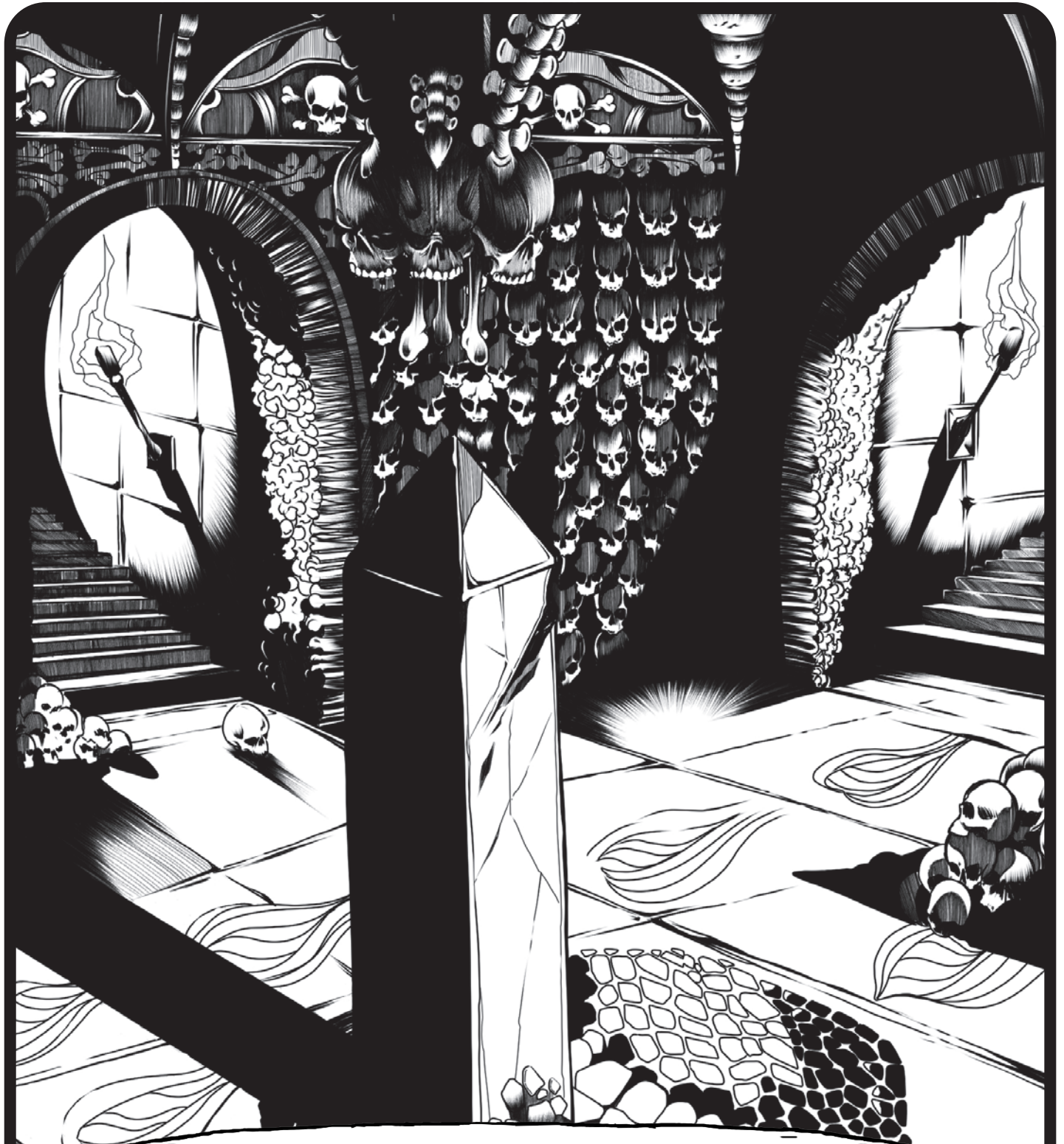


THE GLOWING OSSUARY



AN ADVENTURE FOR 4 PCs
OF 5TH LEVEL BY JERRY LENEAVE

THE GLOWING OSSUARY

Adventure Background

Lost to time and buried in the echoes of wars in the name of the Blood Kingdom, the Cloudwall Mountains hide a tomb unlike any other—the forgotten, once-dwarven halls of the dead that have more recently come to be known as the Glowing Ossuary.

Branching out like stony roots from a seemingly bottomless shaft, the tomb runs deep into the earth below, so deep that it's rumored to be endless, possibly extending into the Empire of the Ghouls and beyond. A century ago, however, its entrance was buried in an avalanche caused by foolhardy adventurers attempting to slay Zrobaishalil. Sealed beneath so much rubble and snow, the dwarves decided to leave the tomb sealed as a silent memorial to those interred within.

Recent rumors abound, however, of new activity—of an enthralled legion of skeletal laborers, incessantly digging deeper. All of which toil under the dark gaze of a cruel master: Naz'Vaza, a death knight of unimaginable malignancy and cruel resourcefulness.

NAZ'VAZA THE SOULLESS

In life, he was born to nobility, though still an outcast even among his own kind. Naz'Vaza Nosmadi, first and only child of the great Nosmadi fortune, was not just any ordinary pariah—some say he was born without a soul at all. Born under grim portents, he emerged from his mother's womb with an upside-down face, his fate already beginning to weave itself. Where his mouth should have been were two dark, beady eyes, and where his eyes should have been was a mouth that would later grow crooked teeth and load his lips with curses.

