

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

A CAMPAIGN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF LEVELS 6–10



EXPEDITION TO Castle Ravenloft™

Bruce R. Cordell James Wyatt



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Castle Ravenloft™

CAMPAIGN ADVENTURE

Bruce R. Cordell James Wyatt

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Introduction

Not the least glimmer of light escaped the castle's tall black windows. Its broken battlements sketched a jagged line across the darkened sky. Castle Ravenloft brooded over a bleak, mist-shrouded valley. Constructed on the sheer side of a thousand-foot cliff, the terrible fortress was occupied by something ancient and evil.

A blot of night detached from the shadowed walls of the castle and moved out onto a narrow balcony. Lightning revealed the sneering countenance of Count Strahd von Zarovich.

His eyes, burning with a never-satisfied hunger, took in the drizzling twilight, the looming peaks, and the few sad lights of the village below. He clutched one hand to his chest and muttered, as if making a promise, or perhaps delivering a curse, a single name: "Irenea . . ."

Strahd grimaced, and his sharp canine teeth promised mayhem. A bitter wind spun dead leaves about him, billowing his velvet-lined cape.

Another fit of lightning burst from the storm's underbelly, casting stark light across Strahd's face. The angular muscles of his visage and the taut lines in his hands revealed a man accustomed to exercising complete authority. In that face, no pity lived—but, perhaps, hints of growing madness?

His eyes narrowed as he spied the newcomers. A group traveled down Old Svalich Road toward the village. His grimace transformed into a hideous smile. He knew they were coming, knew why they came, and relished what would be their ultimate fate. No plan could be called good unless blood was spilled during its execution.

All the pawns were finally assembled; all the pieces, prepared for so long, were in place and waiting to play their parts. Even from where he stood on the balcony, Strahd heard the unceasing pulse of the Dayheart; its beat throbbed up through the castle stone into his rigid flesh. Its horrid semblance of life sustained Strahd with a vigor even more potent than the unholy existence he had enjoyed these many centuries. Precious few weapons could permanently harm him anymore.

Soon enough, Strahd would personally attend the newcomers.

WHAT IS EXPEDITION TO CASTLE RAVENLOFT?

The *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* campaign adventure is designed for four 6th-level DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® characters (though player characters who survive to the adventure's finale should gain three or even four levels). This book presents an expanded, revised version of the original adventure module I6: *Ravenloft* by Tracy and Laura Hickman. Like that module, this adventure is a classic gothic horror story; however, modern elements of terror also infuse this book.

The original, ground-breaking adventure had several memorable features:

- The fantastic orthogonal maps of Castle Ravenloft designed by David Sutherland proved such a powerful aid to play that a generation of Dungeon Masters still fondly recall them and reemploy them whenever possible.
- Characters had their fortunes told by an enigmatic gypsy. The results of the card reading determined not only the placement of an important treasure in the castle, but also set the antagonist's goals for the adventure.
- Finally, Count Strahd von Zarovich has become one of the most infamous villains in D&D history.

Expedition to Castle Ravenloft retains these exciting features and updates the classic adventure with a new look and a new encounter format. The game material in encounters reflects the most recent edition of the rules, and many of the familiar elements of the original setting now include expanded (and sometimes reimagined) backgrounds. This adventure also presents entirely new features, threats, and rewards for player characters.

In addition to adventure material, the appendix of this book contains information for player characters, including special items and magic items, new feats, and a prestige class specific to the Ravenloft setting: the knight of the raven, ideal for PCs who wish to take up the mantle of Barovia's ancient order of holy knights.

THE ENCOUNTER FORMAT

This updated adventure breaks some new ground of its own as the first publication to use a new format for presenting encounters: the combats, traps, and other challenges that await adventurers in the village of Barovia, in the wilderness areas around the village, and in the forbidding environs of Castle Ravenloft itself.

Every encounter in the adventure is displayed on facing pages. In most cases, that two-page spread contains all the information necessary to play out that encounter at the table—a description of the situation and how it unfolds, statistics for monsters and traps, and a keyed map of the area in which the encounter takes place, so that the event can be set up and run on a battle grid using D&D miniatures.

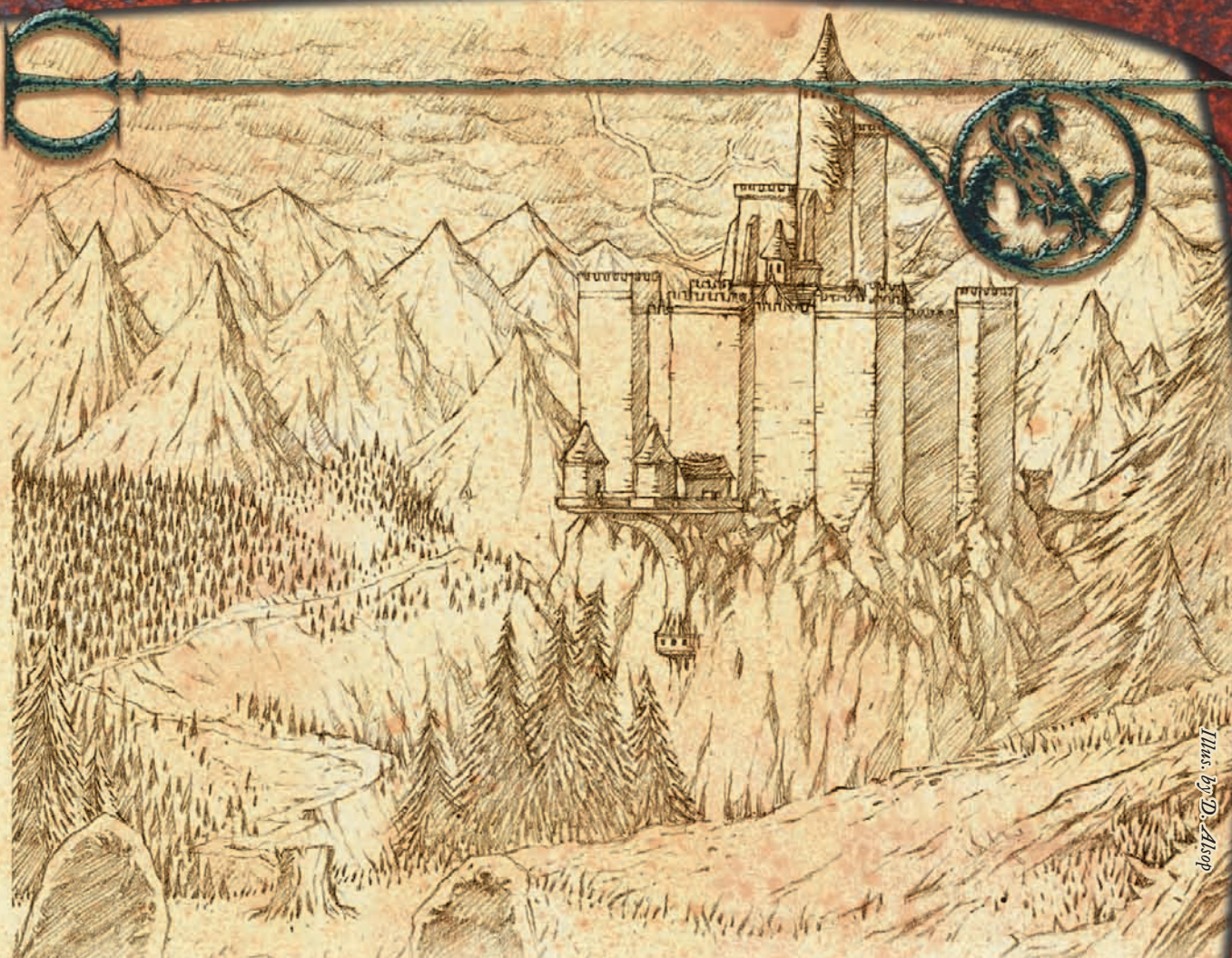
The encounter spreads do not all provide exactly the same kinds of information, and they don't all look the same on the page. Each one is tailored to provide the essential details particular to that event—the encounters that take place in the village (Chapter 2) aren't built the same way as the ones in the outlying lands of Barovia (Chapter 3)—and the encounters in the castle are in yet another style, one that best suits that group of events.

On rare occasions, an encounter spread refers to an earlier page in the book for other information that might or might not be needed, depending on how the encounter unfolds. Most of these page references are a way of preventing frequent repetition of certain pieces of text—for instance, we don't include information in every infected creature's statistics block about how to properly treat the necromantic infection, because we didn't think those details needed to be called out every time they might come into play.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

This adventure is intended for use in any DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. The setting can be dropped into any campaign and played out as an extended series of challenges, or it can be truncated to span just a few playing sessions. It's even possible to experience the threats and thrills of Castle Ravenloft in a single afternoon or evening of play.

You need the *Player's Handbook* (PH), *Dungeon Master's Guide* (DMG), and *Monster Manual* (MM) to make use of the material. This book draws from some D&D supplements as well, particularly *Libris Mortis: The Book of Undead*. However, all the information a DM needs to run the adventure is provided in these pages.



Illus. by D. Alsop



Welcome to Barovia, a mist-shrouded forest valley in the southeastern foothills of a brooding mountain range. This minor realm is little visited, being far off the major trade routes and having a poor reputation in surrounding lands.

Ancient curses, gloomy weather, and vicious werewolves plague the long-suffering peasants who bend beneath the yoke of a cruel nobleman.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Hundreds of years ago, Count Strahd von Zarovich conquered Barovia and moved his family, "long unseated from their ancient thrones," to the valley, fortifying Castle Ravenloft and raising it to new grandeur. Strahd is the architect of his own vampiric existence, having made a blood pact with an unnamed evil entity. Since that time, he has lingered on while his family perished one by one. Now he rules the lands of Barovia alone.

After centuries of dreary inertia, and perhaps growing a bit mad in his endless existence, the count has developed new aspirations. The time has come for Strahd to move, and for the player characters to resist him, if they can.

The PCs have their own reasons to venture into Barovia. Their investigation leads deep into the misty valley and the village of the same name, until they finally discover the infamous Castle Ravenloft and its grim master.

PREPARATION

As with any preconstructed adventure, you should read through *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* ahead of time to become familiar with the material. The adventure is divided into keyed encounters, linked by letters and numbers to specific areas of the overview map of Barovia on page 54. The PCs might reach the various encounter areas by a number of different routes and at various times during the course of the adventure. This nonlinear flow means that sometimes an encounter might refer to details described later in the book, so it is important to have a solid grasp of the interconnected elements.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER FORMAT

Some encounters use traditional narrative text. For those in which combat is expected, the entry points to an associated tactical encounter; these encounters are collected at the end of each chapter.

Each tactical encounter includes a map of the room or area in which the encounter takes place. The information includes creature statistics and tactics, initial positions of combatants, the locations of traps or other hazards, and other details important to the encounter.

The encounters in this adventure are designed for use with DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® miniatures, which make the interactions of combatants easier to visualize.

COUNT STRAHD VON ZAROVICH

Expedition to Castle Ravenloft centers around the vampire Strahd von Zarovich. As Dungeon Master, you must play him as carefully as the players run their characters. Always keep in mind his motives, his activities, and his plans.

The following text provides Strahd's full statistics block, along with important notes and explanations. You can photocopy these pages for reference during the adventure. Variations on this statistics block appear elsewhere, in tactical encounters involving the vampire, since he might adopt different forms or prepare different spells to maximize his options in different circumstances. In such cases, Strahd's statistics are abbreviated to fit into the tactical encounter format; see the Undead and Vampire Characteristics sidebar for a summary of these shortened ability entries.

COUNT STRAHD VON ZAROVICH

CR 15

Male vampire (human) necromancer 10

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Infernal

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 24; **Dodge**

hp 70 (10 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 10/silver and magic

Immune sunlight; undead immunities

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, positive energy 10, sonic 10; +4 turn resistance; ring of counterspells (dispel magic), nondetection

Fort +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Weakness vampire vulnerabilities (except sunlight)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee slam +9 (1d6+4 plus energy drain)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, energy drain, magic strike

Special Actions alternate form, blood drain 1d4 Con, children of the night 1/night, dominate (Will DC 18), gaseous form

Combat Gear *bead of force*, *lesser Silent metamagic rod*, *ring of counterspells*

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th; prohibited schools abjuration and illusion):

5th—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *fell draining lightning bolt* (DC 18; creatures that take damage also gain one negative level), *mind fog* (DC 20), *waves of fatigue*

4th—*dimension door*, *enervation* (+8 ranged touch), *fear* (DC 19), *enervated scorching ray* (+8 ranged touch, +50% damage to living creatures, half damage to unliving), *screaming* (DC 19)

3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 18), *fireball* (DC 18), *haste*, *fell draining magic missile* (creatures that take damage also gain one negative level), *ray of exhaustion* (+8 ranged touch, DC 18)

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *false life*, *fog cloud*, *scorching ray* (+8 ranged touch), *see invisibility*, *spectral hand*

1st—*chill touch* (+9 melee touch, DC 16), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor* (2), *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+8 ranged touch), *true strike*

0—*detect magic* (2), *ghost sound* (DC 15), *message*, *touch of fatigue* (+9 melee touch, DC 15)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16

SQ create spawn, forest sign, mountain sign, swamp sign

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting*, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Enervate Spell†^B, Fell Drain†^B, Improved Energy

Drain†, Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Positive Energy Resistance†, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Drain†

*If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, replace Combat Casting with the Touch of Taint feat from that book.

†Feats described in *Libris Mortis*.

Skills Bluff +17, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +3 (+5 acting), Hide +13, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +13, Move Silently +17, Search +13, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +20, Spot +13

Possessions combat gear plus *ring of protection* +2, *cloak of resistance* +3

Spellbooks See "Strahd's Spellbooks," below.

Fast Healing (Ex) If reduced to 0 hp in combat, Strahd automatically and immediately assumes gaseous form and makes his way toward his crypt (area K86).

Vampire Vulnerabilities As long as the Dayheart remains intact, Strahd suffers no ill effects from sunlight.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by Strahd's slam attack gain two negative levels. At the same time, Strahd gains 10 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on skill checks, ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for 1 hour. (This bonus derives from his Improved Energy Drain feat.)

Whenever a spellcaster opponent loses a prepared spell due to energy drain, Strahd gains the ability to cast that spell once (as if he had prepared it). The spell's effect is treated as if the original spellcaster had cast it. The spell remains in Strahd's mind for up to 1 hour, and he can keep up to three stolen spells at a time. This ability has no effect on spellcasters who don't prepare spells or on characters who have no spells prepared. (This ability comes from his Spell Drain feat.)

If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, Strahd's energy drain also increases the target's depravity score by 2 points or its corruption and depravity scores by 1 point each (because of his Touch of Taint feat).

Magic Strike (Su) If Strahd hits with his slam attack, the attack is treated as magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Alternate Form (Su) See below for Strahd's statistics in his animal forms. In animal form, Strahd cannot use his equipment or cast spells, nor can he use his dominate ability.

Blood Drain (Ex) If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, Strahd's blood drain also increases the target's corruption score by 2 points (because of his Touch of Taint feat).

Gaseous Form (Su) Strahd's Armor Class in gaseous form is 15 (19 with *mage armor* active), touch 15, flat-footed 12.

Forest Sign (Su) As a result of his connection to the forests of Barovia, Strahd benefits from a constant nondetection effect on himself and his gear, as the spell (caster level check DC 19). If Strahd's connection to the Forest Fane is severed, Strahd loses this benefit and his CR is reduced by 1.

Mountain Sign (Su) As a result of his connection to the mountains of Barovia, Strahd is surrounded by a field of force armor that grants him a +6 armor bonus to AC. Because it is made of force, this armor protects him against incorporeal attacks and applies when Strahd is in gaseous form. If Strahd's connection to the Mountain Fane is severed, his Armor Class is reduced to 21 and his CR is reduced by 1.

Swamp Sign (Su) As a result of his connection to the swamps of Barovia, Strahd has resistance to acid 10, fire

10, and sonic 10. If his connection to the Swamp Fane is severed, Strahd loses these resistances and his CR is reduced by 1.

When in bat form, Strahd has the following changed statistics:

BAT FORM

CR 15

LE Diminutive undead (augmented humanoid)

AC 22, touch 16, flat-footed 20

Ref +7

Speed 5 ft. (1 square), fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee —

Grp -12

Abilities Str 1, Dex 15

Skills Disguise +3 (+13 to mimic bat), Hide +24, Move Silently +16

When in dire bat form, Strahd has the following changed statistics:

DIRE BAT FORM

CR 15

LE Large undead (augmented humanoid)

AC 26, touch 15, flat-footed 20

Ref +11

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee bite +7 (1d8+4 plus energy drain)

Grp +12

Abilities Str 17, Dex 22

Skills Disguise +3 (+13 to mimic dire bat), Hide +12, Move Silently +20

When in dire wolf form, Strahd has the following changed statistics:

DIRE WOLF FORM

CR 15

LE Large undead (augmented humanoid)

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 18

Ref +7

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +11 (1d8+10 plus energy drain)

Grp +16

Atk Options trip +11

Abilities Str 25, Dex 15

Skills Disguise +3 (+13 to mimic dire wolf), Hide +8, Move Silently +16

Trip (Ex) In dire wolf form, Strahd can attempt to trip an opponent he hits with a bite attack.

Strahd calls himself the “first vampire,” but the claim seems unlikely. The details of his story are set down in the *Tome of Strahd*, with key excerpts presented on page 22.

Strahd is a tall man, standing just over 6 feet. His body is lean and hard, and his gaunt face has strong features and prominent cheekbones. His eyes are dark and hypnotic, like deep pools with subtle reflections of red light, but when he is enraged they burn like red-hot coals. His skin is usually pale, but it becomes flushed with each feeding and retains that healthy-looking color for several hours. His elongated and thin fingers have long, sharp nails. His fangs are not obvious unless he wants them to be noticed—he can speak and even yawn without revealing his true nature. When he attacks, however, the fangs lengthen to protrude from his mouth.

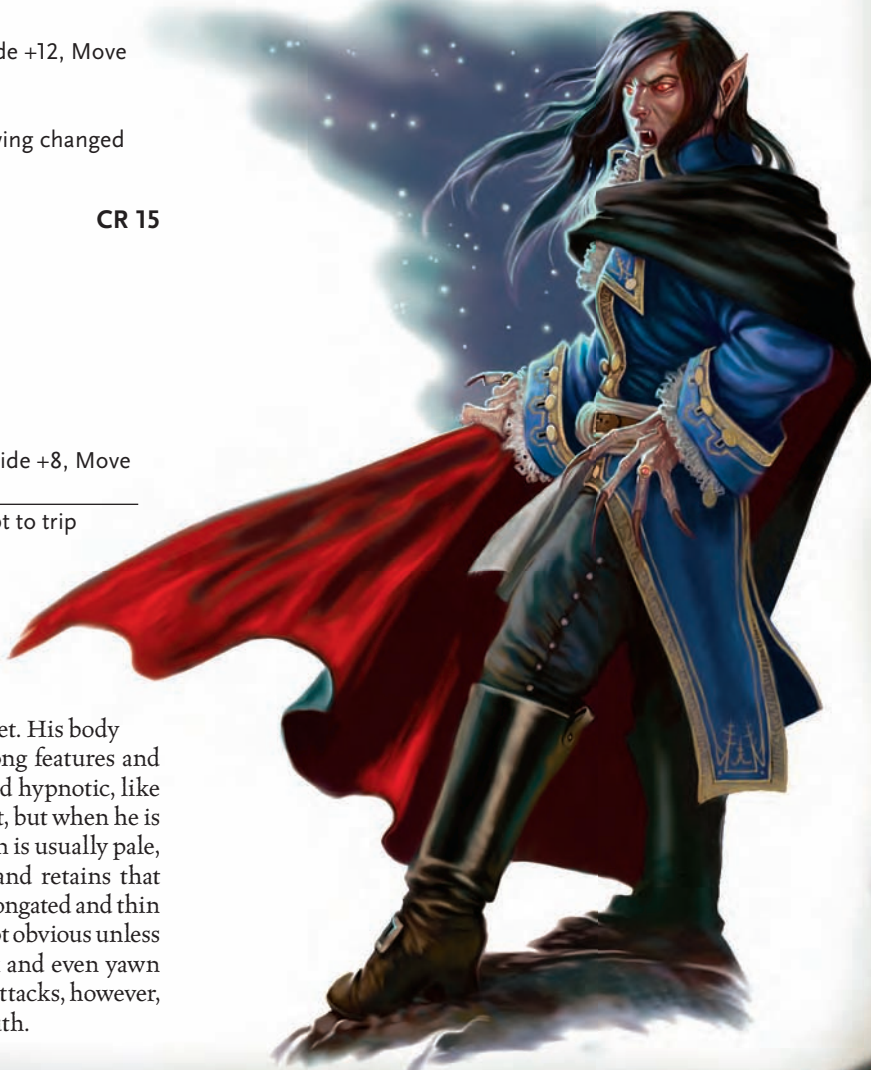
Strahd prefers to wear black with touches of white and red. His clothing style is the tailored, layered look common to the nobility.

SPECIAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strahd differs from standard vampires in a few key respects. He enjoys an unnatural connection with the land of Barovia (see below), which has given him three significant defensive abilities: force armor, energy resistance, and a constant *non-detection* effect. Strahd has no aversion to garlic or mirrors. Though he can be turned, characters cannot keep him at bay simply by presenting a holy symbol. He can enter any building in Barovia, whether he is invited or not. Finally, the artifact known as the *Dayheart* (see below) grants Strahd immunity to the destructive effects of sunlight.

In addition to the standard alternate forms assumed by vampires, Strahd can take the shape of a batlike humanoid (“werebat” form) and a bestial humanoid with wolfish characteristics (feral form). These special forms appear in Strahd’s statistics block for encounters in which he assumes them.

The Wilderness Fanes: In the countryside of Barovia stand ancient sites of worship. Strahd appropriated three such wilderness fanes located near his castle—one in the



Count Strahd von Zarovich

UNDEAD AND VAMPIRE CHARACTERISTICS

Undead creatures—especially vampires—are a recurring theme in *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft*. Full descriptions of the special abilities, resistances, and weaknesses of these creatures would make their stat blocks unwieldy as well as repeating large amounts of text. To save space, this sidebar summarizes the details common to such creatures. Where an exception exists, such as Strahd's ignoring typical vampire aversions, that fact is noted in the creature's stat block.

UNDEAD CHARACTERISTICS

An undead creature has the following characteristics (MM 317).

Undead Immunities: Immunity to all mind-affecting spells and abilities (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects. Not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to damage to physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution), as well as to fatigue and exhaustion effects. Not at risk of death from massive damage, but when reduced to 0 hit points or less, it is immediately destroyed. Immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects or is harmless).

Undead Traits: Darkvision out to 60 feet. No Constitution score. Uses its Charisma modifier for Concentration checks. Not affected by *raise dead* and *reincarnate* spells or abilities. *Resurrection* and *true resurrection* turn undead creatures back into the living creatures they were before becoming undead. Negative energy (such as an *inflict* spell) can heal undead creatures. Undead do not breathe, eat, or sleep.

VAMPIRE CHARACTERISTICS

A vampire has the following characteristics (MM 252). Vampire spawn share many of these abilities.

Vampire Abilities: The DC for all saves against these abilities is 10 + 1/2 vampire's or spawn's HD + vampire's or spawn's Cha modifier unless otherwise specified (MM 252).

Fast Healing (Ex): A vampire heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point; a vampire spawn heals 2 points of damage each round. If reduced to 0 hp in combat, a vampire or vampire spawn automatically and immediately assumes gaseous form and must reach its tomb within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. Any additional damage it takes in gaseous form has no effect. Once at rest in its crypt, the vampire or vampire spawn is helpless for 1 hour. After 1 hour, it regains 1 hit point and is no longer helpless, then resumes healing at the normal rate per round.

Spider Climb (Ex): A vampire or vampire spawn can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a vampire's slam attack gain two negative levels, and the vampire gains 10 temporary hit points. Living creatures hit by a vampire spawn's slam attack gain one negative level, and the vampire spawn gains 5 temporary hit points. See DMG 293 for more information about energy drain and negative levels.

Alternate Form (Su): A vampire can assume the shape of a bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf as a standard action. This ability

is similar to a *polymorph* spell (CL 12th), except that a vampire does not regain hit points for changing form and must choose one of these forms. A vampire in animal form loses its natural slam attack and its dominate ability.

Blood Drain (Ex): A vampire or vampire spawn can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the vampire or vampire spawn gains 5 temporary hit points that last for up to 1 hour. This ability does not affect elementals, plants, or creatures that lack a Constitution score.

Children of the Night (Su): Once per day, a vampire can call forth 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms, or a pack of 3d6 wolves as a standard action. The creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the vampire for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su): A vampire can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack with a range of 30 feet, except that the vampire must use a standard action and choose a single target—those merely looking at it are unaffected. The vampire's target must succeed on a Will save or fall instantly under its influence as though by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th).

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid or monstrous humanoid slain by a vampire's energy drain rises as a vampire spawn 1d4 days after burial. A victim slain by a vampire's blood drain returns as a spawn (4 or fewer HD) or as a vampire (5 or more HD).

Gaseous Form (Su): As *gaseous form* at will (CL 5th), but the vampire or vampire spawn can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.

Vampire Aversions: A vampire or vampire spawn cannot tolerate the strong odor of garlic. It recoils from a mirror or strongly presented holy symbol. When recoiling, it must stay at least 5 feet away from a creature holding the mirror or holy symbol and cannot touch or make melee attacks against the creature holding the item for the rest of the encounter. Holding a vampire or vampire spawn at bay takes a standard action. A vampire or vampire spawn can't cross running water (though it can be carried across) and can't enter a private building unless invited.

Vampire Vulnerabilities: Vampires and vampire spawn share the following vulnerabilities.

Sunlight: If a vampire or vampire spawn is exposed to direct sunlight, it is disoriented and can take only a single move action or standard action in the first round of exposure. In the next round, it is destroyed utterly.

Running Water: Immersing a vampire or vampire spawn in running water deals one-third of its hit points in damage each round. If it reaches 0 hit points when immersed, or at the end of three rounds of immersion, the creature is destroyed.

Wooden Stake: If a vampire or vampire spawn is helpless, a foe can take a full-round action (similar to a coup de grace) to drive a wooden stake through its heart. This renders the body inert, like a normal corpse, and makes it vulnerable to normal attacks so that it can be destroyed. If the wooden stake is removed before the body is destroyed, however, the vampire or vampire spawn returns to unlife, although it has 0 hit points and assumes gaseous form.

Svalich Woods, one in the swamp to the east, and one high in the mountains. Performing dark rituals at each once-sanctified altar, Strahd bound himself to the land and the land to him, gaining great powers in the bargain. Stripping him of those powers requires visiting each fane and performing specific rituals to sever his connection to the land.

The Dayheart: This massive crystal, fed by dreadful energies, grants vampires linked to it immunity from the effects of sunlight. The *Dayheart* occupies the highest part of one of the castle's spires. For more information about this artifact, see area 60A in Castle Ravenloft (page 158) and the Appendix.

Legacy Items: Two legendary magic items of great power can overcome many of Strahd's defenses. The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* predates the arrival of Strahd's family in Barovia and is a potent tool against vampires, but has been lost for centuries. The *Sunsword*, the original model for all sun blades, is the bane of undead. Strahd attempted to have the weapon destroyed, but unknown to him, its blade survives. For more about these two items, and the rituals needed to fully awaken their powers, see the Appendix.

IREENA

Strahd believes that Ireena Kolyana (see page 31) is the reincarnation of Tatyana von Zarovich, wife of Strahd's brother Sergei. Strahd's unrequited love for Tatyana drove him to madness and plunged him over the precipice into irredeemable evil. Having seen Ireena in Barovia, Strahd believes his ancient love has returned to him, and he seeks to claim her. This obsession is the primary motivation for everything he does.

Strahd wants to "win the love" of Ireena, but in the evil manner of a corrupt immortal, such wooing occurs over the course of three visits. He believes that in this way he is "building a relationship." During the first two visits, Strahd lulled Ireena into complacency through domination. He maneuvered her into being alone with him so he could bite her neck and drain some of her blood. He hopes to deliver the last bite during their third meeting, making her his vampire consort.

Strahd never directly attacks Ireena, nor does any creature under his command. However, he had her father, the burgomaster, killed for attempting to interfere in their romantic "destiny." He keeps an eye out for any opportunity to separate Ireena from the PCs, should she join them, then bring her

Tactical Encounter Maps

All maps are scaled in 5-foot squares for the sake of regulating movement on the battle grid. As described on page 59 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, if a map feature covers more than half of a given square, the feature is considered to extend into that square. For example, if an area of light undergrowth skirts the edges of a square, but the rest of the square is clear, then entering that square entails no extra movement cost. If the undergrowth extends past the center of the square, the square costs 2 squares to move into.

Diagonal walls on the tactical maps are positioned so they cut through the sides of squares edges instead of running from corner to corner. As a result, it's easy to tell on which side of a wall a character can stand in a given square, since every square that a diagonal wall passes through has one area that is largely clear and another tiny corner that is impassable.

into a new realm of existence. Domination is Strahd's ace in the hole—ten days remain before the effect ends, though Ireena doesn't realize she is under the vampire's control. Strahd calls upon this advantage only when he deems the time is ripe to bring his bride-to-be into the fold.

SERVANTS OF THE MASTER

As the undisputed master of Barovia, Strahd has many spies, from swarms of bats to wandering Vistani, packs of ghouls to drifting ghosts. These agents constantly patrol the lands of Barovia and report everything they see to Strahd.

Every day and every night the PCs remain in Barovia, some spy of the count checks on them and attempts to return to Strahd with a report (once every 12 hours). A spy does not constitute an encounter if the PCs are unaware of its presence. If they do notice it, the spy's top priority is usually escape, not combat. After all, Strahd brought the PCs to Barovia for a reason, and killing them would run counter to the master's directives—at least at the outset. (Later on, Strahd might well want the PCs dead; if so, his spies attempt to carry out his wishes, though they still flee when a fight turns against them.)

A secondary goal for a spy is to acquire some physical object—a possession, an article of clothing, or even some part of a character's body such as a lock of hair or a bit of nail—that

STRAHD'S SPELLBOOKS

More than simply a treasure to be won by skilled or lucky PCs, Strahd's spellbooks represent a wealth of additional tactical options for the vampiric genius. The following lists additional spells that Strahd knows in addition to those he has prepared. Feel free to substitute different prepared spells to account for the party's capabilities and weaknesses. If you have access to sources other than the *Player's Handbook*, particularly *Spell Compendium*, you can substitute spells from those books for others in Strahd's repertoire.

5th—*cone of cold*, *hold monster*, *magic jar*, *prying eyes*, *teleport*, *wall of force*.

4th—*animate dead*, *arcane eye*, *bestow curse*, *confusion*, *contagion*, *detect scrying*, *Otiluke's resilient sphere*, *solid fog*.

3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *gentle repose*, *hold person*, *slow*, *stinking cloud*, *vampiric touch*, *wind wall*.

2nd—*bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *command undead*, *darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *glitterdust*, *gust of wind*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *see invisibility*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*, *touch of idiocy*, *web*.

1st—*burning hands*, *cause fear*, *charm person*, *comprehend languages*, *identify*, *obscuring mist*, *shocking grasp*, *sleep*, *unseen servant*.

0—all except abjuration and illusion.

Strahd can use to cast *scrying* more reliably. If confronted by the party, the spy attempts to grab some accessible item from a character and then flees if possible.

Should the situation merit his personal involvement, Strahd himself might leave the castle to observe the PCs.

Each day the PCs remain in Barovia, choose one of the following spies or roll 1d20. Add 1 to this roll each day after the first.

d20	Spy
1–4	—
5–10	1d3+1 Vistani (EL 6)
11–15	1d4+1 worgs (EL 6; MM 257)
16–18	Varikov the trapper (EL 7; see below)
19–20	Kavan the Grim (EL 7; see page 11)
21+	<i>Scrying</i> spell

Each night the PCs remain in Barovia, choose one of the following spies or roll 1d20. Again, add 1 to the roll each night after the first.

d20	Spy
1–3	2d4 worgs (EL 7; MM 257)
4–6	1d4+1 dire wolves (EL 7; MM 65)
7–9	2d4 bat swarms (EL 7; MM 237)
10–12	2d4 dire bats (EL 7; MM 62)
13–14	2 ghaunts plus 2d4 ghouls (EL 7; MM 119)
15–16	1d4+1 vampire spawn (EL 7; MM 253)
17–18	1 wraith (MM 258) plus 1d3+1 wights (MM 255) (EL 8)
19–20	1d3 spectres (EL 9; MM 232)
21–22	Sasha Ivlskova (see page 13) plus 2 vampire spawn (EL 8)
23+	Strahd (EL 15; see page 6) (roll 1d6): 1–2: Dire wolf form plus 1d4+1 dire wolves 3–4: Bat form plus 2d4 bat swarms 5–6: Dire bat form plus 2d4 dire bats

VISTANI

The Vistani of Barovia are a loose gang of human and halfling thieves, smugglers, extortionists, and con artists. They travel the region in small groups, carrying stolen goods and contraband between Barovia's neighbors on all sides. Although the villagers fear and despise them, the Vistani are under the protection of Strahd and are among his most loyal and useful servants.

These human Vistani look like thugs, armed with wickedly curved swords and wearing chain shirts under their colorful garb, but they are actually skilled rogues—and keen observers. If the PCs spend time in the village of Barovia, several Vistani sit or stand in a cluster nearby, seemingly engrossed in a conversation in their own language while one pays attention only to the PCs. A character who makes a successful Sense Motive check opposed by any Vistani's Bluff check result (Vistani have a +6 modifier) notices one of the group watching the PCs.

When the PCs are outside the village, the Vistani tail them through the wilderness for an hour or so, remaining about 60 feet away and using their *elixirs of hiding* and *elixirs of sneaking* (increasing their Hide and Move Silently modifiers to +16). The PCs can attempt to notice the spies every 10 minutes, making opposed checks (Spot against the Vistani's Hide, and Listen against their Move Silently). Remember that when the

Vistani are moving through light undergrowth, the PCs get a +2 bonus on their Listen checks, while heavy undergrowth gives a +5 bonus. If attacked, the Vistani drink their *potions of shield of faith* and flee at the earliest opportunity.

For more about the Vistani, including statistics blocks, see encounter area G on page 52 and the associated tactical encounter on page 76.

WORGs

These large, intelligent wolves follow the PCs. During daylight hours, the pack is a relatively small group that stays about 70 to 120 feet from the PCs. This separation corresponds to the maximum distance at which their Spot checks can detect the PCs in a dense forest (2d6 × 10 feet; DMG 87). If the PCs attack the worgs during daylight, the creatures scatter immediately, running off in different directions.

At night, the pack is larger and more aggressive. The worgs stay about 30 to 60 feet away from the PCs (1d4+2 × 10 feet), since they must rely on their fog-hindered darkvision to keep tabs on the party. If the PCs threaten or attack them at night, the worgs try to surround the party and fight back, withdrawing only after roughly one-quarter of them have been slain.

Should the PCs remain in the village during the day, they can see and hear the worgs ranging around the edge of town and howling frequently. If the PCs stay in the village at night, the worgs snarl and howl as they stalk the streets outside the building where the characters are lodging.

In combat, the worgs use flanking and aid one another in attacks to hit high-AC characters more easily. If one manages to trip a PC, the other worgs concentrate their attacks on that character and make attacks of opportunity when she tries to stand. (A worg cannot use that attack of opportunity to trip the character again, since she is already prone when the attack occurs.) Flanking worgs often take turns fighting defensively (–4 attack, +2 AC), but if a foe concentrates attacks on one of the pair, that one takes the total defense action (+4 AC, no attacks) while the other makes the best use of flanking.

VARIKOV THE TRAPPER

This dwarf ranger is a depraved killer who enjoys trapping and skinning human prey more than animal quarry. He knows the Svalich Woods and the surrounding area better than any other living creature. Varikov's lair is a cave behind Tser Falls (area H on the overview map).

Varikov keeps his distance when spying on the PCs, relying on his good Spot modifier to keep them within the maximum range of his vision (roughly 120 feet during the day, or 60 feet at night) while trying to stay out of their sight. If he loses sight of the PCs, he uses Track to follow their trail until he can see them again. Farkash, his wolf companion, uses the aid another action to help Varikov in tracking. Varikov's favored enemy is humans, so he gains a +2 bonus on Survival checks to track the party if it includes a human.

The ranger tries his best to avoid combat, but if the PCs notice him and attack, he does not retreat until defeat is obvious. Even then, if he is sure that a significant number of the PCs can keep up with his relatively low speed, he stands and fights desperately rather than making a futile attempt to get away.

For more about Varikov, including statistics for him and Far-kash, see encounter area H on page 62 and the associated tactical encounter on page 82.

KAVAN THE GRIM

Strahd has been experimenting to create vampire minions with the ability to move about in daylight. He might even be planning to create a population of the daywalker breed (see Strahd's Dynasty on page 15). Among the first of these creations, Kavan the Grim is a savage brute who relishes his new ability to cause mayhem under the noonday sun. His ferocity makes him a poor covert spy, but he can accurately report on the PCs' combat abilities.

Kavan hurries toward the party at top speed, making no effort at stealth—once he closes to 90 feet, the PCs notice his approach. On his first turn in combat, Kavan rages and moves to attack the nearest character. He fights until he drops to 0 hit points, then drifts off in gaseous form toward the crypts beneath Castle Ravenloft.

Kavan's daylight attack should be a clear warning to the PCs that they are not up against any normal vampire foe. Unlike Strahd, though, Kavan suffers from the normal vampire aversions.

KAVAN THE GRIM

CR 7

Male vampire (human) barbarian 5
CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +8

Languages Common, Giant

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 18

(+4 Dex, +4 armor, +6 natural, -2 raging)

hp 38 (5 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 10/silver and magic

Immune sunlight; undead immunities

Resist cold 10, electricity 10; +4 turn resistance

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

Weakness vampire aversions, vampire vulnerabilities (except sunlight)

Speed 45 ft. (9 squares), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +15 (1d10+10) and
slam +9 (1d6+4 plus energy drain)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +14

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, energy drain, magic strike,
rage 5/day (3 rounds)

Special Actions blood drain 1d4 Con, gaseous form

Combat Gear *potion of resist fire* 10

Abilities Str 28, Dex 18, Con —, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dash*†, Dodge^B, Exotic
Weapon Proficiency^B (bastard sword), Extra Rage*,
Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B

*Feat described in *Complete Warrior*

†If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*,
replace Dash with the Touch of Taint feat from that book.
Kavan's speed becomes 40 ft. (8 squares).

Skills Intimidate +10, Jump +20, Listen +20, Sense Motive
+10, Spot +16, Survival +10

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, +1
bastard sword, *gauntlets of ogre power*



Kavan the Grim

Fast Healing (Ex) If reduced to 0 hp in combat, Kavan automatically and immediately assumes gaseous form and makes his way toward an empty crypt in area K84, which he must reach within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed.

Vampire Vulnerabilities Kavan suffers no ill effects from sunlight.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by Kavan's slam attack gain two negative levels. At the same time, Kavan gains 10 temporary hit points.

If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, Kavan's energy drain also increases the target's depravity score by 2 points or its corruption and depravity scores by 1 point each (because of his Touch of Taint feat).

Magic Strike (Su) If Kavan hits with his slam attack, the attack is treated as magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Blood Drain (Ex) If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, Kavan's blood drain also increases the target's corruption score by 2 points (because of his Touch of Taint feat).

Gaseous Form (Su) Kavan's Armor Class in gaseous form is 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10.

When not raging, Kavan has the following changed statistics:

AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 20

Will +3

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +13 (1d10+8) and
slam +7 (1d6+3 plus energy drain)

Grp +12

Special Actions alternate form (doesn't use), children of the night (doesn't use), dominate (Will DC 14)

Abilities Str 24

Skills Bluff +10, Hide +15, Jump +18, Move Silently +15,
Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Survival +10

Alternate Form (Su) Although Kavan can change to other forms as any other vampires can, he never does so.

Children of the Night (Su) Kavan revels in his own power and never uses this ability.

SCRYING SPELL

Strahd casts *scrying* on one of the PCs, based on the information reported to him by earlier spies. If the PCs have prevented any spy from returning to Strahd with information about them, there is no *scrying* attempt this day.

Strahd targets the character he believes is most likely to fail the Will save (DC 19). Take into account any of the following circumstances that apply:

- If Strahd is relying entirely on spies' information, his choice of target is based on a sketchy description of the PCs. If one of the PCs is described as brutish (a half-orc barbarian, perhaps), then Strahd targets that character. He does not choose any character whose description suggests a spellcaster or one who has an animal companion.
- If Strahd has observed the PCs in action before, he targets the character with the lowest Will save modifier.
- Unless Strahd has personally seen the PCs, the targeted character gets a +5 bonus on the Will save.
- If his spies secured a possession or garment of one of the PCs, Strahd targets that character, who takes a -4 penalty on the Will save.
- If his spies secured a lock of hair, bit of nail, or similar piece of one of the PCs, Strahd targets that character, who takes a -10 penalty on the Will save.

DIRE WOLVES

Larger but far less intelligent than Strahd's worg spies, these animals trail the PCs (or circle their camp) in a pack, occasionally piercing the night with their cries. If the PCs spend the night in the village, they hear the wolves' howling nearby after nightfall. If a PC is alone, whether in the woods or on the streets, the pack attacks immediately. Otherwise, the dire wolves attack 1 hour after locating the party, even entering the village and trying to break through doors and windows. They try to flank and trip PCs but are not as sophisticated in their tactics as worgs—they do not position themselves to make attacks of opportunity, nor do they fight defensively.

BAT SWARMS

Masses of bats engulf all the PCs in their area. If the party is inside a building, the bats pour in through open doors, windows, and chimneys. They swarm around the PCs for up to 10 rounds, then disperse. Even if the swarms are dispersed before then, some bats return to Strahd to give their report.

