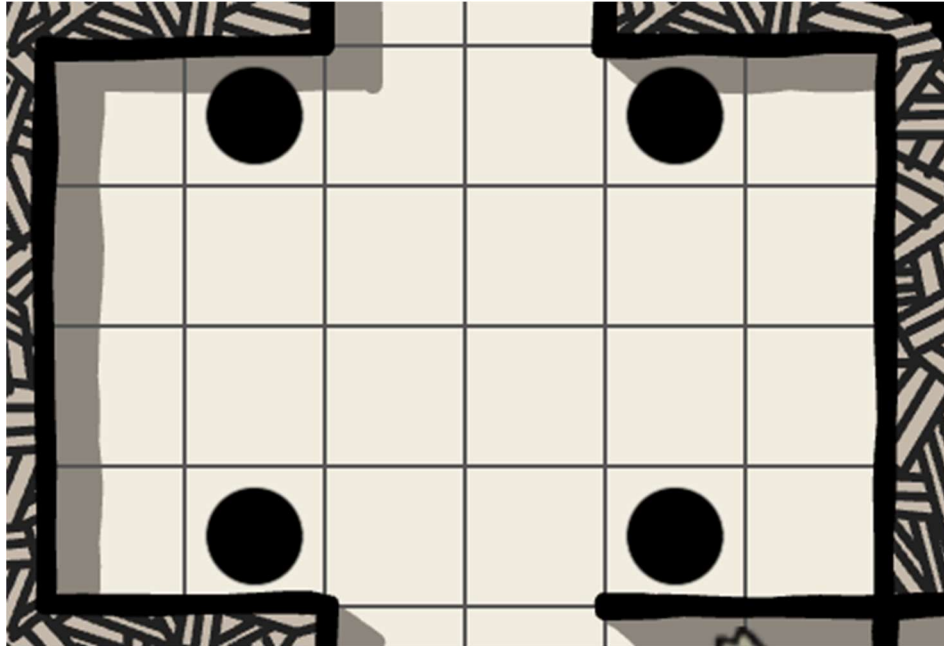
Among the tangled webs, several cocoons dangle from the ceiling and cling to the walls. Some are small, barely the size of a fist, while others bulge unnervingly. A few have already been split open, revealing the shriveled remains of small animals—rats, birds, and other unfortunate creatures. Here and there, glimpses of **metallic glints and splintered wood** hint at other objects trapped within, their shapes obscured by layers of silk.

Eggs → These are giant spider eggs. The soft shells of the eggs are slightly moving. You can see darkened shapes inside the eggs. The eggs are almost ready to hatch.

★ *GM Tip:* Roll a 1d4 as a timer. In that many rounds the eggs will hatch into a spider swarm.

If the eggs are damaged by fire, they are destroyed. Any other attack on the eggs causes the swarm to appear early.

Metallic glints and splintered wood → Among the webs are a dull dagger (1gp), a moldy wooden box (contains 10gp), and an undersized pearl (20gp).



Alcove Room

You step into a room measuring 20 foot long and 30 foot wide. There is a doorway on the opposite wall. Next to the doorways, four stone **pillars** stand, each adorned with empty sconces, their original purpose long forgotten.

The air is thick with the smell of decay. Shadowed **alcoves** set into the walls cradle the decayed remains of ancient warriors, their rusted armor and brittle bones bearing witness to ages long past.

Pillars → Each pillar bears strange, faded markings—runes or symbols whose meanings have long been lost. Some are etched deep into the stone, while others appear almost clawed into the surface, as if by something desperate or enraged.

Alcoves → each holds a decayed skeleton wrapped in tattered remnants of burial cloth. Some remain undisturbed, while others have collapsed into unnatural positions. Faint carvings mark the alcove edges, their meaning lost to time.

When it reaches the GM turn, read:

As you step into the room, a brittle *crack* echoes through the silence. From the alcoves, two skeletons begin to stir, their ancient bones shifting with an unnatural creak. Dust spills from their hollow eye sockets as they lurch forward, clawing their way out onto the stone floor. With slow, deliberate movements, they rise to their feet, empty gazes locking onto you as they prepare to strike.