Placed in charge of the Nosmadi family business at an incredibly young age, Naz'Vaza never really stood a chance. For a noble, he was uneducated yet vastly overconfident. Empathy and humility were alien concepts to him, so he commanded those under his employ with the same callous disregard as was given to him throughout most of his life. His workers demanded respite from their harsh working conditions, and he regularly ignored their pleas until one fateful day when he decided to give the “rest” that was demanded so passionately from one of his workers. While hoisting some large slabs of rock headed to the Southlands,

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Open Game Content: The Open Content in this adventure includes the skeletal sentry and tormented soul monsters and the *hammer of witches* magic item.

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a sweat-soaked laborer demanded a break, claiming without one that it would be the death of him. With a wave of his hand Naz'Vaza obliged him; the pulley he was operating was loosed by one of his guards, and the laborer was crushed to death instantly. "You can rest when you're dead!" Naz'Vaza shouted from behind the mask that corrected his juxtaposed visage to the rest of his workforce, attempting to teach them a lesson.

However, this maliciousness would be his undoing. A revolt was led against him the following day, and he was stoned to death by his own workers. However, he had become an adept necromancer in the latter years of his life and planned ahead to make the most of his inevitable demise, so in death, he was only brought more power.

His return to un-life was swift, and his wrath even more so. The newly risen Naz'Vaza excavated the entrance to the long-lost dwarven ruins, following up on family maps obtained during his life, and claimed it for his dark ambitions. It's said that the bones of the very same people who stoned him to death toil in the Glowing Ossuary under his command.

THE OSSUARY STIRS

Naz'Vaza stirs in the depths of the ossuary, a profane and underdeveloped death knight, alongside his army of skeletons that have been toiling to deepen and expand the halls. They've unearthed treasures and horrors alike and created their own as well, laying many cruel and peculiar traps. All the while, Naz'Vaza's forces have been harvesting bones from those that traverse the Cloudwall Mountains and from interlopers who dare to enter their domain.

Naz'Vaza has combined his knowledge of necromancy and his dabbling in blood magic in an attempt to fuse together new bloody hybrids of bone and repurposed flesh. He ultimately aims to amass an army of undead to descend upon the Blood Kingdom and all of Midgard, emerging across the entire land through a vast system of tunnels. Still growing, his legions have begun seeping out of the Cloudwall Mountains into the surrounding lands to surreptitiously harvest ever more resources.

Rumors of these skeletal raiding parties drift through the Blood Kingdom, finding a home in the taverns and town halls on the lips of scared commoners and boastful adventurers. The goal of this adventure is for characters to enter the ossuary and seek out the source of Naz'Vaza's power—a literal beating heart—and put an end to it and his schemes.

Adventure Hooks

As characters travel through Midgard, they are bound to hear some fragment of a rumor about roaming bands of skeletons dragging people out of their homes in the middle of the night or stories of adventuring parties delving into

a long-lost tomb in the Cloudwall Mountains, never to be seen again. If that's not enough impetus for them, here are a few suggestions:

- An antiquities dealer thinks that the Glowing Ossuary hides pieces essential for their collection, and they will pay handsomely.
- A local bard has been regularly singing ballads about the "Glowing Bone Brigade" that dwells within the mountains and wishes to achieve infamy by traveling with a group of brave heroes.
- The Blood Sisters of Cantri Abbey fear for the safety of the mothers in their care and have sent a band of their priestesses to investigate, but they have yet to return.

Reaching the Glowing Ossuary

Just off the Black Road, northeast of Cantri Abbey, there is a small mountain pass fallen into disuse: the climb is treacherous and a few of the jumps may end in death if missed. Feel free to have characters make the journey up purely narratively or to place some obstacles in front of them and call for skill checks or saving throws as they encounter falling rocks, stubborn mountain goats, crumbling ledges, and rickety bridges. You may also want to employ random encounters with the two-headed eagles, ogres, and yetis—and vampires—that inhabit the Cloudwall Mountains. The trek to the peak entrance should take about 2 days total.

Once the characters reach the entrance, read the following aloud:

.....
As you reach the end of your journey, near the peak, there is a small hole, approximately 5 feet in diameter. It is mundane, undecorated, and would seem otherwise innocuous if not for the stories you've heard about this place. Looking inside reveals a short, narrow stairway carved from the mountain itself, leading to a sturdy wooden platform.
.....

ENVIRONS

Unless otherwise noted, the walls and floors are made of hewn stone and the ceilings are rough-cut. Throughout the halls are dozens of alcoves filled with rows of skulls and sometimes whole skeletons, and doors and archways are decorated with additional bones as well. (The remains left in sarcophaguses are from dwarves unless otherwise noted while the bones used as decoration are generally newer and from a variety of peoples.) The halls are dimly lit by faint magical torchlight and colorful, glowing, yet indiscernible runes that decorate the walls. The runes range from bright greens to otherworldly purples, nauseating pinks, eldritch blues, and crimson reds. The air is dry and smells of dust and moldering remains. It is quiet with the exception of a low, slow rhythm that can be felt as much as heard with increasing clarity as you travel deeper.

NAZ'VAZIAN SIGILS

Throughout the ossuary, strange glowing sigils will be found. They do not belong to any known language and are indecipherable, even by magical means. The markings themselves are magical and will show when *detect magic* is cast, but beyond that, they cannot be manipulated and will vanish if the heart of the Glowing Ossuary is destroyed. These are sigils of Naz'Vaza's own making via profane magic and hold the will of some of his minions, the particularly resistant ones, by disabling their memories of the cruelty inflicted upon them by Naz'Vaza himself—a countermeasure to ensure his skeletal legions do not turn against him. (They are largely decorative and symbolic for the purpose of this adventure.)