DIRE BATS

Enormous bats fly 10 feet off the ground over the area where the PCs are spending the night, screeching horribly (and striking terror into the townsfolk, if the PCs are in the village). If attacked, the bats fight back fiercely but flee after two are killed.

GHASTS AND GHOULS

This pack of undead stalks through the village or circles the PCs' camp in the wilderness. If attacked, the monsters scatter—but return in a half an hour or so, maintaining their distance. Their aim is to tire the characters out by forcing them to remain vigilant through the night; the pack strikes about an hour before dawn. The undead use tactics similar to those of worgs: They concentrate on characters they perceive as weak, and team up to exploit flanking or use the aid another action. If a ghoul begins its turn adjacent to a paralyzed character and at least 15 feet away from a nonparalyzed character, it grabs the paralyzed character and moves away from the battle. The ghastrs continue to fight until no ghouls remain, then flee.

VAMPIRE SPAWN

These weak vampires were villagers until very recently, and they appear to be young, healthy humans—until they open their mouths. They behave in a friendly fashion, trying to get close enough to attack as many PCs as possible before the party can react. In particular, they target lightly armored characters who might otherwise stay out of melee and use ranged spells or attacks. Once each is adjacent to a PC, or combat begins, the spawn bare their fangs and attack. They fight without fear, fleeing to Castle Ravenloft (and their coffins in the crypts) in gaseous form if they are reduced to 0 hit points.

WRAITH AND WIGHTS

Like the ghouls, these undead stalk through the village or circle the PCs' camp in the wilderness. Unlike the ghouls, they aim to hit hard, weaken the PCs, and then retreat. The wraith sends the wights forward in a pack to assault the main

group while it sneaks around to attack spellcasters who are avoiding melee. The wights try to bestow negative levels on as many PCs as possible, while the wraith drains as much Constitution from its target as it can. Once half the wights have been destroyed, the remaining undead try to flee.

SPECTRES

These incorporeal undead begin an encounter by exploiting their unnatural aura. PCs in the village hear their stabled horses neighing wildly in response to spectres' presence. If the PCs are camping in the wild, the spectres deliberately approach horses, animal companions, or any other animals with the party. (Arcane familiars and special mounts are magical beasts, not animals, so they are not affected by the spectres' unnatural aura.) The spectres then hide in solid objects nearby (such as the ground), leaving only their faces exposed. They attack anyone investigating the source of the disturbance, draining the PCs of life energy to weaken them against Strahd. Once they have done sufficient damage, or if battle turns against them, the spectres dive into the ground and head back to the castle to report their observations.

SASHA IVLISKOVA

Sasha Ivlskova is a beautiful and dangerous vampire who was transformed by Strahd in an earlier romantic liaison. Although she is normally confined to her crypt beneath the castle, Sasha has been let off her short leash to spy on the PCs. She brings two vampire spawn with her but avoids combat at all costs. She casts *blur* and *mage armor* on herself before approaching the party's location, and immediately flees in gaseous form if the PCs attack. The vampire spawn fight for a few rounds to cover Sasha's retreat, then assume gaseous form themselves and follow their mistress back to the castle.

For more information about Sasha, including her statistics block, see the description of Crypt 20 in area K84, page 123, and the associated tactical encounter on page 190.

STRAHD

If Strahd spies personally on the PCs, he assumes one of his animal forms (see page 7) and travels with a group of the same kind. The animals behave as described above, with Strahd

blending in as one of the pack. If combat ensues, Strahd joins in until he is seriously threatened, then flees.

If Strahd takes bat form and joins a swarm of bats, he is indistinguishable from the other members of the swarm. He cannot be targeted separately unless the attacker uses *detect undead* or some similar means to pinpoint Strahd's location

among the other bats. He shares the swarm's space but makes his own saving throws against area attacks that affect the swarm, taking damage separately. Wind affects him just as it does a flying creature of his size.

STRAHD'S GOALS

Strahd is the driving force behind everything that goes on in this adventure. Usually the desires of the PCs determine what direction they take, which of myriad opportunities they decide to pursue. Not so here. The PCs come to Barovia because Strahd wants them to. They stay because he will not permit them to leave.

Strahd has two goals that drive his every action and influence his interaction with the PCs and the village of Barovia. One is fixed—his desire to win the love of Ireena Kolyana. His secondary goal is variable and determined by you, the DM, before the adventure begins. The nature of this goal determines how and why Strahd brings the PCs to Barovia. It also guides his actions once they arrive and therefore has a dramatic impact on the overall tone and mood of the

adventure. For this reason, you should choose a secondary goal that interests you. However, you can also randomly determine a goal by rolling 1d6 and consulting the following table. (In a short adventure or a one-night session, Strahd has no secondary goal; see page 18.) The description of each secondary goal below also discusses Strahd's general strategy and the goal's effect on the adventure's mood.

Strahd pens a letter that purports to come from the burgomaster of Barovia, which is intended to draw the PCs into his scheme. Choose the appropriate version of the letter from the Appendix, depending on whether Strahd has a secondary goal and what it is. Photocopy the letter and give it to the players.



Sasha Ivlskova

d6	Secondary Goal	Letter
1	Brook No Rival	A
2	Descent into Madness	B
3	Strahd's Dynasty	C
4	Undead Legions	D
5	Untamed Allies	E
6*	(no secondary goal)	F

*Roll again on a result of 6 if you want to determine a secondary goal randomly. If you are playing a situation in which Strahd has no secondary goal, letter F is the one the PCs receive.

BROOK NO RIVAL

Strahd seeks to destroy the coven of witches that gathers at Lysaga Hill, and in particular its leader, the green hag Baba Zelenna. (For more about the coven, see Chapter 3.) He believes—rightly—that Baba Zelenna seeks to summon a demon who would challenge Strahd's authority over Barovia. He hopes that by luring the PCs to Barovia, he can incite them to root out the witches. Either Baba Zelenna will come to Strahd for help, or the PCs will destroy the hag and scatter the coven. Strahd would be content with either outcome.

To further this goal, Strahd sends a message (letter A) to the PCs that claims Irenea is suffering under a curse placed by the witches. Once the PCs have arrived in Barovia and dealt with the zombie plague, they find that Irenea has been having bad dreams—and bears the marks of Strahd's bite on her neck. (They probably also discover that the letter is a forgery, since the burgomaster has been dead for some time.) Strahd hopes that the PCs are still curious about the witches of Lysaga Hill. Irenea and the other villagers do believe that the witches are a threat, and they inform the PCs that the coven gathers on the night of the new moon every month.

If the PCs visit Lysaga Hill before the night of the new moon, they find the ancient ruins that mark the site of the gathering, along with the undead that haunt it, but Baba Zelenna evades them. Should they come at the new moon, they discover the witches in the midst of the summoning ritual. The witches have already succeeded in conjuring an aspect of their demon lord, and they are trying to create a portal through which his true form can pass. If the PCs fail to prevent this, the demon prince enters the world and moves toward Castle Ravenloft.

Strahd's Strategy: As long as the PCs are working against the witches, they find unlikely allies in the minions of Strahd. Strahd's spies do not attack or threaten them and maintain a relatively innocuous presence. The Vistani, Varikov the trapper, and even Strahd's vampire servants offer information about the witches' gatherings. If the PCs enter Castle Ravenloft before facing the witches, Strahd does not attack; if the PCs find him, he tries to turn them against the coven. He uses his *dominate ability* to bend as many PCs as possible

to his will. He then departs, urging the *dominated* characters to leave the castle and hunt the witches.

If the PCs defeat the witches, Strahd initially views them as useful, if unwitting, allies. Should they venture into Castle Ravenloft afterward, he appears before them personally to thank them for their help but thenceforth avoids them. However, if the PCs strip any of his fane-signs away from him or perform the bonding rituals for either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, he finally recognizes them as a threat. At that point, he reverts to the cat-and-mouse tactics described throughout the adventure.

Mood: This scenario creates and reinforces a mood of internal struggle. With Strahd's assistance, the PCs do undeniable good by thwarting the witches' demonic cult, but they are simultaneously aiding an even greater evil by helping Strahd remove a threat to his power.

DESCENT INTO MADNESS

During centuries of undeath, Strahd has grown increasingly depraved and is now utterly lost to madness. His madness has manifested as a shapeless spawn that has established itself in Strahd's old audience chamber. This horror is the true master of Castle Ravenloft now. Strahd does not have a specific goal in this scenario but is engaged in crazed activities that draw the PCs into the adventure.

Without being fully conscious of it, Strahd seeks freedom from his madness. Such release can be accomplished only through the death of the shapeless spawn, but neither Strahd nor his minions can attack the creature. When his worg spies report that the burgomaster of Barovia tried to send a message outside the valley, this news triggers something in Strahd's demented mind. He makes up a message (letter B)—little more than lunatic ravings—that he signs the burgomaster's name to and sends it out into the world. The letter lands in the hands of the PCs.

You can make this scenario particularly effective by adopting the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*. (See the Taint, Corruption, and Depravity sidebar.) If you are using these rules, creatures who gain negative levels from Strahd's energy drain attacks also become more depraved and time spent in Castle Ravenloft has the same effect.

When the PCs reach Barovia and meet Irenea, they find that—in addition to suffering from Strahd's blood drain—she is also slowly going mad, her mind warped by Strahd's attentions. Terrible nightmares have plagued her sleep, filled with tentacled horrors and howling darkness. She has gained a mild phobia of aberrations, forcing her to make a successful Will save (DC 12 + the CR of the aberration) whenever she encounters one, or be shaken for the duration of the encounter. (If you are using the taint rules, Irenea has a depravity score of 4.)

TAINT, CORRUPTION, AND DEPRAVITY

The *Heroes of Horror* supplement details optional taint rules to increase the sense of horror. Encountering creatures tainted by evil, or simply remaining in a defiled area, makes characters increasingly twisted in both body and soul. The greater the taint, the more severe its effects on the character.

Corruption encompasses physical effects, ranging from mere

blemishes to horrific decay and mutation. Depravity describes mental instability brought on by taint, anything from a mild phobia to full-blown psychosis. Full details on taint, corruption, and depravity begin on page 62 of *Heroes of Horror*.

Certain characters encountered in this adventure might have corruption or depravity scores noted for campaigns that use the taint rules.

If Strahd does not attack, something bizarre and inexplicable happens instead. Roll 1d10 and consult the Weird Happenings table below. These events have no harmful effects on the PCs but produce an ever more unnerving atmosphere. If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, each PC must make a DC 20 Will save each time a weird happening occurs. Failing this save increases the character's depravity score by 1d3 points.

WEIRD HAPPENINGS

d10	Effect
1	The sound of a voice screaming comes from somewhere in the castle; it sounds exactly like one of the PCs.
2	The area is abruptly swathed in a <i>deeper darkness</i> effect centered on a random PC; the effect ends when that PC leaves the area.
3	Every word spoken in the area is echoed in a harsh, evil whisper.
4	The last PC to enter the room sees a large shadow dart across the entrance behind him, but no creature can be detected.
5	An urgent whisper repeats one PC's name over and over as long as any PCs remain in the area.
6	A random PC hears the soft giggling of a little girl; no one else can hear it.
7	A PC's holy symbol drips blood while any PCs remain in the area. There is no evident source.
8	One of the PCs has a sudden sense of déjà vu, believing that he has been in this place before or perhaps dreamed it—then suddenly “remembers” dying horribly here. He can't remember the cause.
9	When the PCs try to leave the area, regardless of the exit they choose, they find themselves leaving the way they came in. If they reenter the area, roll again for a Strahd attack or a new weird happening.
10	As the PCs enter, the area begins filling up with fog. After 1d6 rounds, this duplicates the effect of a fog cloud spell. If the PCs remain in the area, they begin to see phantasms in the fog, as described in the Mists section (page 49).

If the PCs find and slay the shapeless spawn in area K25A (see the tactical encounter on page 138), Strahd begins to regain his hold on sanity. He still behaves erratically until the PCs find him in the room determined by the Fortunes of Ravenloft reading. (Even if they have encountered him there before, Strahd can always be found in this room after the shapeless spawn's death.) At that time, his tactics are logical and intelligent—he even has the presence of mind to thank the PCs for freeing him from his madness.

Mood: This scenario produces an adventure filled with confusion and a sense of eeriness or incongruity. Being unable to find the logic or reason in a situation can be a horrific experience. In addition, if you are using the taint rules, Strahd's madness spreads to the PCs. Their increasing depravity creates a mood of growing desperation and self-loathing.

STRAHD'S DYNASTY

Strahd seeks to found a dynasty of daywalker vampires, a network of undead spies and agents who will do his bidding, day or night. The PCs come to his attention because of their power: Turned to his service, they would be able minions. In this case, Strahd's missive (letter C) is designed to draw the PCs directly to the castle. His servants harry them as they move about the village and surrounding lands, trying to drive the party in that direction.

Strahd's Strategy: Once the PCs reach the castle, Strahd tries to confront them one at a time and drink their blood. (Death by energy drain creates a useless vampire spawn, while a victim drained of blood becomes a formidable servant.) He waits until a character becomes separated from the group within the castle, then attacks in human form. Strahd typically begins with *mind fog* to weaken his target's will and then uses his *dominate* ability to subdue the PC without a fight. If that doesn't work, he uses any or all of *deep slumber*, *ray of exhaustion*, and *chill touch* to weaken the character and increase his own odds in a grapple. If all else fails, Strahd uses his *bead of force* to restrain the character until his dominate attempt succeeds. (Since he has only one *bead of force*, he saves it for a truly desperate situation.)

Once he manages to overcome his target, Strahd commands submission while he drains the dominated character dry. He then interrs the body in a crypt beneath the castle. The dead PC animates as a vampire 1d4 days later, unless the others first find the body and either destroy it or return the character to life. Any PCs who rise as Strahd's minions are sent against their former companions.

If he must face the entire party (for example, when the PCs first enter the room indicated in the Fortunes of Ravenloft reading), Strahd leads with *mind fog* again, then tries *deep slumber* to take at least some PCs out of the fight. He tries to *dominate* all those who remain, commanding characters who succumb to stand aside from the battle. If he manages to overcome a strong combatant, such as a fighter, he commands that PC to grapple a spellcaster who is resisting Strahd's will (granting the attacker a new save with a +2 bonus).

Mood: The possibility of fellow adventurers turning against the party, along with Strahd's frequent attempts at *domination*, contributes to a mood of betrayal and distrust. Strahd also relies on separating and overcoming the PCs one by one, producing a sense of isolation throughout an adventure using this secondary goal.

UNDEAD LEGIONS

The zombie infestation in the village of Barovia is just the beginning. Ultimately, Strahd wants to turn every living creature in the world into his mindless undead slave. His only interest in the PCs is as carriers to spread the infection to the outside world. In this situation, Strahd sends out a message (letter D) designed to lure the PCs to Barovia for a battle against undead.

If this is Strahd's goal, the zombie plague in the village is a trial run for his plans. Strahd killed Doru, the son of the village priest, Danovich. He also made sure that Danovich found and read a fragment from the *Liber Blaspheme* (see page 214), hoping that the grief-maddened priest would use the vile knowledge in that tome to restore his son to terrible unlife. All is going according to plan, including the imminent arrival of the PCs. Only their success against the zombies is a surprise to the vampire.

Strahd's Strategy: Assuming that the PCs destroy the blaspheme Doru, Strahd turns his full attention to transforming the party into the epicenter of a new outbreak of his plague. Outside the castle, his servants keep a close watch on the PCs and drive them to seek out their master in his home. Once the PCs enter the castle, Strahd's tactics are simple and brutal. He attacks whenever the PCs enter a room in which he might be encountered, unless he is currently too weak from his last battle with them. Each time, he is accompanied by two infected Strahd zombies, which combine the virulent contagion with the extraordinary resilience of these new creations. All other Strahd zombies encountered in the castle carry the infection as well. Strahd hopes that the PCs will contract the necromantic disease and spread it beyond Barovia.

If the PCs return to the village after entering the castle, they find a renewal of the zombie plague, albeit diminished from its earlier level. (Reuse zombie encounters in the village as you see fit.) Each time they return to the village, they discover that a villager who was helpful to them on their last visit has become a zombie. Eventually, even Ismark, son of the late burgomaster, falls to the plague. Only Strahd's destruction can put an end to the zombie attacks.

Mood: The seemingly unstoppable zombie plague, spreading to people the PCs care about, lends a mood of spiraling despair to this scenario. The players should have a sense of racing against time, as the PCs try to destroy Strahd before he transforms the entire village into zombies.

INFECTED STRAHD ZOMBIE

CR 2

HP 42
NE Medium undead
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16
(+6 natural)
HD 6; **DR** 5/slashing
Immune undead immunities
Resist hard to kill
Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5
Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, can't run)
Melee slam +6 (1d6+4 plus disease)
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6
Atk Options disease
Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10
SQ hard to kill, plodding, undead traits

Feats Toughness

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened/—. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as an infected zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

Hard to Kill (Ex) Whenever a Strahd zombie would take enough damage from a melee or ranged attack to be destroyed, roll 1d20. On a result of 11 or higher, the zombie ignores all damage that would reduce its hit points below 1.

Plodding (Ex) Zombies can move and attack, but they can not move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

UNTAMED ALLIES

The werewolves of the Svalich Woods do not work for Strahd, though they do not oppose him. Strahd considers them allies, but he would like to make them his servants. If this is Strahd's goal, he entices the PCs to Barovia with a written message (letter E) describing the recent werewolf attacks.

The werewolves have no inclination to rebel against Strahd. They have been particularly active recently, having attacked the village several times in the week or two before the zombie problem began. (Having no desire to be transformed into mindless undead monstrosities, the werewolves keep clear of the village as long as the zombie outbreak remains.)

Once the PCs arrive and have dealt with the zombies, the villagers describe the monstrous wolf attacks that preceded the plague, only the latest in a series of misfortunes. Should the PCs observe the wounds on Ireena's neck, they can recognize them as unlike wolf bites—and Ireena denies having been attacked by a lycanthrope. (They probably also discover that the letter is a forgery, since the burgomaster has been dead for some time.) However, Strahd hopes that the PCs are still inclined to deal with the problem of the werewolves. If they begin a serious effort to fight the beasts, the PCs might have to appeal to Strahd for aid.

Strahd's Strategy: If the PCs start hunting werewolves in the Svalich Woods, the werewolves retaliate with a brutal attack upon the village while the party is away. At the same time, the werewolves entreat Strahd for assistance, which he grants in exchange for an oath of loyalty from their leader, the corrupted nymph Valicia. (See encounter C3: Nymph Hideaway, page 68.) Strahd sends his minions into the woods to help the werewolves. The tactical encounters C1, C2, and C3 in Chapter 3 include notes about Strahd's servants, who are present only in this circumstance.

Should the PCs defeat the werewolves and make their way to Castle Ravenloft, Strahd attacks them ferociously. He is furious at the loss of such valuable servants, and he slaughters any villagers he suspects of assisting the PCs.

Mood: The savage and bloodthirsty werewolves make this scenario similar to modern horror films. The violence of these encounters, and the shock of the slaughter in the village, defines the tone of the adventure. That mood continues even after the PCs have dealt with the werewolves and enter the castle. Once Strahd begins to murder the villagers, the survivors refuse to speak to the party, adding a sense of isolation to the mix.

Adventure Options

You're holding a 224-page book in your hands, and that's a lot of adventure material. To make this book as useful to you as possible, this section presents several options for using the encounters in the way that best suits you, from one night of horrific adventure to a minicampaign lasting for months.

One of the amazing things about the original *Ravenloft* module is that its fans never grew tired of running or playing in it. Thanks to the random element of the Fortunes of Ravenloft, the adventure was different every time, and we've tried to replicate that replayability. Even if you play the entire minicampaign, there will likely be some encounter sites that you don't use, treasures the PCs don't find, plans Strahd never has a chance to execute. You can flesh these out into later adventures (perhaps increasing the EL of encounters to challenge more experienced PCs), or even build a new campaign featuring Strahd, returned from apparent death, threatening the world with a new scheme.

The nonlinear nature of this adventure means its encounters are largely self-contained, a feature that encourages "plundering." If you like a given tactical encounter, you can drop it in almost as written into a different adventure, or string several encounters together into your own storyline.

These ideas are a starting point. What you do from here makes *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* your own.

MINICAMPAIGN

This model uses all the material in this book to form a minicampaign lasting around fifteen to twenty sessions, or roughly five months of real time (assuming you play weekly). The PCs come to Barovia at Strahd's invitation and remain there for weeks, exploring the lands surrounding the village before attempting an assault on the castle itself. The entire adventure contains enough encounters and treasure for characters to advance from 6th level to 9th level by its conclusion.

The minicampaign takes place in three acts that roughly correspond to the next three chapters of this book. Act I takes place in the village of Barovia, Act II in the surrounding wilderness, and Act III in Castle Ravenloft itself. The order of the PCs' explorations, however, is fluid. They might spend time in the wilderness in both Acts I and II, they're likely to return to the village repeatedly, and they might enter Castle Ravenloft one or more times during Act II.

As a minicampaign, *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* can be demanding: The DM must maintain a sense of horror and dread over a long period, while the players must take the initiative to seek out clues and information that helps their characters rid Barovia of Strahd.