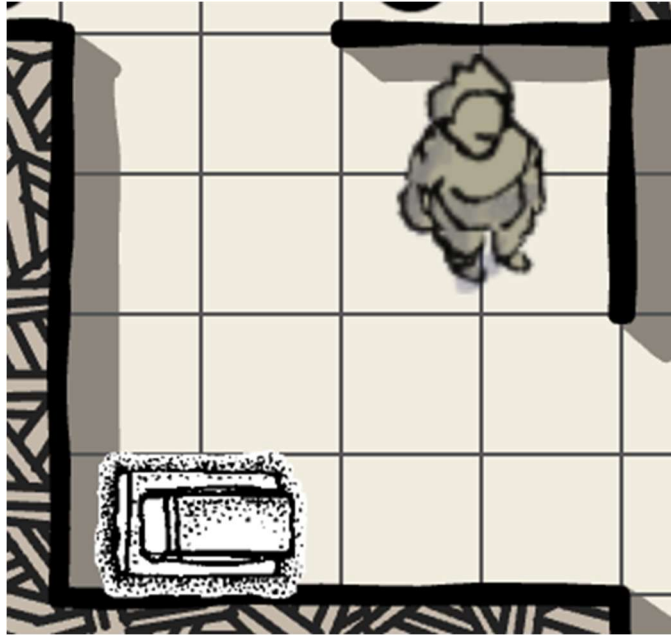
★ *GM Tip:* Skeletons are undead and immune to morale checks: they will fight until destroyed!

★ *GM Tip:* While the skeletons are wearing chainmail armor and fighting with short swords, these items should be considered useless for the players since they are so rusted and broken to be used.

★ *GM Tip:* Roll a 1d4 when the skeletons appear. After that many rounds pass, and if the players are still in the Alcove Room, another skeleton appears.

If the party searches the alcoves, they will find two finely forged dwarven shields (20 gp), 12 gp in the pocket of a ripped cloak, dusty leather armor dyed black (10 gp), a Level 1 Potion of Healing (1d6 HP, 80 gp).





Crypt

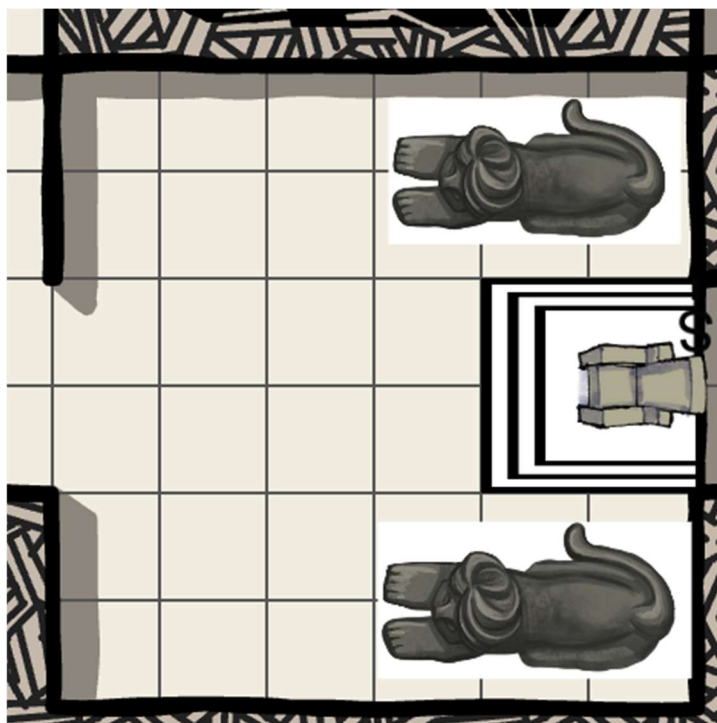
As you enter the 20-by-20-foot crypt, the cold air thickens around you. To the east, a **statue of a winged female demon** stands in sinister grace, her sharp features commanding attention. Two piercing green beams of light emanate from her eyes, casting an eerie glow across the room.