THE DESCENT

The platform is approximately 15 feet by 15 feet and is made of iron-reinforced oak; this is a lift that uses a pulley-and-lever system to traverse up and down. It is the primary mode of transportation characters will utilize in the ossuary. The lift is activated by a lever and moves at 5 feet/round when traveling up and 10 feet/round when traveling down. It takes an action to activate the lever, which allows the lift to rise, lower, or stop. The lift can hold up to 2,000 pounds. It extends downward to ever-deepening levels of the ossuary—level 1 being the highest point and level 10 being both the deepest point and the heart of Naz'Vaza's lair. This portion of the adventure covers levels 1–6.

Level 1

The lift halts after a descent that lasts several minutes. There is a single open archway to the west that leads to a short, narrow hall lit by a torch and ends at a wooden door with an iron handle and decorated in teeth and jawbones.

1. TRAPPED ENTRANCE

The first stop on the lift leads to a narrow, torchlit hallway with a closed door (see bolt trap below).

Beyond the door is a narrow, 15-foot hallway, ending at an iron portcullis, barring further progress. The bars can be bent with a successful DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check or raised via the lever in Area 2.

Bolt Trap. A successful DC 19 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a mechanism in the door hinge. The trap can be disarmed by disabling the hinge mechanism with a successful DC 18 Dexterity (thieves' tools) check or by jamming the hole where the bolt fires from.

When the door is opened, a diseased bolt makes a ranged attack with a +10 bonus against a random target within 5 feet. A target that is hit takes 4 (1d8) piercing damage and must succeed a DC 20 Constitution saving throw against disease, taking damage equal to two Hit Dice or, on a critical hit, three Hit Dice. (These Hit Dice are considered spent,

for purposes such as healing, until after a short or long rest.) After 10 minutes, the bolt trap resets.

2. GUARD ROOM

The dust on the floor here is thick. Bones of all kinds are piled in the corners of this rectangular chamber. On the east wall, you see a lever.

Amid the bones are various simple weapons that characters can sift through. Up to five intact weapons can be found this way. Weapons should be chosen randomly from simple melee and simple ranged weapons.

On the east wall is a lever flipped to the down position. If flipped up, both portcullises in Areas 1 and 3 are raised.

3. GUIDING PILLARS

Green light bounces off the smooth marble of the decorated pillars that dominate this room. To the north, you see two alcoves containing tall skeletons resting upright.

This room contains two bone-decorated columns at its center: the western column depicts a sword, and the eastern an eye. To the north are two alcoves, each containing skeletal remains (see **skeletal sentry** in Appendix) bathed in green light from sigils carved in the ceiling. They are dressed in tattered armor, and one has its bony fingers clasped around a flail, the other a tarnished greatsword. To the south is a small alcove barred by an iron portcullis behind which rests a bronze plaque with an inscription in Common: "As above, so below."

Columns. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the middle of each column can be rotated, requiring a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check. There are three symbols on each: a sword, an eye, and a cross. These columns do nothing on their own but are linked to the column puzzle in Area 12.

Inscription. The full inscription is covered in dust. If brushed off, the sword (left) and eye (right) symbols are revealed, identical to those on the columns.

Skeletons. If the columns' centers are rotated in any way, a mechanism in the wall behind them snaps, causing the skeletons to come to life and attack.

Level 2

As the lift stops, a low stone archway decorated in mandibles and vertebrae opens to the east into a cramped hall with a small alcove to the south. The hallway ahead is lit by dim purple light and curves off to the north.

4. SEPULCHRAL ENTRY

The alcove here contains another dormant **skeletal sentry** (see **Appendix**), wielding a halberd. If its weapon is tampered with or it is attacked, it awakens and attacks. There is a loose stone in this alcove, noticeable with a successful

DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check, behind which is a small sack of coins (3d6 sp) and a gold ring worth 50 gp.

5. THE WINDING SEPULCHERS

The hallway here contains several sarcophaguses, each within its own alcove, and glances north before taking a sharp turn to the east. The purple light grows brighter.

There are eight tombs here total, each decorated differently and with different family crests, none of which appear decadent or noteworthy. Each can be opened with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check and contains a **skeleton** in rotting funerary garments along with 1d4 gp worth of valuables. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals remnants of flesh, clearly not their own, on their fingertips or in their teeth. If any of them are disturbed or their valuables taken, they wait for characters to leave the area and then climb from their graves, crawling down to Area 20 by some unknown passage to await beneath the water to attack those that plundered the funerary hoard.

6. COLLAPSED HALL

The hallway comes to an abrupt end. Bathed in nauseating purple light from a string of eight glowing sigils on the north wall, you see the bodies of three adventurers who appear to have been crushed by a cave-in.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check makes it clear that portions of the bodies' exposed flesh have been scraped down to the bone. A search identifies the following bodies:

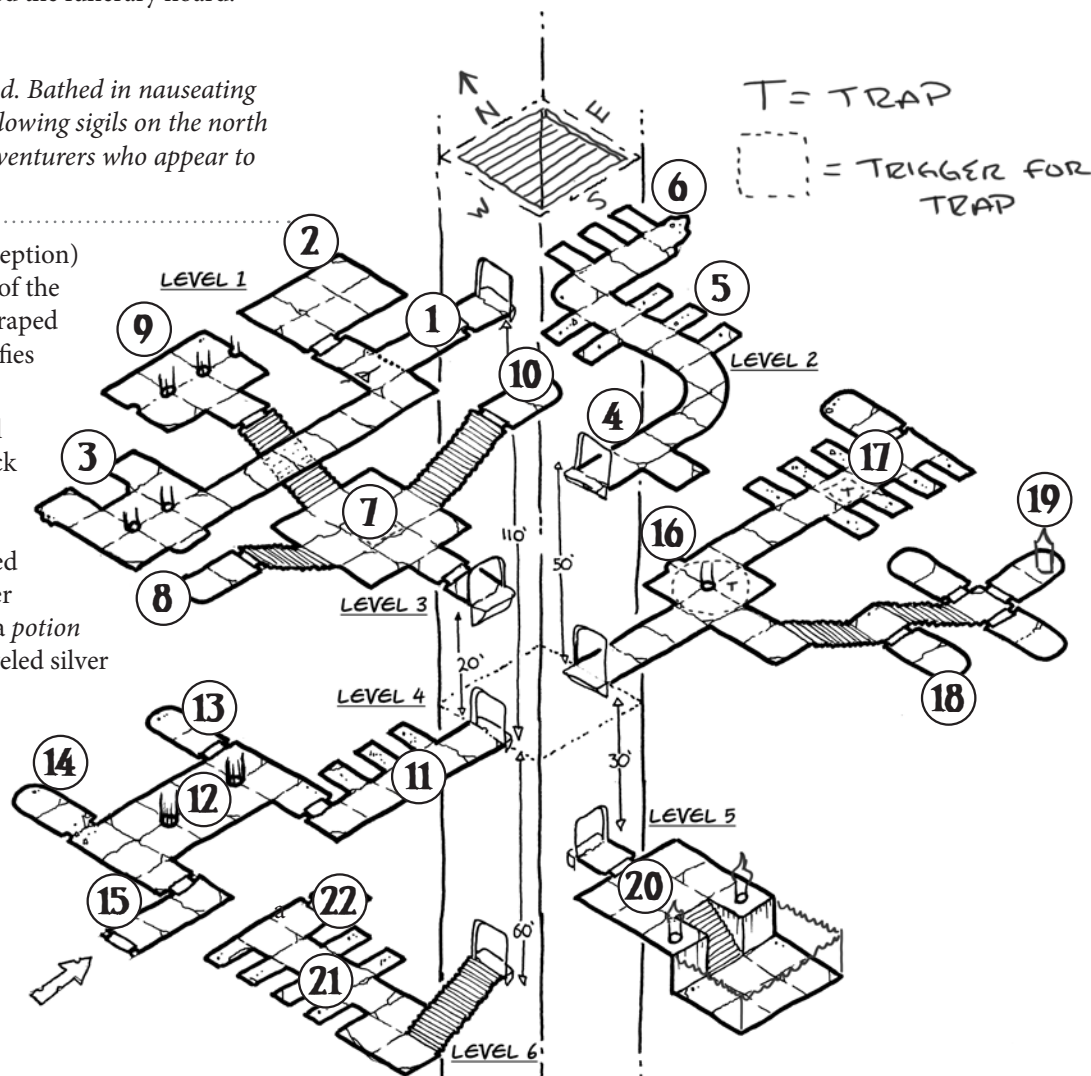
- An elf in fine robes. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that she is the only one that appears to have not been instantly killed. She is only buried in rubble up to her waist, and her fingers still grasp a corked vial (a *potion of greater healing*). She has a jeweled silver clasp in her hair worth 4d6 gp.
- A human wearing a golden breastplate and a red cape. Beside him is a crumpled shield bearing the symbol of a griffon.
- A dwarf clad in blood-soaked leather. Beside him is sturdy dagger (a +1 *dagger*) of dwarven craftsmanship. His beard is beaded with various jasper ornaments worth 1d4 sp.

Level 3

Beyond the lift, the ceiling here is high and vaulted, decorated in thousands of skulls and other bones. The floor is a painted-bone mosaic—strewn skulls and various fragments forming a malformed skull—its eye sockets instead where its mouth should be, and a grinning jaw in the middle of its forehead. Flames are carved into the stone tiles surrounding the visage. Where the skull's nose would be, instead a triangular altar rises several feet from the floor. There are stairs leading upward to the north, east, and west.

7. THE ANTECHAMBER

A successful DC 19 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a hidden iron portcullis. Upon entering this area, the portcullis shuts behind the characters, barring the way back onto the lift. It can be forced open with a successful DC 25



MAP: [CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THIS MAP FOR YOUR VIRTUAL TABLE TOP.](#)

Strength (Athletics) check. It will raise once the puzzle has been completed.

Puzzle Trap. Combinations of primary-colored skulls (from Area 9) need to be placed on the altars to create the correct secondary colors. In the east room, red and blue skulls will need to be placed on the altar, creating purple (for violets). In the west room, blue and yellow will need to be placed on the altar, creating green (for dragon scale). Here in the antechamber, yellow and red will need to be placed atop the altar to make orange (for flames).

If skulls are not placed correctly on the altars, once the sixth and final skull is placed anywhere on any altar, it will trigger the trap. Twenty skeletons begin forming amid the remains that comprise the ceiling and will descend, clawing at any living creature in sight. These skeletons come down at a rate of five skeletons per round for 4 rounds: some are unarmed, and others wield daggers made of sharpened bone.

Shortly after describing the room, feel free to add the following:

To the east and west are stairs that ascend to bone archways that open into chambers containing altars. Directly north, another set of carved steps lead toward a doorway, seeping multicolored light.

8. WEST ALTAR ROOM

This small, elongated alcove is carved painstakingly in a dragon-scale pattern that covers every surface, with the exception of the forked altar in the middle that's painted red and resembles a serpent's tongue.

The altar requires a blue and yellow skull. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (History) check identifies the pattern here as representative of those folk tales and illuminated manuscripts depicting angry green dragons, razing villages to the ground.