PROLOGUE

To start the adventure, the PCs receive a letter, ostensibly from the burgomaster of Barovia. Combined with other rumors and information, this letter brings them to Strahd's domain and plants the seeds of their adventure. The nature of the letter depends on Strahd's secondary goal, if any.

ACT I: INAUSPICIOUS START

Upon arriving, the PCs find the village of Barovia under siege from a sudden zombie infestation. To make things worse, anyone infected by zombies becomes a zombie if killed or severely injured. The PCs are called on to quell the incursion, if only to save themselves. Over the course of approximately three sessions of play, they fight the zombies (with the help of a band of zombie-hunting mercenaries), encounter the new burgomaster and learn of the death of his father, and meet Ireena Kolyana, the object of Strahd's monstrous obsession. Finally, they track the source of the zombie scourge to the church and the village priest, driven to madness by the death of his son. These encounters and events appear in Chapter 2, along with descriptions of the people and locations in the village of Barovia.

During their adventures in Barovia, the PCs discover a number of leads pointing to various locations around the countryside. The Vistani in the village suggest having their fortunes told at the Tser Pool encampment. Ireena tells the PCs about the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, a powerful defense against Strahd. One of the mercenaries has a notebook that describes the *Sunsword*, a legendary weapon she has been seeking to aid her fight against the undead. The villagers speak of witches and werewolves that haunt the surrounding wilderness. And from the journal of the mad priest Danovich, they can learn of the *Tome of Strahd*, a book in Ravenloft's library that illuminates some of the vampire's weaknesses. If nothing else, the PCs have a clue in the letter they received from Count Strahd. Any or all of these clues might lead the PCs into the events of Act II.

ACT II: ILL FORTUNES

At the start of Act II, the PCs should be following several lines of investigation. Only one advances the storyline, though: visiting the Tser Pool encampment. There, Madam Eva can read the PCs' fortunes and give veiled hints about the other information they seek. (See the Fortunes of Ravenloft section on page 56.) The PCs might decide to follow clues on their own, and even learn some important details, but any Vistani they encounter become increasingly insistent that Madam Eva is expecting them at the encampment. If the PCs set off without having their fortunes told first, you'll have to deal and interpret the cards secretly.

Reading the Fortunes of Ravenloft reveals important clues about where the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* and the *Sunsword* can be found, and how to awaken the powers of both of these legacy items. The fortune-telling also reveals where to find the *Tome of Strahd*. The results of the reading randomly determine these details: The items might lie hidden within Castle Ravenloft or somewhere in the surrounding wilderness. The fortune-telling also gives the PCs some information about the secondary goals of Strahd, to assist them in their eventual showdown with the vampire. Finally, the lay of the cards casts omens about their path, which translate into combat penalties and bonuses within certain areas of Castle Ravenloft.

Armed with these clues, the PCs can track down the *Holy Symbol* and the *Sunsword*. Acquiring the legacy items, and awakening their powers, is central to the adventure. The *Tome of Strahd* reveals that some of Strahd's power derives from his connection to the land of Barovia itself; severing this connection will weaken him further.

As they pursue these leads, the PCs must deal with the dangerous inhabitants of the region, including the werewolves of the Svalich Woods, Varikov the crazed trapper, and the three hags. Their investigations might also bring the PCs into the castle—where an attack by the count himself should drive home the message that they must be adequately prepared before they can hope to defeat Strahd. Wilderness encounters are described in Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 details Castle Ravenloft.

ACT III: THE FACE OF EVIL

Once the PCs are armed with the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* and the *Sunsword*, and they have cut off Strahd's connection to the land, they are as prepared to face the vampire as they're ever likely to be. By this time, they should be at or near 9th level, which should enable them to explore Castle Ravenloft and ultimately challenge Count Strahd von Zarovich. In order to make best use of the *Sunsword*, however, the PCs must first destroy the *Dayheart*, which gives Strahd immunity to sunlight.

Madam Eva's fortune-telling determines where this final showdown will take place—the one spot from which Strahd will not flee a battle that turns against him. If Strahd is to be truly defeated, however, the PCs must venture into his crypt far beneath the castle to find his body and destroy it utterly.

LONG ADVENTURE

If you'd rather not sidetrack your entire campaign for several months, you can select some elements of the minicampaign to put together a long adventure lasting about eight sessions. In this model, Strahd starts off a little weaker—he lacks his legacy abilities from his connection to the land, so the PCs do not have to discover the *Tome of Strahd* and visit the three wilderness fanes. Other than that fact, the general outline of the adventure remains the same as described above. Strahd still has a secondary goal.

Because the PCs do not have as much opportunity to gain experience before facing Strahd, they should begin at 7th level. This makes their encounters in the village easier, which also speeds their progress toward the castle and the final confrontation with Strahd.

SHORT ADVENTURE

If you so desire, you can truncate the adventure even further, so that it takes about four sessions to play through. In this model, the PCs need to find or awaken only one of the two legacy items. They do not need to destroy the *Dayheart*—Strahd has not yet managed to draw on its power to ward himself from sunlight.

If you use this model, the PCs should begin at 8th level in order to have a chance against Strahd by the climax. Strahd has only a single goal in the short adventure.

SESSION 1: WELCOME TO BAROVIA

As in the minicampaign, the PCs receive a letter from Strahd to begin the adventure. They arrive in Barovia and discover the zombie infestation. In this model, the PCs spend less time combating the zombies: Ashlyn and her comrades have had some success already, and have already found clues pointing to the village church as the source of the infection. The PCs should have one good fight in the streets of the village (you might need

to increase the numbers or strength of the opponents) before entering the church to find Danovich and the blasphemy. They learn of the existence of both the *Sunsword* (from Ashlyn) and the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* (from Ismark and Ireena), although they need find only one of the items. Danovich's library contains no mention of the *Tome of Strahd*.

SESSION 2: GETTING AT THE ROOT

Time is of the essence—you might have to tell the players outright that visiting the Tser Pool encampment is the most expeditious way to learn more. Madam Eva reads the PCs' fortunes, but she does not deal a focus card for the *Tome of Strahd*. She provides information about only one of the two legacy items—the other, she says, is “hidden in shadow.”

Armed with information from Madam Eva, the PCs strike out to a single wilderness fane (you decide which one) to recover the legacy item. Their assault on the castle has a specific room as their objective—the place where they can awaken the item they have retrieved.

SESSION 3: ENTERING THE CASTLE

The PCs brave the castle gates and make their way into Strahd's home, seeking to awaken the hidden powers of the legacy item. Their first encounter with Strahd occurs in the dining hall as normal (see encounter area K10 on page 132) and ends with either the PCs or the vampire fleeing. The PCs find the room in which to perform the ritual and arm themselves with one effective weapon against the vampire.

SESSION 4: DEFEATING STRAHD

Ready for the final confrontation, the PCs explore the rest of the castle until they encounter Strahd again in the room foretold by the *Fortunes of Ravenloft*. This time the vampire does not flee. Assuming they win the battle, the PCs must still venture into the crypts to prevent Strahd from ever returning.

ONE-NIGHT SESSION

Perhaps you want to observe Halloween in classic style by taking a break from your regular campaign and venturing into Castle Ravenloft. Or you just need to fill a night of adventuring. In that case, you can select material from this book to build one long session that comprises five or six encounters.

For a one-night session, the characters should be about 9th level. They bypass most of Barovia and the surrounding lands, heading straight to the castle. In this model, Strahd has neither his fane-signs nor immunity to sunlight. The PCs do not have time to acquire either the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* or the *Sunsword*, so they must rely entirely on their own abilities. The *Fortunes of Ravenloft* do not come into play in this short session, and Strahd has no secondary goal.

INTRODUCTION: THE VILLAGE OF BAROVIA

As in the minicampaign, the PCs receive a letter from Strahd to begin the adventure. In this scenario, the village of Barovia is entirely free of zombies. The PCs quickly meet Ismark and Ireena, and Ireena pleads with them to destroy Strahd before he can finish what he has begun and make her his vampire bride.

ADVENTURE: CASTLE RAVENLOFT

The PCs enter the castle. Strahd attacks immediately after their first combat encounter and fights them just long enough to get their measure. He launches his next attack at what he feels is the most advantageous moment, and this time he fights to the death. Allow the PCs to explore the castle freely for most of the time allotted for your session. Then have Strahd attack about an hour before you want to end the game.

Simply defeating Strahd in combat is a significant accomplishment, and you can end the adventure at that point if you desire. Alternatively, the PCs can descend into the crypts to find Strahd's tomb and destroy him utterly, but that has the potential to expand the adventure beyond a single session.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Characters could become entangled in Strahd's machinations through a wide variety of methods. The adventure works best if the PCs have at least two distinct reasons to visit Barovia—in addition to feeling properly motivated, they'll have plenty of questions to ask once they arrive.

Regardless of the length of the adventure or Strahd's secondary goals, one hook is always the letter purporting to be from the village's burgomaster. (See *Letter from Barovia*, page 21.) If you are running *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* as a one-night session, this alone should be enough to draw the PCs to Barovia—you don't want them wasting time chasing down other leads. For longer adventures, choose at least one hook from the options presented below (or create one of your own, drawing on these for inspiration).

SMUGGLERS' DEN

A constable, duty collector, or other official in one of the regions near Barovia asks the PCs to help root out a group of smugglers operating in the area. The nature of this official's concern is up to you to determine: She might be pursuing them for evading duties on luxury goods (such as fine wine or rich cloth), be outraged because they are supplying weap-

ons to bandits or insurgents, or be trying to locate a stolen treasure. Evidence provided by the official or rooted out by the PCs points to the valley of Barovia—conveniently situated outside the jurisdiction of any larger government—as the smugglers' headquarters. The official believes the human and halfling “gypsies” who travel throughout the region are transporting the contraband goods.

GRIEF'S PLEA

The PCs encounter Helene Maurgen, the grieving wife of an adventurer who was last seen entering Barovia three months ago, armed with *silversheen* and wolfsbane. She begs the PCs to find her husband, or at least his body. If he is dead, she would like them to return his wedding ring to her as a memento.

This lost adventurer, Jerref Maurgen, is now a trophy in the cavern home of Varikov the trapper (see encounter area H2 on page 82). Jerref had been hunting werewolves at the outer edge of the Svalich Woods, and came home to stock up on *silversheen* before fighting the beasts. Varikov found and killed him first.

SEARCH FOR THE SUNSWORD

In response to the threat of a powerful undead creature (which could be other than Strahd), the PCs must seek out the legendary *Sunsword*. The mighty weapon disappeared from knowledge centuries ago, but the PCs' research indicates that it was last used in the remote mountain valley of Barovia.

CALL OF THE LIGHTBRINGERS

This hook works well if any of the PCs have adopted a prestige class focused on combating the undead, such as the hunter of the dead (*Complete Warrior*), master of radiance (*Libris Mortis*), radiant servant of Pelor (*Complete Divine*), or sacred purifier (*Libris Mortis*), or if the party includes a cleric of Pelor or other devotee of that god. An organization known as the Lightbringers, dedicated to fighting the undead, sends out a call for help—a call that reaches the PCs' ears. (See the Appendix for more about the Lightbringers organization.) A group of

DEALING WITH DEATH

Expedition to Castle Ravenloft is a dangerous adventure, and one or more PCs might well die over its course. If the characters are lucky, their friends are merely dead; if things go poorly, former allies might become vampire slaves of Count Strahd. Barovia is isolated and the village cleric, in addition to being only 5th level, is entirely mad. Thus, the characters probably do not have access to resurrection magic (unless their own cleric reaches 9th level by the end of the adventure). How, then, should you deal with dead characters—and, more to the point, their players?

A few NPCs could make good replacements for fallen characters. These include Ashlyn the Lightbringer (whose statistics appear in tactical encounter E3, page 36), Sir Urik (tactical encounter F, page 74), and possibly even Ireena Kolyana (entry E11, page 30). All three of these characters have equipment appropriate to PCs of their level—though Ireena starts with a handicap, in that she has already failed her saving throw against Strahd's *dominate* ability and lost some Constitution to his blood drain.

Of course, you can also allow players of dead PCs to bring new characters into the adventure. A new character should start at

the beginning of the level one below that of the dead character (DMG 42); for example, if a 7th-level character dies, the new character should start at the beginning of 6th level. You should choose a suitable adventure hook to draw that character to Barovia (see Adventure Options on page 17), which can be the same as the original one or a new one. (A new hook is useful if the PCs are floundering and could use a new direction to explore.) Alternatively, the new character's previous adventuring companions all met horrible ends, and she barely managed to stagger into Barovia with her life.

If a PC is transformed into a vampire, it's best to take over that character as an NPC and let the player create a new one. Another possibility—especially effective in a one-night session—is to let the player join you on the other side of the screen, roleplaying the new vampire's service to Strahd against her former allies. This approach enhances the mood of horror by creating a sense of growing isolation in the remaining players' minds. On the other hand, it contributes to an antagonistic relationship between the DM and the players, which is not a good dynamic for an ongoing campaign.

Lightbringers journeyed to Barovia, where they found the village plagued by zombies. The leader of this expedition, a paladin named Ashlyn, sent a message to her Lightbringer superiors asking for reinforcements.

RACE TO THE TOME



If *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* takes place in the **EBERRON™** setting,

consider using this hook instead of or in addition to any of the others included here. “Race to the Tome” adds a layer of Eberron-flavored intrigue to the adventure.

The PCs learn of an ancient tome of lore dating from the early days of Karrnath, in the years of Karrn’s conquest leading up to the formation of Galifar. Besides its obvious historical value, this volume—the *Tome of Strahd*—is said to contain necromantic secrets unknown to modern spellcasters. Such knowledge is certain to be attractive to the Order of the Emerald Claw. Evidence points to the tome being somewhere in Barovia, a small valley nestled between the civilized heart of Karrnath and the forbidding mountains of the Mror Holds.

The PCs might learn of the *Tome of Strahd* on their own and seek it out, or some patron (such as a knight of the Silver Flame, a disguised dragon of the Chamber, a wealthy member of the Aurum, or an agent of the Emerald Claw) might hire them to find it. Enemies are also after the tome—most likely agents of the Emerald Claw, but possibly of another organization that better suits your campaign. Example opponents include the Emerald Claw necromancer Demise (at 8th level) or Halas Martain the mercenary (at 9th level); these characters are presented on pages 252–253 of the **EBERRON CAMPAIGN SETTING**.

See the Action Points in Ravenloft sidebar for information about adjusting the adventure for an **EBERRON** campaign.

RELICS OF THE MORNINGLORD



If *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* takes place in the **FORGOTTEN REALMS™**

setting, consider using this hook instead of or in addition to any of the others included here. “Relics of the Morninglord” ties the adventure more closely to the people and places of Faerûn.

An earnest young priest of Lathander contacts the PCs. Gevyen Tallmer is a scholar, not an adventurer: A 5th-level cleric (or at least one level below the lowest-level PC in the party), he has more knowledge of ancient texts than contemporary monsters. His field of study is relics of the Morninglord, and he believes he has stumbled across an important text. According to Gevyen’s research, a small sect of Lathander’s church is active in a remote region of Damara, largely isolated from the rest of the world. This sect is served by a small priesthood and two slightly larger orders, the Ecaterine monks and the Knights of the Raven. The short passage Gevyen discovered mentions three holy shrines dedicated to saints of Lathander in the same remote region, as well as two powerful artifacts. One is a holy symbol that shines like the sun, and the other is said to be the first sun blade.

Gevyen’s proposition is fairly straightforward: The road to Damara is long and dangerous, and he seeks an escort of

powerful adventurers. His destination is Barovia, a small realm nestled in the eastern reaches of the Galena Mountains, a few days’ journey from Ironspur. The priest doesn’t anticipate any trouble once he reaches the remote valley.

NEXUS OF SHADOW



For a real twist, *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* can be a horrific experience for a group of d20 **MODERN™** characters. Most of the preceding hooks work just as well in a modern setting as they do in a traditional D&D setting. Consider using this hook if your campaign has the PCs investigating para-

normal phenomena, such as in the **SHADOW CHASERS** model or the **URBAN ARCANA™ Campaign Setting**.

The PCs learn of a remote European castle that is said to be haunted. In contrast to most such stories, however, none of the rumors about this place deal with events inside the castle—rather, the tale goes, no one has entered and survived to tell about it. So great is the evil of this place that it extends beyond the castle walls to encompass the surrounding valley. Monstrous wolves, ghostly spirits, giant bats, and bestial ogres are said to terrorize the area, known as Barovia, tucked away in an isolated part of eastern Europe. If the PCs work for Department-7 or a similar organization, they are sent to investigate this mysterious castle; otherwise, they learn of it during their own investigations.

Depending on the nature of your campaign, you might want to downplay the nonhuman humanoids in the adventure. When an encounter describes halfling Vistani, use the human Vistani statistics instead. The elf werewolves in the Svalich Woods use the statistics presented but appear more human, though slightly feral. Similarly, Varikov looks more or less human (if short and stocky), but his statistics are unchanged.

See the Action Points in Ravenloft sidebar for information about adjusting the adventure for a d20 **MODERN** campaign.

ACTION POINTS IN RAVENLOFT

In an **EBERRON** or d20 **MODERN** campaign, having a pool of action points might diminish the sense of horror in this adventure, since the element of risk is less. To restore a mood of dread, a special rule applies to the use of action points within Castle Ravenloft. Whenever a PC spends an action point for a bonus on a d20 roll but still fails the check, Strahd immediately gains 1 action point. If the PCs are fighting Strahd when this occurs, the corners of his mouth twist into a wicked smile. The following readaloud text conveys the sense that something is terribly wrong.

*You make a heroic effort, but luck still fails you.
A chill passes briefly through your body.*

Strahd begins with 5 action points. Action points “stolen” from PCs can raise his total without limit. Strahd can spend action points just as characters can—and he does so freely, knowing that his supply will quickly be replenished.

Action points spent outside Castle Ravenloft cannot transfer to Strahd. Only within the castle can he benefit from the ill luck of others.

LETTER FROM BAROVIA

However you get them to travel to Barovia, once the PCs are on their way, use Strahd's letter to further draw them into the adventure. The letter is ostensibly from the burgomaster of Barovia, Kolyan Indirovich.

Roughly a day's travel from the village, the party comes upon the Weary Horse Inn, a roadside hostel whose common room hosts patrons from the sparsely populated countryside. Whether the PCs stay there for the night or stop in briefly for a meal or information, a messenger from Barovia finds them there and delivers the letter. If they continue past the inn without stopping, the messenger runs out and calls out to them to stop. The following readaloud text assumes that the PCs are dining in the common room of the inn.

With the dying of daylight, a fog creeps across the land, clutching everything in its clammy grasp. Inside the Weary Horse Inn, though, the fire is warm enough, and if the few patrons are sullen and stare at you a little boldly, at least the food and drink are good.

For an inn's common room, it's quiet. It holds no more than a handful of customers. They keep their voices low, and even the clink of their mugs seems subdued as the fog gathers outside. When the door swings open, every head turns to see who has arrived.

This new arrival loudly stamps the mud off his boots in the doorway, then strides confidently over, throwing a letter down on the table in front of you.

"The village of Barovia is in need of heroes," he says in a thick accent. "You'll do as well as any." Without another word, he turns to leave.

The messenger is a human Vistani (see page 76). If the PCs stop him to ask questions, he offers little more information. He can be persuaded to add the following details but refuses to answer questions about himself or the other Vistani.

- "Barovia lies to the west, a full day's ride from here. You would do well to leave at first light. They say the Svalich Woods are not safe at night."
- "The letter is from the burgomaster. That is all I know."
- "My journeys take me through Barovia, but I do not live there. The villagers' troubles are not my troubles. They pay me to find them heroes, and that is what I have done."

The Vistani's directions are accurate. The Weary Horse Inn stands about 30 miles from the village of Barovia. At a speed of 40 feet, a traveler requires almost 8 hours to cover that distance; unencumbered light horses can make the journey in about 5 hours.

Barovia and Castle Ravenloft

The map on page 54 gives an overview of the village and lands of Barovia, which are detailed in the following chapters. Chapter 2 describes encounters in the village (area E on the overview map), while Chapter 3 covers encounters in

the surrounding areas (areas C, D, F, G, H, and I). Chapter 4 describes Castle Ravenloft itself (areas J and K).

The PCs approach the village of Barovia along the Old Svalich Road (area A on the overview map). Assuming they stick to the road, the gates of Barovia welcome them (area B on the overview map).

A. Old Svalich Road

Black pools of water stand like dark mirrors about the muddy roadway. A pall of thick, cold mist spreads over the ground. Giant tree trunks stand guard on both sides of the road, their branches clawing at the mists. In every direction the fog grows thicker and the forest seems more oppressive.

The road seems threatening but is actually quite safe. Strahd's servants do not generally venture beyond the gates of Barovia, so the PCs do not have any significant encounters along the way.

B. Gates of Barovia

Gray in the fog, high stone pillars loom up from the impenetrable woods on both sides of the road. Huge iron gates hang from the stonework, dew clinging to their rusting bars. Standing before the pillars are two stone statues of armed guardians with wicked polearms. Their carved heads lie among the weeds at their feet, neatly broken from the stone shoulders.