The light focuses on the open lid of a **sarcophagus** in the southwest corner, creating strange shadows on the ancient stone. The oppressive silence is broken only by a faint hum that seems to pulse from the statue, as if the figure itself watches and waits.

statue of a winged female demon → A solid obsidian statue of a female demon. The light beams emanate from her eye sockets (nothing in there). → DC 15 Intelligence Check: The statue is of Veylara, the Hungering Shadow. She is a powerful demon lord and seduces humanoids into her service with offers of power. Followers usually perform cannibalistic rituals in her name.

sarcophagus → The sarcophagus is empty except for a sword (Doomfang).

★ *GM Tip:* Don't give the players the card for Doomfang until they begin to use it. That way they don't know the benefits and drawbacks of the weapon until they have used it. The unknown hazards of using a powerful magic item without learning about it first!



Throne Room

The 30-by-30-foot room ahead is thick with the oppressive stench of decay and death. To the east, a raised dais supports a **throne** flanked by two menacing **lion statues**, while behind the throne, the **cruel visage of a dark lord** is carved into the wall, his twisted features radiating malice. His presence is palpable, even in stone.

At the foot of the throne, a pale creature crouches, noisily gnawing on the leg of a giant spider, the grotesque sound echoing in the stillness. As you step into the room, a wave of pure evil presses down on you. The creature's glowing green eyes lock onto you, and it growls, "**Flesh**," as the **green gem** around its neck pulses with sinister light, casting eerie shadows across its ghoulish face.

Zardok will immediately attack the party, his hunger for flesh insatiable.

- ★ *GM Tip:* If any of the players use Doomfang during the battle, make sure you give them ½ damage done to target as HP back from successful attacks.
- ★ *GM Tip:* If the player using Doomfang kills Zardok, remember to have the player roll a DC 13 Wisdom save or attack the nearest creature.

Zardok the Vile

AC13, HP15, ATK 1 Claw +2 (1d6), MV near, S +2, D +3, C +2, I -3, W -1, Ch 0, AL C, LV 3

Undead: Immune to Morale Checks

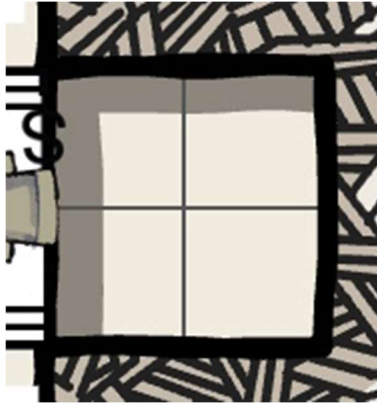


Throne → Made from stone and covered in dried blood. The name “VEYLARA” is scratched into the stone of the throne in various places.

Lion Statues → Each lion statue is carved from a single piece of stone. Each of the eyes are rubies (10 gp each)

Cruel Visage of Dark Lord → This is an image of Zardok the Vile at his prime. He is wearing the same necklace in the mural, but the gem is missing and just an empty socket. If the gem from the corpse of Zardok is placed into the socket, the secret door opens.

Green Gem → The gem will stop glowing when Zardok is killed. The gem emanates feelings of cold and evil to anyone that holds the gem. If it is inserted into the socket in the empty necklace of the mural on the back wall, the secret entrance will open. The gem is worthless glass and anyone who handles the gem would not want to possess it.



Secret Chamber

As the secret door grinds open behind the dark lord's throne, a wave of stale, cold air rushes out, carrying the scent of dust and decay. Beyond the threshold, a small chamber is revealed, its stone walls slick with age and shadow. In the center of the room, a **lone chest** rests on the floor, its iron fittings tarnished. The silence in the chamber is heavy, as if the very air is waiting—watching—to see who will dare take the first step inside.