9. THE SKULL CHAMBER

Prismatic light emanates from beneath the door set into this skull-adorned archway. A heavy iron lock bars entry.

A successful DC 13 Dexterity (thieves' tools) check or DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check will open the door. Within the room are four pillars, each containing three skulls, each with a different brightly colored, glowing sigil emblazoned between its eyes. In total, there are four red, four yellow, and four blue skulls. Only six are needed to solve the puzzle in Area 7.

10. EAST ALTAR ROOM

This small, rounded chamber is carved floor to ceiling in a beautiful bas-relief of a wooded grove, dominated by flowers and petal-shaped patterns. At its center is a rough-cut altar with two jagged protrusions.

The altar requires a red and blue skull. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies the carved flowers, though worn, as violets.

Level 4

As the lift lurches to a halt, you are met with two gateways: to the east, a narrow hall shrouded in total darkness and to the west another dimly lit funerary hall.

11. THREE WISE GHOULS

Stepping off the lift and into the passageway, you see a door at the end of the hall on the north wall and, leading up to the door, three alcoves. The air here is dry, and cobwebs dangle from the ornate spiral patterns of bones that decorate the walls.

Along the north wall are three tombs, each containing an upright sarcophagus covered in thick dust and cobwebs. Brushing the dust from the sarcophaguses reveals beautiful marble inlays of skeletons. Each contains treasure and a resting ghoul, and their lids serve as subtle clues, pertaining to the direction their depictions face, as to the nearby rooms. If any of the lids are opened, all three ghouls immediately emerge and attack.

Sarcophaguses. The easternmost is depicted facing east and is blindfolded. This sarcophagus contains a *widow's lantern* (see **Appendix**) and a wedding ring worth 6d6 sp.

The middle is depicted facing forward. It is covering its mouth with both hands. This sarcophagus contains several gold teeth worth 3d6 gp and various jeweled bracelets worth 5d6 gp.

The westernmost is depicted facing west. Its hands are bound in iron manacles. This sarcophagus contains an iron crown inset with false rubies and 1d4 *potions of healing*. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) or DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the rubies are fake.

12. SO BELOW

Thick marble columns decorated in a facade of skulls dominate this room. Eerie yellow light glints off them from a half-dozen sigils on the ceiling. The center of each column bears a series of symbols on an iron band that wraps around it. On the floor between the two pillars is an obvious circular stone dais. To the north are two stone doors, one sealed and another reduced to rubble. To the south is a simple wooden door reinforced with iron banding.

This room contains two bone-decorated columns at its center, identical to the ones found in Area 3. However, these have six symbols on their rotating middle portions: a sword, an eye, a cross, a fist, a comet, and an inverted

trident. The door on the north wall that isn't broken is magically sealed and unbreakable. The door on the south wall leads to Area 15.

Pillar Puzzle. Currently, the western pillar has the trident symbol facing forward on its middle portion, and the eastern pillar has the comet symbol. The center of each column can be rotated with a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check.

To solve this puzzle, these pillars and those in Area 3 must both be set to the symbols indicated on the inscribed plaque in Area 3: the sword on the west and the eye to the east. After the pictographic choices are made, the dais must be stood upon, or otherwise depressed, to activate the puzzle.

If the solution is correct, the sealed stone door to Area 13 slides into the floor, revealing its contents.

If the solution given is anything but what is mentioned above, the roof of the chamber to Area 13 collapses, burying the treasure beneath thousands of pounds of rubble, and any remaining ghouls from Area 11 emerge and attack as magical darkness fills the room.

13. TREASURE CHAMBER

With a low rumble and the sound of stone grinding against stone, a gout of dust spews upward from a slot in the ground as the massive stone doorway slides beneath the floor, revealing a gleaming chamber full of valuables that rest atop a black granite sarcophagus.

Atop the sarcophagus are gold coins from ages past (12d6 gp), a bracelet of pink pearls (worth 800 gp), and a golden necklace inset with an emerald (a *peript of health*). A successful DC 19 Strength (Athletics) check is required to lift the lid of the sarcophagus; a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Medicine) check identifies the stout skeleton within as a once-mighty dwarf lord. The remains are dressed in ceremonial vestments threaded with red and gold embroidery and a crown of silver and gold filigree (worth 6d6 gp in total). Beside the skeleton is the *hammer of witches* (see **Appendix**), the handle wrapped in black dragon scale and the head set in the form of a comet.

14. LOOTED CHAMBER

The stone door to this tomb is crumbled away. In the dim light, you see a funerary chest that has been forced open.

This small cask once contained a small trove of trinkets and jeweled baubles but is now barren. The inlay on the outside of the chest is made of gold; removing the gold from the chest will take approximately 1 hour and is worth 2d6 gp.

15. THE PRECIPICE

This narrow hall is filled with fresh, crisp air, and natural light floods in from the windowed door to the west.

This hallway ends in an unlocked doorway that opens directly out to the mountainside. There is a very short,

unstable ledge just beyond the door that if stepped upon could lead to an abrupt, calamitous drop of several hundred feet. Characters not paying attention and stepping through this door must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to avoid falling to their death.

16. SCYTHING COLUMN

From the entryway, you can see an unlit narrow passage. The hall opens into a square chamber with a column at its center. A path leads to the east and another to the south.

Characters with a light source, low-light vision, or darkvision can plainly see that on the floor of the chamber ahead lies the slumped-over corpse of a small humanoid.

Scythe Trap. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the column contains a hidden scythe trap: a thin, spinning blade deploys from the column when the trap is triggered.