If the PCs approach within 50 feet from the outside, the gates screech open slowly. After the PCs pass through (or retreat to a distance greater than 50 feet), the gates close again with a loud clang. Approaching from the Barovia side does not cause the gates to open, and in fact they are difficult (Strength DC 28) to force open from that side. Characters can circle around the gates to leave Barovia if they wish, although they might have to contend with the mists (see page 49).

The Tome of Strahd

The *Tome of Strahd* is an ancient work penned by Strahd himself. It is a tragic tale of how Strahd came to his fallen state, blurring into a nightmarish raving about the power he has since acquired. The book is bound in a thick black leather cover with brass hinges and fastenings. The pages are made of parchment and are very brittle. The language is Common, but the handwriting is small, cramped, and difficult to read. Stains and age have made much of the book entirely illegible. Characters can make out the text presented on the following page, but the remainder of the book is beyond deciphering.

Madam Eva's reading of the *Fortunes of Ravenloft* (see page 56) determines the actual location of the *Tome of Strahd* in the course of the adventure.

I am the Ancient, I am the Land. My beginnings are lost in the darkness of the past. I was the warrior, I was good and just. I thundered across the land like the wrath of a just god, but the war years and the killing years wore down my soul as the wind wears stone into sand.

All goodness slipped from my life; I found my youth and strength gone, and all I had left was death. My army settled in the valley of Barovia and took power over the people in the name of a just god, but with none of a god's grace or justice.

I called for my family, long unseated from their ancient thrones, and brought them here to settle in the castle Ravenloft. They came with a younger brother of mine, Sergei. He was handsome and youthful. I hated him for both.

From the families of the valley, one spirit shone above all others. A rare beauty, who was called "perfection," "joy," and "treasure." Her name was Tatyana, and I longed for her to be mine.

I loved her with all my heart. I loved her for her youth. I loved her for her joy. But she spurned me! "Old One" was my name to her—"elder" and "brother" also. Her heart went to Sergei. They were betrothed. The date was set.

With words she called me "brother," but when I looked into her eyes they reflected another name—"death." It was the death of the aged that she saw in me. She loved her youth and enjoyed it. But I had squandered mine.

The death she saw in me turned her from me. And so I came to hate death, my death. My hate is very strong; I would not be called "death" so soon.

I made a pact with death, a pact of blood. On the day of the wedding, I killed Sergei, my brother. My pact was sealed with his blood.

I found Tatyana weeping in the garden east of the chapel. She fled from me. She would not let me explain, and a great anger swelled within me. She had to understand the pact I made for her. I pursued her. Finally, in despair, she flung herself from the walls of Ravenloft, and I watched everything I ever wanted fall from my grasp forever.

It was a thousand feet through the mists. No trace of her was ever found. Not even I know her final fate.

Arrows from the castle guards pierced me to my soul, but I did not die. Nor did I live. I became undead, forever.

I have studied much since then. "Vampyr" is my new name. I still lust for life and youth, and I curse the living that took them from me. Even the sun is against me. It is the sun and light I fear the most. But little else can harm me now. Even a stake through my heart does not kill me, though it holds me from movement. But the sword, that cursed sword that Sergei brought! I must dispose of that awful tool! I fear and hate it as much as the sun.

I have learned much, too, about this land of Barovia. Ancient are its ways, ancient beyond the knowledge of the simple folk of the valley. I have walked the ancient ways, secret roads linking three fanes of might, and thus I have become the Land.

Three ancient saints dwelt in this valley long before my coming, and three hidden fanes still give tribute to their memories. I visited the Swamp Fane, the Forest Fane, and the Mountain Fane, and claimed their power for my own. Thus I solidified my grasp on this dim shadow of life.

I made the fanes my own, and I have become the Land. Also I made the fane-servants my own, and they now serve me as once they served the saints of the fanes.

I have often hunted for Tatyana. I have even felt her within my grasp, but she escapes. She taunts me! She taunts me! What will it take to bend her love to me?

I now reside far below Ravenloft. I live among the dead and sleep beneath the very stones of this hollow castle of despair. I shall seal shut the walls of the stairs that none may disturb me.



Illus. by K. Andrews

Fog blanketed the village, smothering the streets and marooning the buildings, forming an archipelago of crumbling masonry in a gray, hopeless sea.

At the village's lonely edge, most structures were abandoned, burnt-out hulks. Charcoal was thick on the air, but that choking odor couldn't overpower the underlying, sickly sweet smell of carrion and spoilage. Claw marks raked some of the vacant homes, ominous not merely because of their presence, but because of the five-fingered, handlike shape they suggested.

Farther inward, most buildings survived. Doors were barricaded with tables, broken carts, and smashed furnishings. Windows were shuttered and planked. But had anyone been saved? Silence was thick in the fog-bound streets, as though from cotton stuffed into the ears. Nothing living stirred, nothing breathing walked the streets.

But where the living were absent, the newly dead shambled.

And hunger, too, raw and unstoppable, stalked the village, multiplying with each new corpse that kicked and shuddered its way back toward animation.

A hunger that could never be slaked.

An infection that could never be stemmed.

The village of Barovia has suffered a string of bad luck. As if Strahd's recent attacks weren't enough, now a burgeoning necromantic infection threatens to erase it utterly (although the zombie attack may be only indirectly related). Characters who come upon the village have a fight on their hands simply

to get to its central square. Has the entire village fallen to multiplying zombies?

ZOMBIE INCURSION

Entering Barovia is like moving through a war zone. Any travel at all is risky—zombies might lurk anywhere, and probably do.

SUMMARY

PCs who want to figure out what's going on need to get to the village square, which is still effectively held against the zombies (area E3), or to the burgomaster's home (area E11). Although this house is zombie-free, it has been recently breached by Strahd.

Characters eventually learn that the heart of the incursion festers in the old church and its graveyard (areas E7 and E8, respectively). If the PCs overcome the challenges in those areas, they quell the zombie infestation and the accompanying monstrous attacks. All zombies drop to the ground, becoming ordinary corpses; grieving survivors gather and bury their dead. Opportunistic monsters, such as ghouls, dire maggots, and the like, slink away from the village when they realize that the infection no longer offers them cover.

RUNNING THE ZOMBIE INCURSION

This chapter contains several zombie tactical encounters (E1, E2, E3, and E9), which correspond to the adventure information presented in the keyed entries.

First Street Encounter: Tactical encounter E1: Zombie Street Ambush is intended as the first experience with the infestation when the PCs arrive in the village.

The PCs run into zombies randomly as they travel the streets and investigate buildings. Some encounters are also keyed to specific locations, as detailed in the following pages.

Subsequent Street Encounters: When the PCs reach the intersection marked E2 on the village map, they come upon another group of zombies and associated creatures. This combat is presented in tactical encounter E2: Zombie Street Encounter. For every 40 feet they travel through the village of Barovia, the PCs have a 45% chance of encountering another group of zombies in the abandoned streets. (Such random encounters should not take place within 40 feet of a keyed area.) You can use tactical encounter E2 to handle these random fights; the tactical information includes instructions for varying the setup accordingly.

Should the PCs make it to the village square, they encounter a paladin trying to fight off the zombies that have broken through one of the barricades. Tactical encounter E3: Zombies in Town Square, page 36, contains detailed information.

Building Encounters: Most buildings in the village are not keyed to adventure locations. The citizens have piled up furniture and assorted junk to barricade doors against the undead hordes (hardness 5; 50 hp; break DC 20). If the PCs break into such a building, roll on the table below to determine what they find inside. If the result indicates zombies, use tactical encounter E9: Zombie-Infested Building (page 46). Specific buildings might have locked doors instead; the tactical encounters provide such details.

BAROVIA BUILDING ENCOUNTERS

d%	Encounter
01–50	Empty building
51–70	Barovian survivors
71–100	Zombies

Empty Building: This building is unoccupied. If you wish, you can roll 1d4: on a result of 1 or 2, the structure is an empty tenement; on a 3, an abandoned shop; and on a 4, a looted warehouse. For each 10 minutes spent searching the debris in a building, the party can attempt a DC 25 Search check. On a success, roll for a random treasure (Table 3–5: Treasure, DMG 52) suitable for a 1st-level encounter. No unkeyed building has more than one treasure.

Barovian Survivors: A group of 2d4 villagers are huddled in the building. The scared survivors inform the PCs that the zombie attack began only a few days ago but got worse quickly. Anyone who is killed by a zombie rises as a zombie a few moments later. The villagers beg the PCs to escort them to the village square, which they've heard is still holding out.



Zombies: This building is inhabited only by zombies, whether transformed villagers or marauders that broke in some other way.

If characters take shelter in an abandoned building, there is a 25% chance per hour that a mob of 2d4+1 zombies shows up at the entrance and tries to break in. (Use the infected zombie statistics presented in any of the referenced tactical encounters.) If the zombies fail to gain entrance after 2d10 rounds, they lose interest and shamle away.

E. Streets of Barovia

Tall shapes loom from the dense fog, and the muddy ground underfoot gives way to slick, wet cobblestones. A dilapidated wooden sign reads “Welcome to the Village of Barovia.” As you grow closer, the shapes resolve into tenements whose windows are boarded, broken, and lightless. Nothing moves nearby, though the fog limits visibility. Faint sounds, as of something groaning, echo hollowly from somewhere deeper in the settlement.

When characters enter keyed adventure locations (identified by letter-number combinations on the village map), refer to the appropriate entries below. Not every entry has an associated tactical encounter; some of them detail interactions with important NPCs, while others involve examining an area and do not provoke combat.

E1: ZOMBIE STREET AMBUSH

Use this encounter the first time the PCs enter the village of Barovia from any direction, to simulate the shock of an unexpected zombie attack.

Tactical Encounter: E1: Zombie Street Ambush on page 32.

E2: ZOMBIE STREET ENCOUNTER

This encounter is keyed to a specific intersection on the village map. It represents the PCs penetrating deeper into the village, now alert for zombies. You can use the associated tactical encounter for any randomly encountered zombies, as described above.

Tactical Encounter: E2: Zombie Street Encounter on page 34.

E3: ZOMBIES IN TOWN SQUARE

This encounter takes place the first time the PCs enter Barovia's central square. They have the chance to meet a potential ally: Ashlyn the paladin.

Tactical Encounter: E3: Zombies in Town Square on page 36. Ashlyn's statistics are presented in the encounter description.

Ashlyn

Once the zombies in the square have been defeated, the PCs can make the acquaintance of Ashlyn (if she survived).

Ashlyn is part of a group of undead hunters called Lightbringers (see page 204 in the Appendix) who recently arrived in town. She reveres Pelor or a similar good deity appropriate to your campaign. Ashlyn provides the following information to the PCs during the course of conversation.

- "I and my companions are called Lightbringers. We slay undead wherever we can find them. We'd heard Barovia was thick with the horrors."
- "My companions include Thendrick, faithful servant of Pelor, and Mathilda, a fighter of great renown."
- "It is also my quest to find the legendary *Sunsword*. A mighty weapon against evil, especially undead, it is most potent against vampires. It fell out of histories long ago, but I've determined that it was last seen and used in these lands. The townspeople say someone named Madam Eva would know the sword's whereabouts if anyone does."



Ashlyn is a Lightbringer, pledged to destroy all undead

- "Thendrick and Mathilda wanted to check out the church to the northwest. The townsfolk believe that's where the zombies arise. Everyone told them to talk to Madam Eva first—she's some sort of wise woman who lives west of town, the same one who apparently knows about the *Sunsword*. But they wouldn't listen, the arrogant clods. They went to the church, confident they could handle whatever they found without needing advice. That was three days ago. I haven't heard from them since, and haven't been able to venture beyond this square."
- "Had you not arrived when you did, I doubt I could have held this last wave back. The zombies never breached the barricades before."
- "If you're here to destroy zombies, our aims likely coincide. Will you help me find my companions, escape town, and talk to Madam Eva?"
- If asked about Strahd, Ashlyn replies: "I've heard the townspeople curse with that name. I thought it merely a local equivalent to the evil eye. Why—does it have some significance?"

Development: Once they have defeated the zombies in this location, PCs are free to check out the two businesses still in operation in downtown Barovia. These border the village square as shown on the tactical encounter map: Bildrath's Mercantile (area E4) and the Blood of the Vine tavern (area E5). See those entries for more information.

Ashlyn is eager to head to the church and learn about her companions, and to end the threat. However, she can wait a day or two if healing and rest are required. If the PCs dally longer than that, Ashlyn makes the attempt herself.

As long as the source of the necromantic infection remains (see area E7A: Church Understory), the zombie plague continues. Every day, 1d3 groups of 2d4 zombies each shamble up to one or more of the barricades defending the village square (each group attacks a different barricade) and attempt to smash their way through until defeated. If they have not penetrated the barricade after 2d10 rounds, the zombies wander off in search of easier prey.

Barricade Repair: Without Ashlyn or the PCs to assist them, the few villagers remaining in the area cannot fight off the zombies for long. The first order of business is repairing the breached barricade. Parriwimple emerges from Bildrath's Mercantile and two surly Vistani join him from the tavern. They require 10 minutes of uninterrupted work to complete rough repairs and gladly accept any aid the PCs offer. See areas E4 and E5 for more information about these NPCs. No zombies attack during this period.

Treasure: Should Ashlyn be killed, the PCs can still learn important information. She keeps a journal in addition to other items noted in her statistics. The journal

contains the basic information described above, making clear that Ashlyn believed her friends would still be alive if they had listened to the advice of the townspeople and sought out Madam Eva. Perhaps Eva would have known where to locate the *Sunsword*?

E4: BILDRATH'S MERCANTILE

Sparse light gleams from gaps in the boarded-up windows of this building. A sign over the door creaks on its hinges, proclaiming "Bildrath's Mercantile."

In normal times, Bildrath replenishes his stock through trade with the far-roving Vistani. His prices are high, but the townspeople rely on the mercantile for hard-to-come-by items. However, Bildrath closed shop when the zombie invasion began, and he will not open it again to regular business until the infestation is quelled.

Bildrath (N male human warrior 4; Profession [shopkeeper]) is holed up alone in the building with his rather dim nephew, Parriwimple (NG male human warrior 9). Bildrath sends Parriwimple out to help repair the barricade if it is breached, but otherwise commands his nephew to remain in the shop and defend it against shoplifters and zombies alike. He sends anyone seeking sanctuary across the street to the Blood of the Vine tavern (area E5).

Parriwimple serves as Bildrath's stock boy, and his uncle occasionally asks him to carry items out from the back room. The width of his shoulders and the muscles rippling beneath his leather jerkin reveal Parriwimple's prodigious strength. However, he is extremely simple-minded. On no account does Bildrath allow Parriwimple to accompany the PCs, whether to quell the zombies or to undertake some other task. Parriwimple is dedicated to his uncle and would not follow the PCs even if his uncle gave permission. In his own dim way he knows that to cross the master of the castle is death—or worse.

Development: Persistent PCs might get Bildrath to open his shop to them even before the zombie incursion stops. This requires a helpful result on a Diplomacy check; his attitude starts as unfriendly for this purpose, but a 50 gp bribe raises his starting attitude to indifferent. Once the store is open, PCs can buy anything they can normally find in a village—Barovia has a 200 gp limit (DMG 137), but the markup on all items is 50%. Bildrath himself serves customers. He never bargains: "If you want it badly enough, you'll pay—you won't find another shop in this town."

If asked about Strahd, Bildrath gets a nervous look in his eyes and refuses to speak on the topic. He doesn't actually have any information—he's just afraid.

An agent of Strahd named Lucian has recruited Bildrath as a spy. (For more about Lucian, see area K72 on page 172.) Bildrath has received a few pieces of correspondence from Lucian, asking about how things are going in town and requesting reports on any newcomers or other interesting events. Since the correspondence always includes 5 platinum pieces, Bildrath has never seen any reason not to comply.

He sees himself not as an agent of evil but as merely an observer. He doesn't know anything more about the mysterious Lucian.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: Depending on the results of Madam Eva's fortune-telling, either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* might be hidden in the back room of Bildrath's Mercantile. Bildrath does not know the item is in his shop, and he does not normally allow anyone back there but Parriwimple. However, a 50 gp bribe is sufficient to persuade him to change his mind. Finding the item requires a successful DC 22 Search check. Alternatively, with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check, the PCs can convince Parriwimple to look around in the back room. He searches diligently and returns with the item after about 20 minutes.

In either case, Bildrath claims the item belongs to him (even though he didn't know he had it), and he is loath to hand it over without payment. It is clearly of fine quality, and he demands fair market value: 1,500 gp for the *Holy Symbol*, or 3,335 gp for the *Sunsword*. The PCs might be able to drive down the price somewhat through haggling, but they cannot persuade Bildrath to simply give them the item.

E5: BLOOD OF THE VINE TAVERN

A mutter of voices, a clatter of dishware, and the squeal of a poorly played wind instrument usher from this rambling building. A sign hanging precariously askew reads "Blood of the Vine Tavern." A thin skein of smoke curls up from a wide chimney.

The structure was once finely appointed, though it has suffered from poor upkeep over the years. A successful DC 18 Spot check reveals that the sign originally read "Blood of the Vine Tavern," but an N has been scratched over the F.

Many villagers took shelter at the tavern when the zombie incursion began and remain there as long as the infestation continues. Ten families are packed into the main room, and another twenty occupy various guestrooms, spare closets, the cellar, and even hallways.

Other than the families, three NPCs of note occupy the tavern. Arik, the barkeep and owner, mindlessly cleans glasses at the bar. Three Vistani were trapped during the uprising (they normally stay at the Tser Pool encampment), and now sit at a small table, slurping beer and playing cards. If the zombies in the courtyard are quelled (see tactical encounter E3), two of the Vistani emerge grumbling to help repair the barricade, then return to their game. Ismark the Lesser is the son of the town's burgomaster. He sits in a shadowed corner, apart from all the others, and sips wine from a goblet. Ismark is dressed better than anyone else in the room, wearing what passes for a noble's outfit, though it is dirty and stained.

Arik: NG male human warrior 1; Profession (bartender).

Vistani (3): N human rogue 3; see page 76.

Ismark the Lesser: CG human aristocrat 4.

Arik refers all questions to Ismark. The Vistani only grin and shake their heads. If pressed, one says in heavily accented

Common, “Go to encampment west of town. Talk to Madam Eva. Maybe she read your fortune.”

Ismark

If approached, Ismark is initially reluctant to speak, but buying him another goblet of wine or succeeding on a DC 13 Diplomacy check quickly loosens his lips. He relates the following details to the PCs during the course of conversation.

- “I am Ismark the Lesser. My father is—was— Kolyan Indirovich, the burgomaster of Barovia. But the burgomaster is dead! His body lies these ten days and more in the mansion. My sister remains with him, barricaded there against the zombies.”
- “The plague began in the church. Danovich the priest used to ward the church and the village, but his vigil lapsed when his son Doru was slain by brigands on Old Svalich Road. No one knows what became of Danovich, but soon afterward, the zombies began to walk. If they aren’t stopped, we’ll all be dead in days.”
- “Two Lightbringers, undead hunters, went to investigate the church a few days ago. We haven’t heard from them since. I told them to talk to Madam Eva first—that woman is wiser than any of us.”
- “The zombies didn’t get my father; the infection began after Kolyan was already dead, thank the gods. No—it was the master of the castle, or his servants, that killed Kolyan Indirovich!”
- “A few months ago, he who rules the castle—that devil Strahd—tried to pay us a visit. I don’t know why. However, my father bravely stood up to him, using the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*. Then the attacks began.”
- “The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* is a powerful amulet that hurt Strahd. But one morning we woke to find our father dead from poison. After that, the power of the amulet wouldn’t work for me or my sister, Ireena.”
- “Me? I’m going to sit here and drink. Go speak with Madam Eva if you want to help—she’s west of town. Or talk to Ireena. Perhaps she’ll give you the amulet—much good it will do you. But Ireena won’t leave the mansion. She’s sitting vigil by our father’s body to make certain he doesn’t become a zombie.”

Development: If the PCs show Ismark the letter they received from Kolyan Indirovich, he indicates that the handwriting is not his father’s.

E6: GHOUL FORAY

This encounter takes place the first time the PCs enter this crossroads from any direction.

Tactical Encounter: E6: Ghoul Foray on page 38.

Development: These ghouls are not part of the necromantic infection, but an independent pack of undead taking advantage of the chaos. After venturing out of the cemetery (area E8), the ghouls are moving from house to house in search of valuables and still-living creatures. They are upset by the quick conversion of zombie victims to yet more zombies, but they are so hungry that they consume even the rotting undead. They lust for fresh corpses.

E7: CHURCH

A gray, sagging edifice of stone and wood stands atop a slight rise, on the very roots of the great pillarstone of the omnipresent castle. Light flickers through holes burned through the roof shingles, and the sound of hoarse chanting is audible within.

Characters who listen at the double doors (Listen DC 15) hear a voice uttering a strangely convoluted prayer emanating from somewhere inside.

Danovich

Danovich was the village priest. He devoted years to fighting the influence of Strahd over Barovia. He spent most nights meditating and chanting prayers to ward away evil. One night, though, his prayers proved inadequate: His son, Doru, was killed by brigands on Old Svalich Road.