Lone Chest → The chest is not locked but it is trapped. → DC 12 Wisdom check to determine there is a trap. DC 12 Dexterity Check to disarm. If not disarmed, lifting the lid triggers a puff of green gas. DC 12 Constitution Check or take 2D6 damage from poison. Inside the chest are 50 gp, a silver and gold circlet (10 gp), a sapphire (10 gp), a pair of elf-forged shortswords (10 gp each), a golden bowl stained with blood (10), and a set of golden teeth (10gp).

Conclusion

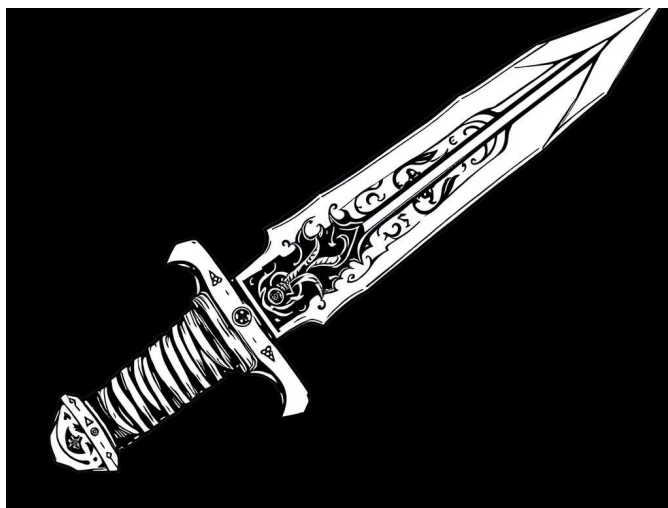
With the secret chamber opened, the treasure within is yours to claim—but the weight of this place remains. The carvings on the walls tell a story of horrors long past, yet the whispers of the demon Veylara may still linger in the dark corners of the world.

As you step from the crypt into the open air once more, the night feels colder, the stars distant and uncaring. The question remains—what will you do with the cursed blade Doomfang, and what other horrors might you have awakened in this lost tomb?

- ★ *GM Tip:* If this is going to be the starting adventure for a campaign, you can award the players 5XP each for the adventure. This should put them ½ way from Level 2.
- ★ *GM Tip:* Also allow them to roll on the Carousing Tables to see if they can gain additional XP.

This can make an interesting start to a campaign. While the sword Doomfang is powerful, players might want to remove the curse and get rid of the sword, especially if the owner of the sword keeps attacking them after each kill. That could be a good quest to start a campaign!

New Magic Items



Doomfang

Cursed shortsword, magical, +1

A jagged, blackened blade etched with infernal runes, **Doomfang** radiates a chilling aura of malice. The sword's hilt is wrapped in aged leather, stiffened by dried blood, and its edge never dulls. When wielded, the blade almost seems to pull toward flesh, eager to taste blood once more.

Properties:

- **Magic Weapon:** Doomfang grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls (1d6+1).
- **Life-Drinker:** When you deal damage with Doomfang, you regain hit points equal to half the damage dealt (rounded down). This effect only triggers once per turn.
- **Cursed Hunger:** Whenever you reduce a creature to 0 HP with Doomfang, you must succeed on a **DC 13 WIS save** or be compelled to attack the nearest creature (ally or enemy) on your next turn. You can repeat this saving throw at the end of each of your turns to regain control.
- **Bound by Blood:** Once used to draw blood and regain hit points, Doomfang cannot be discarded unless **Restoration** is cast upon the wielder. Doomfang will become the user's most prized possession.

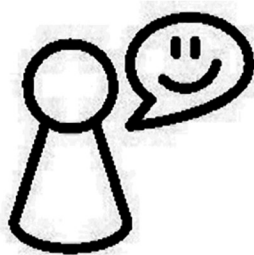
The blade whispers to its wielder in their darkest moments, urging them to spill more blood in the name of **Veylara, the Hungering Shadow**.



Ring of Protection

A metal ring etched with Dwarven runes

Benefit. You get a +1 bonus to your armor class.



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