The trap is armed when any of the adjacent floor tiles (pressure plates) around the column are depressed with more than 50 pounds of weight, but the trap doesn't activate until that weight is removed from the tile (such as when a creature steps from it onto the next tile). Once activated, the blade deploys and spins fully around the room, reaching all but the four corners. Each creature in the area must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) slashing damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

The pressure plates can be alternatively triggered by poking a blade between their seams, and they can be disabled with a successful DC 21 Dexterity check, using either thieves' tools or a small blade.

Corpse. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the corpse, that of a halfling, is several weeks dead due to a lacerated throat. Searching the body reveals 2 gp, a set of thieves' tools, and an elven dagger.

17. HALL OF GUARDIANS

This long, narrow hall is home to yet more alcoves that house stone sarcophaguses. At its end is a large sigil that glows red, bathing the bone-laden walls in bloody crimson. An ornate marble door on the north wall stands adjacent to the sigil.

Midway down this hall is a pressure plate (see skeleton trap below). The marble door at the end of the hall is magically trapped (see tormented souls trap below).

Skeleton Trap. The trap is armed and triggered as the one in Area 16 and can also be revealed and disarmed in the same way. Once triggered, it unleashes a **skeleton** from each of the seven sarcophaguses in this chamber along with one **tormented soul** (see **Appendix**) that emerges from a skull atop the column in Area 16.

Tormented Souls Trap. Upon the door in gold inlay is the same iconography as the pillars in Area 3 (sword on the left, eye on the right) along with the message, "Speak the words,"

written in Dwarvish script. If the trap is not disarmed, when the door is opened, two **tormented souls** burst from the heads of the corpses of the halfling in Area 16 and the human in Area 19, and they seek out the character that triggered the trap.

To deactivate the trap, the phrase, "As above, so below," must be spoken aloud in Common or Dwarvish. Casting *dispel magic* will also deactivate the trap.

18. THE DARK DESCENT

This cramped corridor has a high ceiling and travels eastward down two short flights of stairs. At the bottom, a chamber, its door ajar, contains an obsidian obelisk, emanating a bright coral glow that lights the entire hallway. The walls are decorated with ilium and other flat bones that have been well polished, reflecting the strange pink light that cascades over the smooth walls and ceiling.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a trail of blood, leading down the stairs.

The first landing has an elongated alcove to the south that houses a low stone dais large enough for a human figure. It is devoid of features but contains several sheets of parchment, an ink bottle and quill, and a small plate of moldering food.

The second landing has additional alcoves: one to the north and another to the south. They both contain a similar stone dais. The northern alcove contains an adventurer's pouch with 3 days' rations, a quiver of crossbow bolts, 50 feet of hemp rope, and a retractable 10-foot pole. The south alcove contains two **skeletons**, waiting to attack any that enter.

19. THE DREAD OBELISK

Before you in a small chamber with its door swung wide stands an abyss-black obelisk made of obsidian. It radiates a sickly pink light. At the base of the obelisk is the slumped corpse of an adventurer who has taken their own life with a crossbow.

The obelisk has been here for ages, well before Naz'Vaza and his thralls began hollowing out these halls. This portion of the hall was found mostly intact as part of a dwarven ruin, and bones were placed over the existing architecture. The undead are unaffected by the obelisk's effects, but adventurers who find themselves here are drawn to it like moths to flame. Characters coming within 15 feet of the obelisk must succeed a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw to resist approaching it and touching its otherworldly smooth surface.

Characters who touch the obelisk are affected differently by its presence; roll on the table below to see what happens. Characters may only be affected by the obelisk's presence once.

| d6 | Effect from Dread Obelisk |
|----|--|
| 1 | Stygian Secrets. The character is immediately plagued by visions of the thing they are horrified of the most. Their deepest, darkest fears manifest before their very eyes. Some fight until they are exhausted and collapse and eventually starve, some take their own lives, and some simply go mad and may wander out of the chamber into the wild or into the claws of Naz'Vaza's skeletons. The GM should elaborate on how this plays out on a per-game, per-character basis. Other characters unaffected by the obelisk are free to intervene and may snap them out of it with enough effort. |
| 2 | Dread Vistas. A momentary vision of indescribable creatures amid an alien realm flashes before the character's eyes. They must succeed a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or suffer 4d6 psychic damage. |
| 3 | Sands of Time. The character experiences what feels like several years of their life passing by. Though it only takes a moment, it feels as if the time has actually passed. They gain one level of exhaustion. |
| 4 | Curse of Comfort. The adventurer feels as if this portion of the ossuary is now their home. They find a small spot to call theirs, where they eat, drink, and pass time. They may venture out in search of sustenance but always return here. They will continue to do this until their curse is removed by magical means. |
| 5 | Sickly Tendrils. A wave of discomfort washes over the character. If they are living, they must succeed a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or immediately throw up, taking 2d6 damage. |
| 6 | Eldritch Reconstruction. The character is granted a boon from beyond the stars. They heal as if they drank a <i>potion of superior healing</i> and regain a single spell slot or charge of a daily ability. |

The fallen adventurer here is human and is sitting slumped over, a crossbow in their hands and one of its bolts protruding from the back of their head. Several slashing wounds can be found on their body as well, if closely inspected. They have long red hair and wear common traveler's garb. A small leather coin pouch on their belt contains 5d6 sp and a love letter written in Elvish.

Level 5

As the lift plunges lower, echoes from the pulleys above are so distant they take several seconds to reach you. This stop feels softer than those before it as the lift glides into its resting position. An archway to the south opens to a brightly lit chamber where two cylindrical braziers burn bright with blue light.

20. THREE KINGS, ONE WORM

Before you, between the braziers, is a rectangular chamber filled with water that sits high enough that some of it laps over the edges of the floor near the base of the braziers. A staircase descends into the mostly clear water below where a faint glimmer can be seen beneath its surface. Water drips from above, breaking the stillness of the water every few seconds.