This tragedy, on top of the stress of decades of vigilance without respite, finally broke Danovich. Seduced by the very evil he had fought so long, the priest read a fragment from the *Liber Blaspheme*, a terrible manuscript he discovered years ago in the catacombs below Castle Ravenloft. Using the vile techniques it described, he attempted to revive his son. The result was a blaspheme, an undead horror whose perverted existence propagates the necromantic infection.

Danovich keeps Doru sequestered in the church’s under-story, but as long as the blaspheme exists, the zombie infestation persists. Several undead now share the ground floor of the church with the shattered priest.

Tactical Encounter: E7: Church on page 40.

Development: A hollow in the church’s altar contains, in addition to other items described below, a much-stained journal kept by Danovich. The PCs can locate the hollow automatically by announcing their intent to search the altar. The last half of the journal describes Danovich’s grief over his son’s death, reveals his descent into madness, and rationalizes his subsequent decision to read the accursed manuscript.

The first half of the journal contains only sparse notations, spanning months or years with hardly a word. The PCs can glean a few bits of relevant information, summarized in the following entries.

- “There is a book, the *Tome of Strahd*, that might shed light on the steps necessary to destroy the monster of the castle. It is well known that Strahd kept meticulous notes from ancient times on all he did or said. Perhaps some weakness of his could be found there. This tome was once located in Ravenloft’s library, but now I’m not sure where it is. I asked Madam Eva about it, and she mumbled something indecipherable. Why do seers always speak in riddles?”

WAS IT STRAHD’S PLAN ALL ALONG?

If Strahd’s secondary goal is Undead Legions (see page 16), Danovich’s son wasn’t the victim of a cruel accident, and Danovich’s discovery of the *Liber Blaspheme* was not a twist of fate. Instead, both events form part of Strahd’s ultimate plan to build a legion of undead, beginning with the zombie plague.

- “Ireena Kolyana is not the natural daughter of Kolyan Indirovich. Ireena never know, but old Kolyan found her one day at the edge of the Svalich Woods near the very foot of Ravenloft’s crag. She was but a girl then and had no memory of her past. Kolyan adopted her as though she were his own and loved her dearly.”

Treasure: Atop the altar is the fragment of the *Liber Blaspheme*, which describes how to create a blaspheme from a recently dead human corpse. The process is lengthy (1 week) and requires 15,000 gp worth of materials. It can be attempted only on the corpse of a close blood relation of the creator (parent, grandparent, child, or grandchild).

The hollow in the altar contains other valuables: a gold chalice worth 700 gp, two silver bells each worth 50 gp, and three potions of cure moderate wounds.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: Depending on the results of Madam Eva’s fortune-telling, either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* might be hidden on a landing in the church’s steeple. This area does not appear on the tactical encounter map, being simply a 10-foot-square room cluttered with crates. A casual inspection reveals nothing more than miscellaneous items—old vestments, paraments, and consecrated vessels that have outlived their usefulness but have not been thrown away. If the characters are actively searching for one of the legacy items, they locate it with a successful DC 22 Search check.

E7A: CHURCH UNDERSTORY

As described in tactical encounter E7, the center of the church floor has begun to fall away. If Danovich decides to flee from the PCs by jumping into the hole, he joins his reanimated son and two zombies in the understory to continue the fight.

Doru the blaspheme haunts the understory. Along with him are the animated corpses of the two unfortunate Lightbringers, Thendrick and Mathilda, risen as infected zombies. The area contains remnants of the alchemical equipment Danovich used for the reanimation process.

Tactical Encounter: E7A: Church Understory on page 42.

Development: Doru is the hub of the necromantic infection. If the blaspheme is destroyed, all infected zombies immediately become lifeless corpses and fall where they stand. This immediately ends the zombie incursion. Other undead leave the village once the zombies cease.

If PCs haven’t yet spoken with Ismark and learned about the threat of Strahd, Ismark seeks them out at his first opportunity. He is less apathetic than if they approached him in the Blood of the Vine tavern (see area E5 on page 26), explaining Ireena’s situation and requesting their help.

TAINTED JOURNAL

If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, Danovich’s journal has become suffused with evil. The corruption that consumed the priest is inescapably bound in his words, and no one can read them without being changed for the worse. A character who closely reads the last half of the journal must succeed on a DC 22 Will save or have his depravity score increased by 1d3 points.



Attempts at resurrection sometimes go horribly awry

Treasure: Danovich’s specialized alchemical equipment is worth 2,000 gp if undamaged. Should the church floor collapse, all that survives is the equivalent of an ordinary alchemist’s lab; the remaining equipment is worth only 500 gp.

The PCs can discover the two Lightbringers’ equipment and clothing concealed in the southwest corner of the room (Search DC 21). The cache includes a suit of half-plate armor, a suit of +1 chainmail, a +2 greatsword, two scrolls of cure light wounds, and a scroll of lesser restoration.

E8: CEMETERY

Stone slabs, mostly simple square markers in the earth, dot the manicured grass that grows at the foot of the great crag. The omnipresent mist encircles the cemetery but seems unwilling to penetrate its heart.

For generations, the village has buried its dead here without trouble. The necromantic infection has not yet penetrated the

ground to trouble the tombs' occupants. If the plague goes unstoppable, though, even those long dead would eventually rise as zombies—were it not for the nearby ghouls.

At first blush, nothing seems out of the ordinary. However, a successful DC 21 Spot check or a thorough search reveals that one of the graves appears to have been dug up recently, perhaps several times. (The stone grave marker reads "Mihail Latcu—Father, Brother, Husband.")

If PCs investigate, they can discover (Search DC 20) that the grave marker covers a rough-hewn, 6-foot-wide tunnel into the earth. A terrible stench emanates from the opening.

Tactical Encounter: If the characters investigate the tunnel, go to tactical encounter E8: Ghoul Grave on page 44.

Development: PCs in the cemetery at midnight witness something very strange.

Green-white radiance blossoms at the foot of the castle's pillarstone. From this point of spectral light marches a ghostly procession. Wavering images of doughty women touting greatswords, woodwise men with slender bows, dwarves with glittering axes, and archaically dressed mages with beards and strange pointed hats—all these and more march forth from the graveyard, their numbers growing by the second.

One hundred ghostly forms rise from the graveyard and march straight south to intersect the road leading west from the village. Any who follow the procession observe that it heads along the road toward Castle Ravenloft. At the castle, the spirits march straight through walls and doors to the chapel (area K15), up the High Tower stair (area K18) to the top of the tower (area K59). They then hurl themselves down the shaft toward the crypts, disappearing partway down.

The spirits have no interest in the living unless they are themselves attacked. A spirit returns each attack once, then attempts to continue its march. A destroyed spirit rises again the next night to rejoin the ghostly procession.

If the PCs mention this apparition, villagers explain that the spirits are previous foes of Strahd who died trying to destroy him. Each night they attempt to complete their quest, and each night they fail. The spirits do not communicate with PCs. The only way they can be put to rest is through Strahd's final destruction.

CEMETERY SPIRIT

LN Medium undead (incorporeal)
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +10

Aura unnatural

Languages as in life

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12

Miss Chance 50% (incorporeal)

hp 32 (5 HD)

Immune undead immunities

Resist incorporeal, +2 turn resistance

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Weakness daylight powerlessness

Speed fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (good)

Melee incorporeal touch +5 melee (1d4)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +2; **Grp** —

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes

Abilities Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ incorporeal traits

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes

Skills Diplomacy +6, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +10, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks)

Advancement —

Incorporeal Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See DMG 295 for more information.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals will not willingly approach closer than 30 feet to a cemetery spirit and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Daylight Powerlessness (Su) A cemetery spirit is utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flees from it.

Treasure: The PCs can rummage through the debris at the bottom of the coffins in this tunnel, where the ghouls stashed plunder from violated graves. Make a DC 15 Search check for each coffin. One contains a silver-nibbed pen worth 20 gp; one contains nothing; and one holds two gem-studded gold cufflinks (50 gp each) along with a slender wooden baton engraved with the words "Milosh's Wand." This is a *wand of magic missile* (caster level 5th, 45 charges remaining).

Fortunes of Ravenloft: Depending on the results of Madam Eva's fortune-telling, either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* might be buried in a grave in this cemetery. The

THE NECROMANTIC INFECTION

Zombies and some other undead in the village carry a supernatural disease that sickens those injured by their attacks and can transform victims into more zombies.

The infected zombies that plague the village, brought into existence by the infected blaspheme, are tougher than ordinary human zombies. A character who is transformed by the necromantic disease rises as a typical zombie, but it carries the disease and has the plodding special quality, both as described below.

Disease (Su): Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises

as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated.

Treating Necromantic Infection: The disease is of supernatural origin and cannot be removed by natural means. Only a *remove disease* or *remove curse* spell can end the infection. A zombie is also cured of the disease by being restored to life.

Once the blaspheme has been destroyed, the progress of the disease immediately halts. Creatures that were previously infected are no longer in danger of becoming zombies, and the symptoms of their illness end.

Plodding (Ex): Infected zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed on their action, and they cannot charge.

grave in question is closest to the castle but is otherwise unremarkable. Its worn stone bears a single, faded word: "Shem." No external signs mark this grave as holding anything out of the ordinary, but its position might hint at its importance. A character using *Speak with Dead* to question the cemetery spirits can attempt a DC 15 Diplomacy check to persuade a spirit to point out the correct grave. Half an hour of digging reveals a coffin that is empty except for the item in question.

E9: ZOMBIE-INFESTED BUILDING

This encounter takes place the first time the party enters the building labeled E9 on the Barovia village map. The associated tactical encounter can also be used whenever the PCs enter a building in the village and discover zombies; see the table on page 24.

Tactical Encounter: E9: Zombie-Infested Building on page 46.

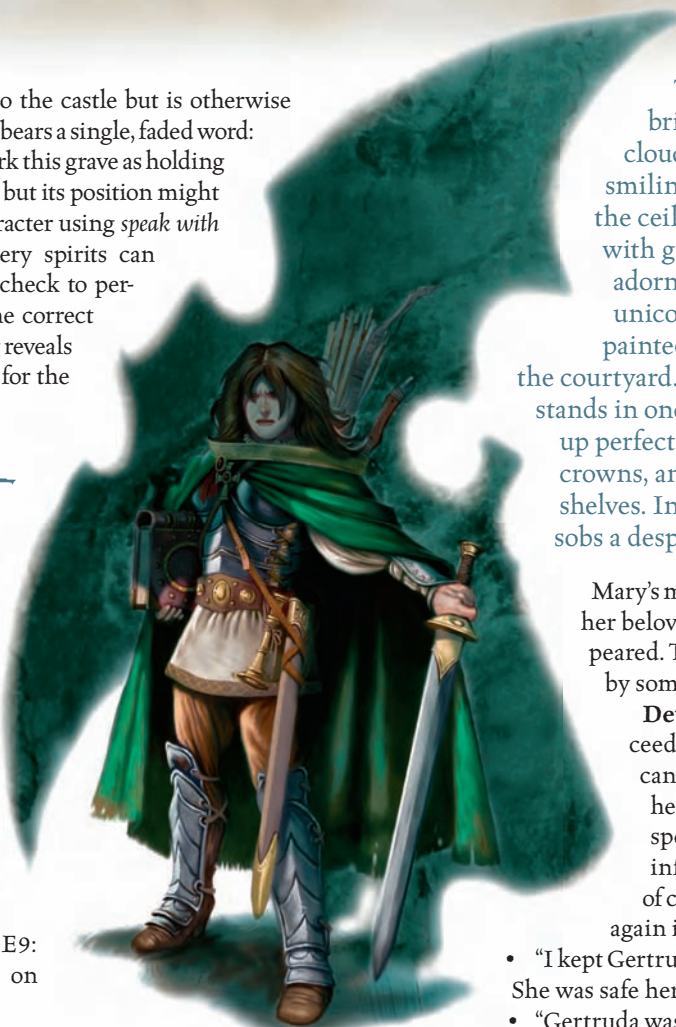
Treasure: For each 10 minutes spent searching the debris in this building, the party can make a DC 25 Search check. On a success, roll for a random treasure (Table 3–5: Treasure, DMG 52) suitable for a 5th-level encounter. If the encounter was a random result of a building search, then treasure is appropriate to a 1st-level encounter. No building has more than one treasure.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: Depending on the results of Madam Eva's fortune-telling, either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* might be hidden in the cellar of a tenement. This is an isolated building to the northeast of the village, closest to the edge of the Svalich Woods (see the village overview map). It is a dilapidated shack, long uninhabited. The item is buried under debris (Search DC 25).

E10: MAD MARY'S TOWNHOUSE

A moaning sob floats through the still, gray streets, hoarse and drained of hope. The sound issues from a darkened, two-story building.

Investigating PCs find that the door to the building is barricaded (hardness 5; 50 hp; break DC 20). The interior is an impoverished home, long untended. In an upstairs bedroom is the source of the crying, Mary Bogoescu (NG human commoner 3; Craft [knitting]).



Ireena Kolyana is the burgomaster's daughter

This bedroom is painted bright pink with fluffy white clouds. A big yellow sun with a smiling face stares down from the ceiling. A great fairy castle with gleaming crystal windows adorns a wall, with pretty girls, unicorns, and handsome lords painted on its verandas and in the courtyard. A small canopied bed stands in one corner of the room, made up perfectly. Dolls, play-princess crowns, and other little girls' toys fill shelves. In the center of the floor sobs a despondent older woman.

Mary's mind shattered with grief when her beloved daughter, Gertruda, disappeared. Thus she is called "Mad Mary" by some of the villagers.

Development: PCs who succeed on a DC 15 Diplomacy check can rouse Mary long enough for her to notice their presence and speak. She relays the following information during the course of conversation but soon descends again into inconsolable grief.

- "I kept Gertruda in this room her entire life! She was safe here. Safe!"
 - "Gertruda was happy here—she knew only the storybook tales I told her. The real world is too hard, too dangerous. I never let her know anything of it."
 - "My girl had everything she ever could have wanted. Why did she run away?"
 - "I fear that the master of the castle has her now. Oh, my poor Gertruda! I know the worst has come to pass!"
- Ad Hoc XP:** If the PCs discover Gertruda in Castle Ravenloft (see page 143), convince her to return to her mother, and escort her through the dangers of the road back, they earn XP as if they had overcome a 5th-level encounter.

E11: BURGOMASTER'S HOME

An aged and dilapidated mansion squats behind a rusting iron fence, but the gates have been twisted open—one lies torn from its hinges, while the other swings crazily in the wind, screeching and clanging with mindless repetition. The house beyond is marked by claws, fires, and ominous stains. Every window is boarded, every door barricaded.

The burgomaster's home is the largest building in the village, though it has suffered much during the zombie incursion. Ismark spoke true (see area E5) when he said his sister yet remained in the mansion, guarding her father's body against possible infection. If the PCs arrive here before dealing with the zombie threat, Ireena will not unbar or open the doors.

If the PCs have overcome the necromantic plague, she is willing to speak with them and grants entry.

Ireena Kolyana

The well-furnished mansion shows considerable wear, though the holy symbols hung in every room of the house draw attention from the soiled divans and ratty carpets. A man's body in burgomaster's robes lies in state in the front room. Beside the corpse kneels a haunted-looking young woman.

Ireena welcomes the news that the threat of necromantic infection has passed. She asks for help transporting her father's body to the cemetery for a proper burial and even offers to pay (two *potions of cure moderate wounds*).

If asked about Strahd, Ireena can provide the following information, which she reveals to the PCs over the course of conversation.

- "The master of the castle punished my father for standing up to his commands. My father held him off with the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, until he paid with his life. He was poisoned! It had to be Strahd."
- "I no longer have the *Holy Symbol*. I couldn't make it work, nor could my brother, Ismark, though it was still precious to me. But something evil slipped in and stole it in the dead of night!"
- "The thief could have been a servant of Strahd, but if so, I don't know which one. It could have been something else entirely. Evil of every sort has begun to collect in the woods around Barovia. The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* could be anywhere—Strahd's reach is long, and if he had it stolen, he likely he wants it as far from the castle as possible. Maybe the wise woman knows."
- "If I dared leave, I'd go to the encampment west of town. I've heard the wise woman there knows things that even Strahd is afraid to discover. She can glimpse the future."

Ireena's Secret: PCs who succeed on a DC 15 Sense Motive check get the sense that Ireena is holding something back. She is at first unwilling to say more, but with a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check, she reveals the following information.

- "It is *me* Strahd wants, so he says! I've had awful dreams where he chases me, and when he catches me he kisses me and calls me 'Tatyana.' At least, I thought they were dreams—but when I wake, I find *these* . . ."

Ireena reveals two marks on her neck, obviously made by bites. She says she has had the "dream" twice.

Development: Ireena is scared, troubled, and desperate—she realizes that Strahd will convert her to his thrall on their next meeting. But she is no shrinking violet, and if she learns that the PCs plan to explore the castle or to find out more about Strahd, Ireena demands to accompany them. Perhaps accompanied by such powerful characters, she might have a chance to fend off the count. She indicates she is good with a sword.

Even if the PCs don't meet Ireena here, or they don't want to take her with them, Ireena trails the party and tries to join

later. She does this only after the zombie incursion has been quelled and she has asked Ismark to make arrangements for the body.

Unknown to her, Ireena has been *dominated* by Strahd. He allows her to act normally until he deems the moment is right to seize control. Strahd otherwise does not harm Ireena, hoping to complete her transformation into his eternal bride. His minions never attack or harass her; if she is with the party, they focus on the PCs.

PC Option: If a player takes on the role of Ireena as a PC, advance her to the same average level as the rest of the party and provide her appropriate equipment for that level.

IREENA KOLYANA

CR 4

Female human fighter 4

LG Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

hp 32 (5 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

Weakness *dominated*

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee +1 *longsword* +8 melee (1d8+3)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +6 (1d8/19–20 or alchemical flare bolt)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +6

Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack, Quick Draw

Combat Gear 3 alchemical flare bolts*, 1 alchemical sun flash*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of bull's strength*

*New item described on page 208.

Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 11*, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14

*Ireena's Constitution has been reduced from 13 to 11 by Strahd's blood drain.

Feats Cleave, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*longsword*), Weapon Specialization (*longsword*)

Skills Handle Animal +9, Listen +3, Ride +9, Spot +3

Possessions combat gear plus breastplate, +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *longsword*, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, *cloak of resistance* +1, sunrod

Dominated Strahd *dominated* Ireena 2 days ago, so 10 days remain before the effect ends. Ireena doesn't realize she is under the vampire's control.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTERS

The following pages provide detailed information for combat encounters in the village of Barovia. A creature's position on a tactical map is indicated by a circled letter symbol, which is associated with the creature in the encounter's descriptive text. Information about the features of a room or an area is provided in a sidebar format along with the tactical map for the encounter.

Many doors in the village have been barred or barricaded against the zombies. Those that are not (usually interior doors) have hardness 5 and 10 hit points. Listen DCs increase by 5 through a closed door.

Lighting conditions depend on what time of day the PCs arrive; however, mist is everpresent in the streets and limits vision. Beyond 30 feet, creatures have concealment (20% miss chance).

ZOMBIE STREET AMBUSH

Encounter Level 6

Use this encounter for the PCs' first experience with zombies in Barovia.

To begin, read aloud the following text:

The streets are choked with mist, limiting vision to only a few dozen feet. The buildings here at the edge of town look abandoned, burned out, or barricaded. Garbage litters the ground, and a carrion stench assaults your nose. Ahead, an overturned haycart blocks the street.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

Ask the players to place their characters anywhere at least 40 feet east of the overturned cart, then give each character a turn to perform actions.

If the PCs move westward, notice the zombies behind the cart (Spot DC 26), or do nothing, place the infected zombies (marked as **Z** on the map), the carcass eaters (**C**), and the infected deathlock (**D**) as indicated on the tactical map and roll initiative checks.

THE MONSTERS

Infected Zombies: These mindless corpses have been animated by necromancy to walk once more. The zombies (and some of the other creatures) stalking Barovia are carriers of a terrible infection.

Carcass Eaters: These gore-streaked, four-footed animals look like a cross between an overlarge rat and a wolf. Their jaws are extraordinary in size, and their eyes glitter with rabid fury.

Infected Deathlock: This corpse is skeletally thin. Its cadaverous eyes sizzle with cursed power, and deadly spells dance on nits fingertips. Like the zombies, the deathlock is animated by means of the necromantic infection born from the blasphemy in the chapel cellar (see the entry for E7A, page 42).

Zombie Tactics

On its turn, each zombie moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy it can attack. A zombie behind a door opens it as part of its first move action.

Carcass Eater Tactics

Both carcass eaters attack the closest PCs. If an adjacent character drops to –1 hit points or fewer for any reason, a carcass eater uses its rend fallen ability.

INFECTED ZOMBIES (6)

CR 2

HP 42 each

NE Medium undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6; **DR** 5/slashing

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4 plus disease)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6

Atk Options disease

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ plodding, undead traits

Feats Toughness

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

Plodding (Ex) Infected zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

CARCASS EATERS (FRENZIED) (2)

CR 1/2

HP 9 each

N Small animal

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +3, Spot +3

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 10

HD 1

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 10 ft.