Above this chamber, and the cause for its flooding, is the corpse of a massive, dead **purple worm**. It can be plainly seen by any character looking up. It's rows of teeth are rotten, and its hardened cartilage juts from breaks in its mostly dried flesh. Runoff from the mountain above flows over the carcass to fill the chamber.

Magical Braziers. The flames here are magical and cannot be extinguished with water.

Diseased Pool. The water in this pool is mostly clear with sediment on the bottom that will make it cloudy should it be disturbed. It is also diseased: any living creature submerging themselves in the water must succeed a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned.

Below the Surface. Within the water are the tombs of three kings (**skeletal sentries**, see **Appendix**) and potentially some **skeletons** from Area 5. The skeletons will attack if the water is disturbed or if the characters begin to leave the chamber. The skeletal sentries will all attack if any of their tombs are disturbed. Their tombs are empty of valuables but for the crowns they wear on their heads, except that one also holds a metal placard depicting a trident. (This placard will become valuable in the second part of this adventure.)

If any characters retreat from this chamber, any attacking skeletons and skeletal sentries will pursue the characters onto the lift. If characters continue to run, the enemy will regroup and find them in a later part of the dungeon (or whenever the GM sees fit for them to pop back up).

Level 6

As the lift creaks to rest, the air feels a bit warmer than in previous areas of the ossuary. In the distance below you, a faint repetitious thump can be heard. Before you to the west is an archway with five full and well-preserved skulls on a stone shelf above it. On the south wall burns a single torch, and next to it is a fist-sized, triangular cut-out in the wall.

If characters attempt to take the lift any lower, it will not move. It requires a special key to be set into the triangular space in the south wall in order to travel farther down. This key is found just ahead in Area 22.

21. HALL OF HARROWING REFLECTION

A wide set of stairs descends to a stone landing and a narrow hall that leads north. You see bones strewn all about the floor, piled as high as one or two feet in some places. At the end of the hall to the east is a green glow.

Any bones here are protected by the same antimagic aura that protects the skeletal sentries (see **Appendix**). As characters pass through, they will notice that each alcove contains a dirty mirror. If they gaze into these mirrors, they see rotting, undead versions of themselves bathed in a putrid green glow, staring back with empty eyes. Any character that looks into a mirror, even if only for a second, will spawn a doppelganger of themselves into existence. These doppelgangers lie in wait inside the mirrors for characters to attempt to leave the area or until after they obtain the key from Area 22.

The doppelgangers have hit points equal to half the maximum hit points of the character but have the same armor class, attributes, skills, armor, gear, weapons, proficiencies, spells, and abilities as the character. The only differences being that they are skeletal and undead, meaning they are vulnerable to bludgeoning damage, immune to poison, and susceptible to effects such as turning.

22. THE EMERALD KEY

Before you is a slim stone archway decorated in only the eye portions of skulls. Beyond it is a small room, containing a basalt pedestal. Sitting atop the pedestal is a triangular icon of jade and granite, carved in the shape of a trident with a serpent coiled around it.

A successful DC 17 Intelligence (History) check identifies this icon as that of the Nosmadi family crest. It is the key to allowing the lift to descend farther into the ossuary. Once it is removed from the pedestal, the doppelgangers in Area 21

emerge from the mirrors and attack. They fight to the death and are unrelenting in their pursuit of the characters.

Descent to Level 7 and Beyond

Once players have hopefully defeated their undead selves and not become more bones for Naz'Vaza's legion, they will likely continue their descent into the ossuary. The next four levels await you in the second part of this adventure, but feel free to read aloud the following text for a nice cliffhanger:

You set the icon into the depression in the south wall of the lift, the trident's tines face downward. With a burning hiss and a loud pop akin to the crackle of a lively campfire, the sigil shatters to pieces. You hear its fragments tumble downward into the darkness for what feels like forever before the lift finally rumbles to life again, its squeaky pulleys lowering you deeper into the shaft. After several minutes of darkness, it is broken by the dim orange glow of more strange sigils on the walls above two archways to the west and east. You begin to notice the repetitious thump from earlier has grown louder and more rhythmic, but just as the beat seems to stabilize, you're interrupted by a series of loud screams.

APPENDIX

All of the new game elements in this adventure are presented here.

New Magic Items

These items may prove useful to resourceful adventurers.

HAMMER OF WITCHES

Weapon (warhammer), rare (requires attunement)

When you hit a fiend or an undead with this magic weapon, that creature takes an extra 1d8 radiant damage. If you reduce the creature to 0 hit points with this damage, it is utterly destroyed and cannot be brought back by any means, and the sudden surge of righteousness fills you with power, allowing you to spend one Hit Die to regain hit points, as if during a short rest. While holding this weapon you have advantage on saving throws made to avoid becoming frightened by fiends or undead.

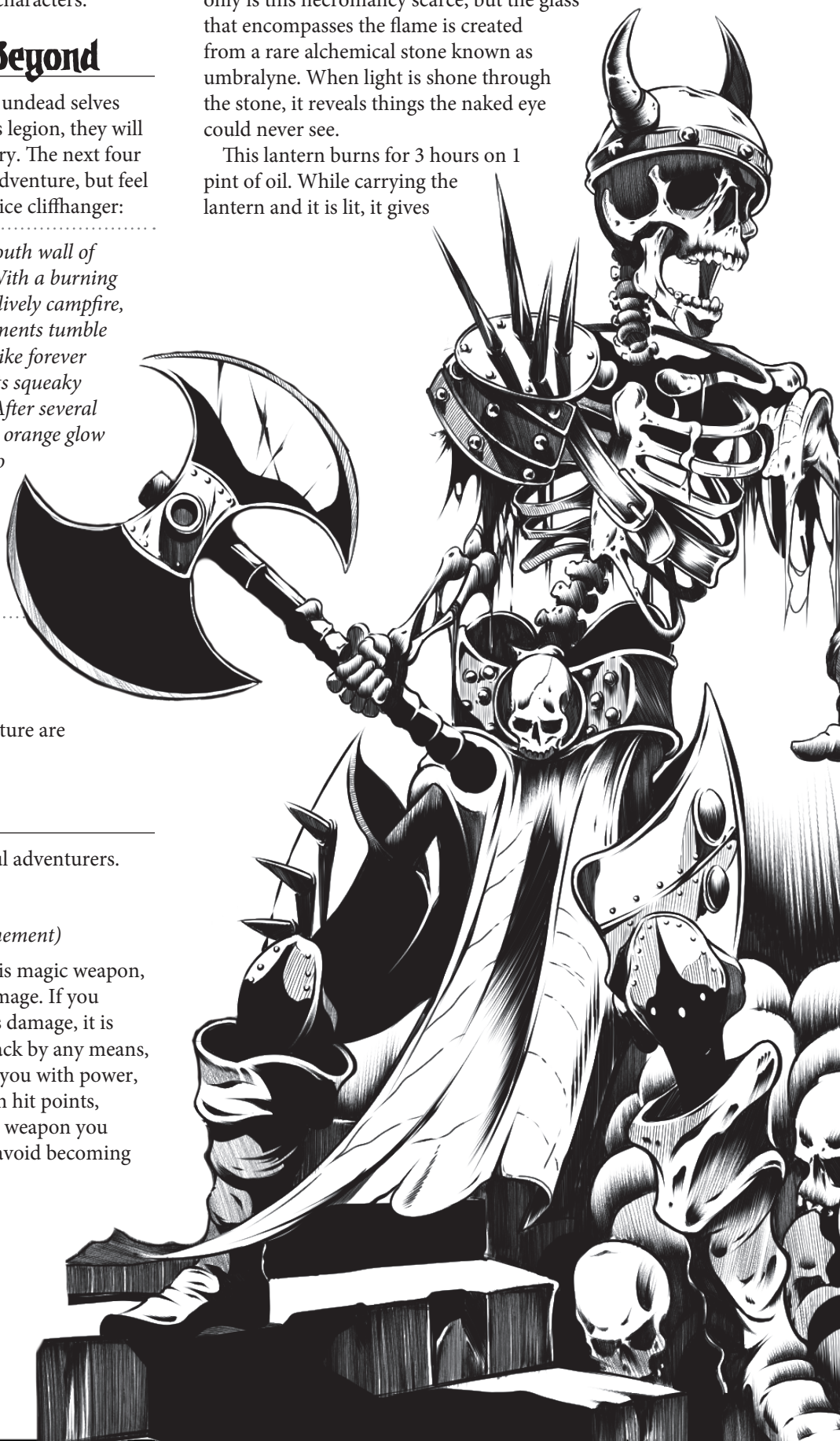
WIDOW'S LANTERN

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

Made with tomb-crawlers in mind and imbued with the soul of one who has lost their spouse and died of a broken

heart, these lanterns are hard to come by. Not only is this necromancy scarce, but the glass that encompasses the flame is created from a rare alchemical stone known as umbralayne. When light is shone through the stone, it reveals things the naked eye could never see.

This lantern burns for 3 hours on 1 pint of oil. While carrying the lantern and it is lit, it gives



off faint purple light in a 15-foot radius. Invisible creatures as well as any magical text, as per the *illusory script* spell or other hidden markings, become clear and visible.

Those who are attuned to the lantern may sacrifice a bit of their own life force in order to peer beyond the veil by spending a bonus action and taking damage equal to a Hit Die, allowing them to see spirits of those who have died within a 30-foot radius of the lantern for 10 minutes. (The Hit Die is considered spent, for purposes such as healing, until after a short or long rest.) These apparitions become visible as translucent white representations of themselves, looking exactly as they did just before they died. They do not produce sound and cannot interact. They simply give the wielder a glimpse into the last minute of their lives in an endless loop, such as stepping on a trap, falling victim to a wound, choking, or whatever other actions their death throes might have involved.

Monsters & NPCs

There are many foes that seek to block your progress.

SKELETAL SENTRY

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (armor scraps)

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 3 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 3 (-4) |

Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Antimagic Aura. When detecting magic, the skeletal warrior does not give off an aura nor does it show up when *detect evil and good* is cast or a paladin's *divine sense* is used.

Turn Resistance. The skeletal warrior has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The skeletal warrior makes two greatsword attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

TORMENTED SOUL

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d4 + 18)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 (-5) | 17 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +2

Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Resistances lightning, necrotic, piercing

Damage Immunities cold, fire, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages understands all languages it spoke in life but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Blazing Hatred. The tormented soul blazes with bright light in a 10-foot radius. Creatures ending their movement adjacent to a tormented soul take 1d6 fire damage.

Magic Resistance. The tormented soul has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spellcasting. The tormented soul is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The tormented soul has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): *fire bolt*

1st level (3 slots): *magic missile, shield*

2nd level (2 slots): *blur, scorching ray*

3rd level (1 slot): *fireball*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tormented soul uses Incendiary Spit twice.

Incendiary Spit. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d6) fire damage and must make a constitution saving throw or be set on fire, taking 1d6 fire damage each round until a successful Constitution saving throw is made or they douse themselves with water.

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