Melee 2 claws each +4 (1d2+1) and bite –1 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** –3

Atk Options blood frenzy

Special Actions rend fallen

Abilities Str 12, Dex 17, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Feats Track, Weapon Finesse

Skills Hide +7, Listen +3, Spot +3

Blood Frenzy (Ex) During the zombie attack, the streets of Barovia run red with blood, and all carcass eaters are automatically in a frenzied state. While in a blood frenzy, a carcass eater automatically uses its rend fallen ability.

Rend Fallen (Ex) If an adjacent opponent is at –1 hit points or fewer, a carcass eater immediately makes an additional bite attack, automatically dealing 2d6+2 points of damage. A carcass eater can rend a fallen foe once per round.

Skills A carcass eater has a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks.

INFECTED DEATHLOCK

CR 3

HP 19

NE Medium undead (humanoid)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Common, Abyssal, Infernal

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11

HD 3

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist +2 turn resistance

Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +1 (1d4 plus disease)

Base Atk +1; Grp +1

Atk Options disease

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):

At will—*detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (DC 12), *read magic*

3/day—*cause fear* (DC 13), *magic missile*, *summon monster I*

2/day—*death knell* (DC 14), *hold person* (DC 14)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 15, Con —, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ undead traits

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative

Skills Concentration +6, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +9, Spellcraft +10, Spot +9

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—bite, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

Deathlock Tactics

This deathlock is the animate corpse of a powerful spellcaster, as are all of its kind. It possesses a number of spell-like abilities, and it has the intelligence to use them to best advantage. The creature has no allegiance to the other monsters in this encounter, but it will not purposely hinder or harm them.

The deathlock waits to move toward the street until at least two PCs have advanced westward past the alleyway it lurks in. If it is spotted before it has a chance to move out, it makes a stand from where it is located. It begins combat by using its *hold person* ability, following up with its *magic missiles*. It uses *death knell* if it gets the chance, but never if doing so puts itself in danger. If it is reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, it attempts to flee. As a last resort if it is forced into melee, it uses its infected bite.

AFTER THE BATTLE

The PCs are free to explore the town, but they are at risk of random attacks by roving zombies (see Subsequent Street Encounters, page 24).

If the PCs encounter zombies on the street, go to tactical encounter E2: Zombie Street Encounter.

If the PCs investigate empty buildings and discover zombies within, go to tactical encounter E9: Zombie-Infested Building.

EXPLORATION

The PCs might decide to poke around in this area after the fight is over.

One of the buildings in the southeast portion of this area has its door smashed in and is seemingly empty. A family had barricaded this door against the undead hordes but recently fell victim to their attack.

If the PCs search this building, an infected zombie (formerly a female human) bursts from the refuse and attacks. Place the zombie anywhere within the building and roll initiative. (This encounter is in addition to the results of the building search; see the Barovia Building Encounters table on page 24.)

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Doors: Simple wooden doors, barricaded: hardness 5; 50 hp; break DC 20.

Cart: This cart lies on its side. It provides cover (+4 AC) to characters who take shelter behind it. It also initially provides total concealment for the two adjacent zombies against PCs approaching from the east.



ZOMBIE STREET ENCOUNTER

Encounter Level 7

Use this encounter the first time the PCs enter the intersection labeled E2.

The everpresent mists clear slightly, revealing a human body lying face down in the street amid the garbage. One of the buildings facing the street has its door smashed in.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

Ask the players to place their characters anywhere within 20 feet of the intersection from the direction they enter the map, then give each character a turn to perform actions. (When the PCs initially visit this area, they approach from the east. If they pass through this area again later, they might approach from the north or the west.)

If the PCs move toward the intersection or do nothing, place the four infected zombies (marked as **Z** on the map) as indicated on the tactical map and roll initiative. Do not place the vargouilles (**V**) or dire maggots (**M**) until their turn in the initiative order.

THE MONSTERS

Infected Zombies: Identical to those described in encounter E1 on the preceding pages.

Vargouilles: These creatures look like hideous, distorted human heads suspended from leathery wings. In place of hair, they are crowned with writhing tendrils, and their eyes burn with a menacing green flame. These creatures have been drawn in by the carnage left in the wake of the zombie advent.

Dire Maggots: These are 4-foot-long, dead-white segmented worms. Eyeless, drooling stinking ichor from their clacking mandibles, these monstrosities are maggots grown orders of magnitude too large. Luckily, no one has yet encountered the vermin capable of leaving behind such awful larvae.

THE DEAD VILLAGER

If the PCs are motivated to do more than loot the obvious amulet and leave the dead villager, a Search of the corpse (DC 10) easily brings to light a leather fold stuffed into a pocket sewn into the man's pants. Inside, papers reveal the man's name to be Viktor Litmunova, a carpenter. Once the infection has been quelled, PCs who take the body and seek out Viktor's still-living family easily discover his wife Stara by asking about him, and though she is sad to receive the body, she is happy to find it did not succumb to the infection. She offers to let the PCs keep the amulet and gives them a gold ring worth 50 gp.

INFECTED ZOMBIES (4)

CR 2

HP 42 each

NE Medium undead

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6; DR 5/slashing

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4 plus disease)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Atk Options disease

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ plodding, undead traits

Feats Toughness

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

Plodding (Ex) Infected zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

Zombie Tactics

On its turn, each zombie moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy it can attack. A zombie behind a door opens it as part of its first move action.

Vargouille Tactics

These creatures begin the encounter by swooping down from the rooftop and shrieking. They then attempt to kiss any creature that has been paralyzed, whether by their own shrieks or through the dire maggots' paralytic saliva (see that entry). Once at least one PC fails the saving throw to resist transformation, the vargouilles flap away, giggling evilly.

Dire Maggot Tactics

At the beginning of the encounter, the dire maggots squirm forth from beneath the corpse they were feeding on. Each attacks the closest PC. Once a target is paralyzed, the maggots move on to the next closest PC.

AFTER THE BATTLE

After this encounter has played out for the first time, it's important to entice the characters into the following encounter by encouraging them to move eastward toward the town square. If needed, you could mention something about the sounds of a battle occurring some distance away off to the east.

VARGOUILLES (2)**CR 2**

HP 5 each

NE Small outsider (evil, extraplanar)

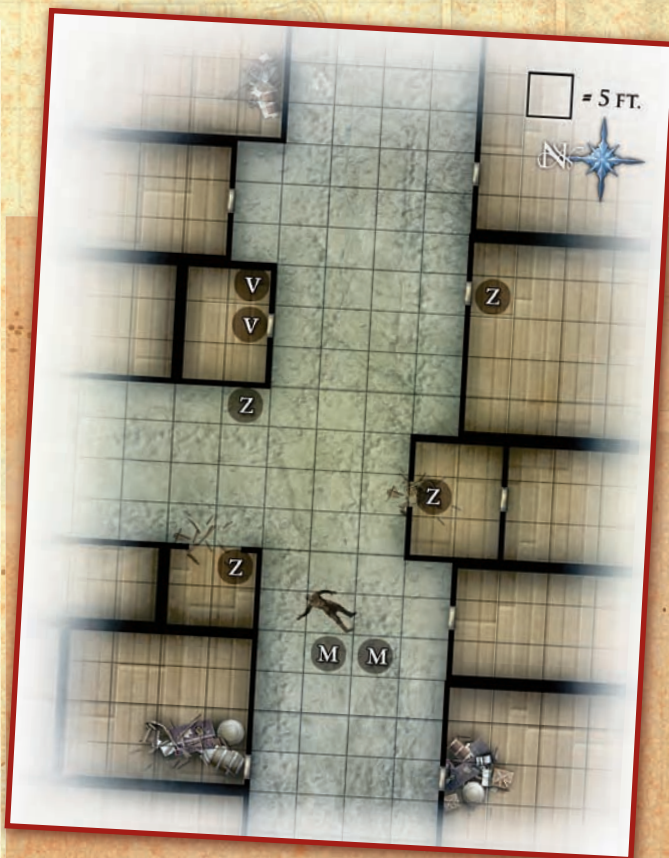
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5**Language** Infernal**AC** 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11**HD** 1**Speed** fly 30 ft. (good) (6 squares)**Melee** bite +3 (1d4 plus poison)**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** -3**Atk Options** aligned strike (evil), poison (DC 12, unable to heal vargouille's bite wound naturally/—)**Special Actions** kiss, shriek**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 8**Feats** Weapon Finesse**Skills** Hide +9, Intimidate +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5**Poison (Ex)** A *neutralize poison* or *heal* spell removes the effect, while *delay poison* allows magical healing.**Kiss (Su)** A vargouille can kiss a paralyzed target with a successful melee touch attack. An affected opponent must succeed on a DC 19 Fortitude save or transform into a vargouille in stages. First 1d6 hours: All hair falls out. Next 1d6 hours: Ears grow into leathery wings, tentacles sprout on the chin and scalp, and teeth become long, pointed fangs. Next 1d6 hours: 1 point of Int and Cha drain per hour. Final 1d6 hours: The head breaks free of the body (which dies) and becomes a vargouille.This transformation is interrupted by sunlight or a *daylight* spell; *remove disease* reverses the transformation.**Shriek (Su)** Creatures within 60 feet (except other vargouilles) who hear a vargouille's shriek and can clearly see the creature must succeed on a DC 12 Fortitude save or be paralyzed with fear until the monster attacks them, goes out of range, or leaves their sight. A paralyzed creature is susceptible to the vargouille's kiss (see above). A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by the same vargouille's shriek for 24 hours; a creature subjected to multiple shrieks at the same time makes only one save, whose result applies to all the vargouilles' shrieks. The shriek is a mind-affecting fear effect.**DIRE MAGGOTS (2)****CR 2**

HP 33 each

N Small vermin

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0**AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14**HD** 6**Immune** mind-affecting**Fort** +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 5 ft.**Melee** bite +5 (1d8+1 plus paralytic saliva)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +1**Atk Options** paralytic saliva**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2**SQ** vermin traits**Feats** —**Skills** —**Paralytic Saliva (Ex)** Paralysis 1 round; Fort DC 14 negates. Each round, a paralyzed creature can attempt another Fortitude save to break the paralysis.

The PCs are free to continue exploring the town after completing this encounter, but they are at risk of random attacks by roving zombies (see page 24).

**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

Doors: Simple wooden doors, locked: hardness 5; 10 hp; break DC 15; Open Lock DC 20.

Body: This dead villager wears a *pendant of good health* (see page 215), which keeps his corpse safe from the necromantic infection. A character can locate the pendant with a successful DC 16 Search check. Unfortunately, the pendant didn't protect him from being killed by zombies. At the beginning of the encounter, two dire maggots are feeding on the corpse.

If the PCs encounter zombies, go to tactical encounter E2: *Zombie Street Encounter*.

If the PCs investigate empty buildings and discover zombies within, go to tactical encounter E9: *Zombie-Infested Building*.

Random Street Encounter

If the PCs randomly encounter zombies while traveling through the streets of Barovia, make a few changes to the setup. Remove the body, and remove either the vargouilles or the dire maggots, adding 1d4 to the number of whichever creatures remain. Place the zombies in different positions behind doors or in the street.

The building with the smashed-in door is provided as the scene of a possible zombie encounter at close quarters. If the PCs approach the doorway close enough to see inside, read the following text:

Inside is a litter of broken furniture and smashed crockery, spattered with bloodstains. Whether this building was a dwelling or a small business is impossible to say, the destruction is so complete.

ZOMBIES IN TOWN SQUARE

Encounter Level 8

This encounter takes place the first time the PCs enter the village square, labeled E3 on the village map, from the east.

Rough barricades block most of the access to the town square; however, the eastern barricade has been breached, and zombies are swarming through the opening. A woman in half-plate near the center of the town square valiantly fights the zombies, but she is heavily outnumbered.

INFECTED ZOMBIES (9)

CR 2

HP 42 each
NE Medium undead
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16
HD 6; **DR** 5/slashing
Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion
Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5
Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run
Melee slam +6 (1d6+4 plus disease)
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6
Atk Options disease
Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1
SQ plodding, undead traits
Feats Toughness
Skills Listen +0, Spot +0
Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).
Plodding (Ex) Infected zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

Ask the players to place their characters on the eastern edge of the map. Simultaneously place the nine zombies (marked as Z on the map), the entomber (E), and Ashlyn (A) as indicated on the tactical map and roll initiative.

THE MONSTERS

Infected Zombies: Identical to those described in encounter E1 on page 32.

Entomber “Zombie”: This shrunken, disfigured humanoid carcass is animated by the same infection that supernaturally propagates at the behest of the blaspheme in the chapel understory (see entry E7A, page 42). However,

ASHLYN, UNDEAD HUNTER

CR 6

HP 45
Female human paladin 5
LG Medium humanoid
Init –1; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2
Aura courage (10 ft., allies +4 against fear)
Languages Common
AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20
HD 5
Immune disease, fear
Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6
Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee +1 longsword +9 (1d8+3/19–20)
Ranged mwk light crossbow +5 (1d8/19–20 or alchemical flare bolt)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +7
Atk Options smite evil 2/day (+3 attack, +5 damage)
Special Actions lay on hands 15 points/day, turn undead 5/day (+3, 2d6+2, 2nd)
Combat Gear 10 alchemical flare bolts*, 10 alchemical flare stakes*, 2 alchemical sun flash*, 10 cold iron bolts, 10 silvered bolts, *potion of eagle's splendor*, *potion of cure serious wounds*
*New item described on page 208
Paladin Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):
1st—*bless weapon*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th):
At will—*detect evil*
Abilities Str 14, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 17
SQ aura of good
Feats Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)
Skills Concentration +10, Diplomacy +5, Heal +10, Listen +2, Sense Motive +10, Spot +2
Possessions combat gear plus +1 *full plate*, heavy steel shield, +1 *longsword*, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, *amulet of health* +2, *cloak of Charisma* +2

this corpse is encrusted with years of grave-dirt, and moves with a rapidity regular zombies lack. It wields a grave-born power to push other creatures into a premature, shallow grave. In fact, it is not actually a zombie, but the PCs probably don't realize it until they see it in action.

THE ALLY

Ashlyn: This human woman wears shining half-plate mail on which a holy symbol is emblazoned. She calls out for aid from “the Light” while trying to put down the zombie uprising. Ashlyn reveres a deity appropriate to your game; otherwise, she reveres Pelor.

Zombie Tactics

On its turn, each zombie moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy it can attack (whether a PC or Ashlyn). They try to overwhelm a single target if possible.

INFECTED ENTOMBER

CR 5

HP 58

LE Medium undead

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Language Common (can't speak)

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21

HD 8; DR 5/silver

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 10 ft.

Melee slam +10 (1d6+9 plus disease plus entomb)

Base Atk +4; Grp +10

Atk Options disease, entomb

Abilities Str 23, Dex 10, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ exhume, undead traits

Feats Alertness, Toughness (2)

Skills Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

Entomb (Su) Whenever an entomber hits with a slam attack, it can attempt to entomb its foe. The foe must succeed on a DC 16 Reflex save or be pounded bodily into a shallow grave. This ability doesn't work in locations with a basement or open level immediately below, nor can a creature be entombed in magical, living, or animate materials, or materials that have a hardness higher than 8.

Treat an entombed creature as pinned (opposed grapple check result of 20). Succeeding on two grapple checks allows it to stand up from prone on its next round. Two standard actions are required for others to unearth an entombed creature, which can use its next action to stand; a partially uncovered creature can stand on a single successful grapple check.

A creature runs the risk of suffocation (DMG 304) each round it spends fully or partially entombed.

Exhume (Su) When an entomber spends a standard action to touch the top of a grave or space where a creature is buried no deeper than 10 feet, the body immediately rises undamaged to the surface, leaving no hole or tunnel.

Ashlyn's Tactics

When this encounter begins, Ashlyn is hard-pressed by zombies, already in hand-to-hand combat with two and more closing in. If the PCs enter the fray and relieve the melee pressure on her, she fires alchemical flare bolts at any undead she can see.

Entomber Tactics

The entomber's sole aim is to pound as many living creatures into the dirt as possible. It runs toward the closest character, whether Ashlyn or a PC. An entombed creature that dies from damage or neglect might reanimate as a zombie if it contracted the necromantic illness. The entomber uses its exhume ability to bring the newly formed undead to the surface.

AFTER THE BATTLE

Villagers holed up the tavern and the mercantile emerge only after the zombies are defeated. The PCs can now interact with key NPCs in those areas as well as with Ashlyn.

If Ashlyn survives the encounter, she has important information to impart. Refer to entry E3 on page 25.

If the PCs enter the mercantile, refer to entry E4: Bildrath's Mercantile on page 26.

If the PCs enter the tavern, refer to entry E5: Blood of the Vine Tavern on page 26.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Barricades: These obstacles are constructed of repurposed doors, tables, loose lumber, and other scrap wood. A barricade is 4 feet high and 1 foot thick on average. It has hardness 3, 50 hp, and a break DC of 20. Sheltering behind a barricade provides cover (+4 to AC) to defenders. One barricade has been breached, leaving a 10-foot-wide gap.

Doors: Simple wooden doors, locked: hardness 5; 10 hp; break DC 15; Open Lock DC 20.

Strong Doors: Strong wooden doors, locked: hardness 5; 20 hp; break DC 23; Open Lock DC 25. These doors secure the two remaining occupied businesses in town: Bildrath's Mercantile (see entry E4 on page 26) and the Blood of the Vine Tavern (see entry E5 on page 26).

Those inside are reluctant to open the doors while the zombie attacks continue; if the PCs seek entry, only a 50% chance exists that they will be allowed in. The occupants willingly open the doors once the zombies are defeated.

Wall: A low stone wall surrounds the village well. The shaft drops 10 feet down to cold water. This terrain is impassable to nonflying creatures.



GHOUL FORAY

Encounter Level 7

This encounter takes place the first time the PCs approach the intersection labeled E6 on the village map.

Ahead, a dead horse lies stinking in the street, its rotting entrails attracting a small troupe of zombies.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

Ask the players to place their characters anywhere at least 15 feet away from the dead horse, along whichever street they used to approach the intersection. Simultaneously place the three zombies (Z) as indicated on the tactical map and roll initiative. Do not place the three ghosts (G) until their turn in the initiative order.

Note: If you desire, you can change the directional orientation of this map to control how close the PCs are to the monsters when the encounter begins. For instance, if you want the PCs to start close to the ghosts and zombies, then they should approach along the street that's adjacent to the buildings where the ghosts are located. If you want them to start as far away as possible from those monsters, then they should approach from the opposite end of that same street.

If one or more PCs approach stealthily and the zombies don't notice them, the ghosts emerge from the buildings in which they lurk and attack the zombies. If the ghosts notice the presence of the PCs, they turn on the living prey at the first opportunity.

At the beginning of the third full round of combat, two roving carcass eaters (C) show up. Attracted by the ruckus, they bound in at the places indicated on the tactical map.

WHAT PCs MIGHT OVERHEAR

If PCs stealthily approach the intersection without gaining the attention of the zombies, they also fly under the hidden ghosts' notice. If this happens, PCs overhear the following bits of conversation emanating from the surrounding buildings where the ghosts take their ease. The infected zombies ignore the words.

"I ain't eaten fresh in a week or more—I'm famished!"

"What about these here, then?"

"I said fresh, didn't I? These rotting buggers ain't much better then, I'd turn up in my barrow."

"I don't know, they're better than a dry bone any night."

"Yah. Enough with the jawing. Let's have at it."

INFECTED ZOMBIES (3)

CR 2

HP 42 each

NE Medium undead

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6; DR 5/slashing

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4 plus disease)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Atk Options disease

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ plodding, undead traits

Feats Toughness

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

Plodding (Ex) Infected zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

THE MONSTERS

Infected Zombies: Identical to those described in encounter E1 on page 32.

Ghouls (Ghosts): These foul creatures appear more or less humanoid, but they have mottled, decaying flesh drawn tight across clearly visible bones. Mostly hairless, they have a carnivore's teeth, and eyes that burn like hot coals in their sunken sockets. A character who makes a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) check realizes that the ghouls are actually ghosts, which are a more formidable variety of ghoul.

Carcass Eaters: Identical to those described in encounter E1 on page 32.

Zombie Tactics

On its turn, each zombie moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy. The zombies try to overwhelm a single target if possible.

Ghast Tactics

Only with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) check can a character recognize these creatures as different from ordinary ghouls.

The ghosts, starving for still-living flesh, ravenously move toward the closest PC. If no fresh prey is available, and if they do not notice the PCs, the ghosts attack zombies.

GHOSTS (3) CR 3

HP 29 each

CE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +8

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14

HD 4

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Resist** +2 turn resistance**Fort** +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** bite +5 (1d8+3 plus disease plus paralysis) and 2 claws +3 each (1d4+1 plus paralysis)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +5**Atk Options** disease, paralysis, stench**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 17, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16**SQ** undead traits**Feats** Multiattack, Toughness**Skills** Balance +8, Climb +9, Hide +9, Jump +9, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Spot +8**Disease (Su)** Ghoul fever—bite, Fort DC 15, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. An infected creature that dies from ghoul fever rises as a ghoul on the next midnight. A humanoid with 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghost instead.**Paralysis (Ex)** 1d4+1 rounds; Fort DC 15 negates. (Elves are not immune.)**Stench (Ex)** Sickens living creatures within 10 feet for 1d6+4 minutes; Fort DC 15 negates.**CARCASS EATERS (FRENZIED) (2)****CR 1/2**

HP 9 each

N Small animal

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +3, Spot +3

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 10

HD 1

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 10 ft.**Melee** 2 claws each +4 (1d2+1) and bite –1 (1d4+1)**Base Atk** +0; **Grp** –3**Atk Options** blood frenzy**Special Actions** rend fallen**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 17, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6**Feats** Track, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Hide +7, Listen +3, Spot +3**Blood Frenzy (Ex)** During the zombie attack, the streets of Barovia run red with blood, and all carcass eaters are automatically in a frenzied state. While in a blood frenzy, a carcass eater automatically uses its rend fallen ability.**Rend Fallen (Ex)** If an adjacent opponent is at –1 hit points or fewer, a carcass eater immediately makes an additional bite attack, automatically dealing 2d6+2 points of damage. A carcass eater can rend a fallen foe once per round.**Skills** A carcass eater has a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks.

When not frenzied, a carcass eater has the following changed statistics:

HP 7

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12

Fort +5**Melee** 2 claws each +4 (1d2–1) and bite –1 (1d4–1)**Grp** –5**Abilities** Str 8, Con 17**Carcass Eater Tactics**

Both carcass eaters attack the closest PCs. If an adjacent character drops to negative hit points for any reason, a carcass eater uses its rend fallen ability.

AFTER THE BATTLE

The street quiets, and the disrupted mist begins to inch forward again to cloak the village in a blanket of hopelessness.

The PCs are free to continue exploring the town, but they are at risk of random attacks by roving zombies (see page 24).

If the PCs encounter zombies, go to tactical encounter E2: Zombie Street Encounter.

If the PCs investigate empty buildings and discover zombies within, go to tactical encounter E9: Zombie-Infested Building.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Doors: Simple wooden doors, locked; hardness 5; 10 hp; break DC 15; Open Lock DC 20.

Carcass: This horse's carcass has lain here for so long it has nearly rotted away. It provides no cover or any other tactical advantage to characters or creatures that move adjacent to it. Because of repeated contact with zombies, it also harbors the necromantic disease. Anyone who touches the carcass or moves through one of the four squares it occupies is treated as if struck by an infected zombie for the purpose of infection.



CHURCH

Encounter Level 8

This encounter takes place when the PCs first enter the old village church (labeled E7 on the village map). The inside of the church is lit only dimly by candles. Treat this as shadowy illumination: Creatures have concealment (20% miss chance) and can attempt Hide checks.

The church interior is a shambles, with overturned and broken benches littering the dusty floor. A claw-scarred altar broods at the north end of the church, directly north of a gaping hole in the rotten floorboards. A hoarse voice coming from that same direction chants the phrases of a nonsense prayer.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

When the PCs open the doors to the church, no enemies are immediately visible. If anyone enters, ask the players to place their characters inside or outside the church; any PCs inside should be no more than 10 feet from the entrance. Roll initiative for all the monsters, but do not place them until their turn in the initiative order. On their initiative, the infected zombies (Z) and the deathlock (DL) open the doors and attack. The old priest, Danovich (D), jumps up from behind the altar where he was praying.

When this occurs, read the following text:

A wild-haired man pops up from behind the altar. He screams, "You can't take my son from me!" and launches a spell from a crumbling scroll he clutches in one filthy hand.

If one or more PCs approach stealthily, they find Danovich crouched behind the altar, sobbing and mumbling disjointed prayers. He acts on his initiative count if he is aware of the PCs entering the church.

THE MONSTERS

Infected Zombies: Identical to those described in encounter E1 on page 32.

Infected Deathlock: Identical to the one described in encounter E1 on page 32.

Danovich: This crazed-looking man wears the robes of a cleric over his full plate armor.

The Hole in the Floor

If one or more PCs investigate the hole in the floor, they have a chance of falling through into the church understorey.

A character who moves onto any of the 4 squares comprising the 10-foot-diameter hole must succeed on a DC 18 Reflex save or fall 20 feet (taking 2d6 points of damage) when the rotten wood gives way. A successful save indicates that the character has caught the edge of the opening and can haul himself back to safety.

INFECTED ZOMBIES (3)

CR 2

HP 42 each
NE Medium undead
Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6; DR 5/slashing

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4 plus disease)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Atk Options disease

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ plodding, undead traits

Feats Toughness

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

Plodding (Ex) Infected zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

INFECTED DEATHLOCK

CR 3

HP 19
NE Medium undead (humanoid)
Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +9
Languages Common, Abyssal, Infernal

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11

HD 3

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist +2 turn resistance

Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +1 (1d4 plus disease)

Base Atk +1; Grp +1

Atk Options disease

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):

At will—*detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (DC 12), *read magic*

3/day—*cause fear* (DC 13), *magic missile*, *summon monster I*

2/day—*death knell* (DC 14), *sound burst* (DC 14)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 15, Con —, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ undead traits

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative

Skills Concentration +6, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +9, Spellcraft +10, Spot +9

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—bite, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

DANOVICH, FALLEN PRIEST

CR 5

HP 36

Male human cleric 5

NE Medium humanoid

Init -1; Senses Listen +7, Spot +3

Language Common

AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21

HD 5

Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +7

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee mwk morningstar +6 (1d8+1/19–20)

Base Atk +3; Grp +4

Special Actions death touch 1/day (5d6), rebuke undead 4/day (+1, 2d6+6, 5th), spontaneous casting (*inflict spells*)Combat Gear scroll of *circle of death*, scroll of *cure moderate wounds*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th):

3rd—*animate dead*^D (CL 6th), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*2nd—*death knell*^D (2) (DC 15, CL 6th), *hold person* (2) (DC 15), *inflict moderate wounds* (DC 15)1st—*cause fear*^D (DC 14), *command* (2) (DC 14), *doom* (DC 14), *obscuring mist*0—*detect magic*, *guidance* (2), *light*, *resistance*

D: Domain spell. Domains: Death, Evil.

Abilities Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12

Taint corruption 9 (moderate), depravity 10 (moderate, deranged)

SQ aura of evil

Feats Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (morningstar)

Skills Concentration +10, Listen +7, Spellcraft +8, Spot +3

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *full plate*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, masterwork morningstar

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Doors: Strong wooden doors, locked: hardness 5; 20 hp; break DC 23; Open Lock DC 25.

Hatch: With a successful DC 21 Search check, PCs can find a secret hatch in the floor of the southeast corner of the church. Beneath the hatch is a set of stairs leading into the church's understory (see tactical encounter E7A).

Pews: The wooden pews and benches on either side of the hole provide cover for anyone who crouches in a square containing a pew. Moving through a square containing a pew costs 2 squares of movement rather than 1.

Altar: This altar has been clawed by humanoid hands, like the doors of the buildings in the village. Guttering candles flicker dimly atop it.

Zombie Tactics

On its turn, each zombie moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy. The zombies try to overwhelm a single target if possible. They do not purposely go through the hole in the floor.

Deathlock Tactics

The deathlock begins by using its *sound burst* ability, following up with its *magic missiles*. It uses *death knell* if it gets the chance, but never if doing so puts itself in danger. If it is injured, it attempts to flee from the church. It does not purposely go through the hole in the floor.

Danovich's Tactics

Danovich leads off by activating his scroll of *circle of death*, a page he tore out of the back of the *Liber Blaspheme*. Its caster level is higher than his own, so he must make a DC 12 caster level check. If the check fails, the spell isn't cast, and Danovich must succeed on a DC 5 Wisdom check to avoid a mishap (DMG 238). Next he casts *invisibility purge* or *dispel magic* if he believes the PCs have too much magical protection, and finally he casts *hold person*.

If any PC gets close enough to engage him in melee, or if he is at risk of defeat from ranged attacks, Danovich moves to the hole in the floor and jumps down into the understory.

AFTER THE BATTLE

Even after they defeat the undead and the crazed priest, the PCs are not done yet. They must deal with the source of the necromantic infection—the blaspheme in the church's understory. Go to tactical encounter E7A: Church Understory (on the next page).

If the PCs locate the secret hatch and use it before Danovich jumps down the hole in the floor, they can attempt to enter the understory surreptitiously.

If the PCs investigate the altar, refer to Treasure in the E7 entry on page 27.

CHURCH UNDERSTORY

Encounter Level 9

This encounter takes place when the PCs first arrive at the understory of the old church. They might have arrived here by falling or jumping through the hole in the floor of the church (see encounter E7), or they might have been able to enter stealthily by using a stairway.

Amid the litter of the collapsed floorboards is a dank understory. A partially smashed laboratory work bench stands in the northwest portion of the cellar, including an iron slab surrounded by a clutter of broken equipment of incomprehensible complexity. Something awful groans to the south and shambles forward.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

The church understory is dimly lit through the hole in the floor above. Treat this as shadowy illumination: Creatures have concealment (20% miss chance) and can make Hide checks.

If Danovich leapt down into the understory during the previous encounter and survived the drop, place him in the square immediately beneath the one he fell through, and refer to his statistics block in tactical encounter E7 on the preceding pages. If he has time (and the need) to do so, the priest reads his *scroll of cure moderate wounds* to heal some of the damage he has taken.

If any PCs followed Danovich through the hole, place them in appropriate squares adjacent to the priest. Characters who have arrived here by using the hatch and the stairway leading down from the ground floor of the church can position themselves within 10 feet of the base of the stairway.

The understory holds Doru the blaspheme (B), two infected zombies (Z), and an infected skeleton (S). Place these monsters as indicated on the tactical map and roll initiative for the new combatants.

SPLITTING THE PARTY

If some of the PCs follow Danovich through the hole and others decide to stay on the ground floor of the church, it might be necessary to keep track of activity in both encounter areas at the same time. However, if the party splits up in this fashion, it's likely that each smaller group of PCs finds itself overmatched against the monsters that remain in the same area. In such a case, it's tactically smart for the PCs to rejoin forces as quickly as possible. If they all descend to the understory and dispose of Doru the blaspheme, it's likely that the infected undead on the ground floor of the church collapse and become harmless.

DORU, INFECTIOUS BLASPHEME

CR 9

HP 147

NE Medium undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +10

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19

HD 18; **DR** 5/slashing

Immune cold, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +13

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); erratic charge

Melee bite +18 (1d8+13 plus blasphemous bite plus disease)

Atk Options blasphemous bite, disease

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +18

Abilities Str 28, Dex 12, Con —, Int 5, Wis 15, Cha 10
SQ undead traits

Feats Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Toughness*, Toughness (4), Track

 *Feat described in *Libris Mortis*.

Skills Listen +10, Spot +10, Survival +7

Erratic Charge (Ex) A blaspheme can normally make one turn of up to 90 degrees during a charge. However, Doru can't charge through the difficult terrain of the debris-covered floor in the area beneath the hole.

Blasphemous Bite (Su) Doru's bite dazes a living nonevil creature for 1 round and might also transmit the necromantic infection.

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—bite, Fort DC 22 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +3 circumstance bonus; Doru is the epicenter of the infection. An infected humanoid that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as an infected zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

If Ashlyn is with the PCs, she recognizes the two zombies as her former companions, the two missing Lightbringers. Ashlyn is shaken with grief during this fight, taking a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks.

THE MONSTERS

Blaspheme: This creature appears like a corpse surgically modified by a lunatic. Skeletally thin, its arms are too long, while its head is wide and wedge-shaped, with a mouth split so that it is able to open wider than a normal humanoid. Its teeth glitter like shards of black, steaming ice.

Infected Zombies: Identical to those described in encounter E1 on page 32.

Infected Skeleton: This human skeleton is animated with the same infection that infuses the zombies, granting it vigor not seen in a regular skeleton.

INFECTED ZOMBIES (2)**CR 2**

HP 42 each

NE Medium undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6; **DR** 5/slashing**Immune** mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Fort** +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run**Melee** slam +6 (1d6+4 plus disease)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +6**Atk Options** disease**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1**SQ** plodding, undead traits**Feats** Toughness**Skills** Listen +0, Spot +0**Disease (Su)** Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).**Plodding (Ex)** Infected zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.**INFECTED SKELETON****CR 2**

HP 39

NE Medium undead

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12

HD 6; **DR** 5/bludgeoning**Immune** cold, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Fort** +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** 2 claws each +9 (1d6+6 plus disease) and bite +4 melee (1d4+3 plus disease)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +9**Abilities** Str 23, Dex 16, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1**SQ** undead traits**Disease (Su)** Necromantic infection—claw or bite, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).**Doru's Tactics**

Although it is not mindless, Doru the blaspheme has one overwhelming goal: Infect and kill all enemies. However, the monster dimly recognizes Danovich and does not attack the priest if he is present.

Zombie Tactics

On its turn, each zombie moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy. If Ashlyn is with the PCs, the zombies attack her first if possible.

Skeleton Tactics

On its turn, the skeleton moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy and continues attacking until that enemy is dead.

AFTER THE BATTLE

If Doru is destroyed, the necromantic plague immediately ceases. All infected undead in the village instantly drop, now just ordinary corpses.

If Strahd's secondary goal is Undead Legions, destroying Doru alone is not enough to stop the necromantic infection. Only defeating Strahd himself can end the zombie plague forever (see Undead Legions, page 16).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This chamber is a weird variant of an alchemist's lab (PH 129). The furniture in the northwest corner is not tall enough or massive enough to provide cover or concealment. See Treasure in the E7A entry on page 28 for more information.

Difficult Terrain: The 4 squares directly beneath the hole in the church floor are covered in shattered timbers and other debris. The wreckage produces difficult terrain: Each of these squares costs 1 extra square to enter, and the DCs of Tumble and Move Silently checks increase by 2).

Pillars: The vertical beams holding up (most of) the floor of the church are not thick enough to provide cover or hinder movement.



GHOUL GRAVE

Encounter Level 9

This encounter takes place when the PCs first enter the tunnel under the dug-up gravestone (see the E8 entry on page 28).

This rough-hewn, earthen tunnel is about 6 feet in diameter. A terrible stench emanates from somewhere deeper. Bits of gnawed remains—including a fingerbone and part of a skull—and scraps of torn, rotted clothes are partly embedded in walls worn by heavy use.

No check is needed to recognize that clawed hands and feet have burrowed this tunnel.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

The tunnel leads down into a rough chamber, which is entirely dark.

The tunnel opens up into a fetid earthen chamber whose stench is abominable. Corpses of humans, mostly eaten, are strewn about and partly trodden into the floor. One body is relatively intact, and several coffins lie in a jumble nearby.

GHOSTS (2)

CR 3

HP 29 each

CE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +8

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14

HD 4

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist +2 turn resistance

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +5 (1d8+3 plus disease plus paralysis) and 2 claws +3 each (1d4+1 plus paralysis)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5

Atk Options disease, paralysis, stench

Abilities Str 17, Dex 17, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16

SQ undead traits

Feats Multiattack, Toughness

Skills Balance +8, Climb +9, Hide +9, Jump +9, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Spot +8

Disease (Su) Ghoul fever—bite, Fort DC 15, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. An infected creature that dies from ghoul fever rises as a ghoul on the next midnight. A humanoid with 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast instead.

Paralysis (Ex) 1d4+1 rounds; Fort DC 15 negates. (Elves are not immune.)

Stench (Ex) Sickens living creatures within 10 feet for 1d6+4 minutes; Fort DC 15 negates.

GRAVETOUCHED GHOUL HARPY

CR 5

HP 45

CE Medium undead (augmented monstrous humanoid)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +5

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Dodge

HD 7

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist +2 turn resistance

Fort +2, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 80 ft. (average); Flyby Attack

Melee 2 claws +8 each (1d4+1 plus paralysis) and bite +6 (1d6 plus disease plus paralysis)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +8

Atk Options disease, paralysis

Special Actions captivating song

Abilities Str 12, Dex 19, Con —, Int 9, Wis 16, Cha 19

SQ undead traits

Feats Dodge, Flyby Attack, Multiattack[®], Persuasive

Skills Bluff +13, Intimidate +10, Listen +9, Perform (oratory) +6, Spot +5

Captivating Song (Su) All creatures (other than harpies) within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 17 Will save or become captivated. This is a sonic, mind-affecting charm effect. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by the same harpy's song for 24 hours.

A captivated creature walks toward the harpy, taking the most direct route available. If the path leads into a dangerous area, that creature gets a second saving throw. Captivated creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. A captivated creature within 5 feet of the harpy stands there and offers no resistance to the monster's attacks. The effect continues for as long as the harpy sings and for 1 round thereafter. A bard's countersong ability allows the captivated creature to attempt a new Will save.

Disease (Su) Ghoul fever—bite, Fort DC 17, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. An infected creature that dies from ghoul fever rises as a ghoul on the next midnight. A humanoid with 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast instead.

Paralysis (Ex) 1d4+1 rounds; Fort DC 17 negates. Elves are immune to this effect.

This chamber holds two ghosts (G), a gravetouched ghoul harpy (H), and a gravetouched ghoul monk named Inka (I). (Gravetouched ghouls are creatures that rise from the grave endowed with ghoul abilities.) The ghosts lurk behind thin earthen walls and the harpy in an out-of-the-way alcove to the southeast, while Inka rests within a plundered coffin. These monsters are not immediately visible as the PCs enter this area and move around within it.

INKA, GRAVETOUCHED GHOUL MONK**CR 7**

HP 39

Female human monk 6

CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +4**Languages** Common, Terran**AC** 23, touch 19, flat-footed 19; **Dodge**, **Mobility****HD** 6**Immune** mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Resist** +2 turn resistance, evasion**Fort** +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9 (+11 against enchantments)**Speed** 50 ft. (10 squares); **Spring Attack****Melee** unarmed strike +7 (1d8+3) or**Melee** unarmed strike +6/+6 (1d8+3) with flurry of blows or**Melee** bite +7 (1d6+3 plus disease plus paralysis) and 2 claws +5 each (1d4+1 plus paralysis)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +11**Atk Options** Deflect Arrows, Improved Grapple, Improved Trip, disease, *ki* strike (magic), paralysis**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 18, Con —, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 10**SQ** slow fall 30 ft., undead traits**Feats** Deflect Arrows^B, Dodge, Improved Grapple^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip^B, Improved Unarmed Strike^B, Mobility, Multiattack^B, Spring Attack**Skills** Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +13, Jump +13, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Spot +4, Tumble +13**Possessions** *bracers of armor* +2**Disease (Su)** Ghoul fever—bite, Fort DC 13, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. An infected creature that dies from ghoulish fever rises as a ghoul on the next midnight. A humanoid with 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast instead.**Paralysis (Ex)** 1d4+1 rounds; Fort DC 13 negates. Elves are immune to this effect.

If a PC opens the coffin containing Inka, ask the players to roll initiative. The ghast in the western part of the area bursts forth from its hiding place, and the harpy also moves in to join Inka in the fight against the PCs. As her first action, Inka attacks from a prone position.

THE MONSTERS**Ghouls (Ghosts):** Identical to those described in encounter E6 on page 38.**Gravetouched Ghoul Harpy:** This creature looks like an evil-faced old human with mottled decaying flesh. Its lower body, legs, and wings are reptilian. Its hair, or what remains of it, is tangled, filthy, and crusted with blood.**Inka, Gravetouched Ghoul Monk:** This hideous creature wears tarnished iron bands at her wrists and ankles, which do nothing to hide her mottled, decaying flesh.**Ghast Tactics**

If a PC approaches the coffin containing Inka, the ghast nearby waits until the coffin is opened before attacking.

The ghast closest to the entrance (the one behind the earthen wall in the northeast corner of the tactical map) remains concealed until the characters try to leave this area, whereupon it bursts out and attacks a character who occupies the square to the southwest of its hiding place.

Gravetouched Ghoul Harpy Tactics

The gravetouched ghoul harpy begins the encounter using its captivating song (which does not affect undead). It tries to draw off one or more PCs so that the other creatures in the lair can deal with those remaining. The harpy maintains the effect until all resistance is dealt with; the others then attack captivated foes.

Inka's Tactics

Inka prefers to attack with her claws and bite, hoping to paralyze and infect victims. She exploits her high speed, Tumble skill, Mobility, and Spring Attack to deliver attacks while staying away from opponents.

If Inka drops to 9 hit points or below, she attempts to flee to the surface. She switches to her unarmed strikes if hard pressed so as to deal more damage.

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the PCs defeat the ghouls, they are free to search the coffins and the general area for treasure, as described in the E8 entry on page 28.

If the PCs are in the graveyard at midnight, they observe the spirit procession described in the E8 entry.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Body: This is the body of a recently deceased villager, pulled from his coffin but only partially eaten (missing a hand and a foot). A successful DC 13 Search check reveals a gold ring worth 50 gp and a gold pendant worth 100 gp.

Coffins: These coffins have been dragged here from the original site of burial and their contents eaten. Inka, the gravetouched ghoul monk, is resting in one of the coffins.



ZOMBIE-INFESTED BUILDING

Encounter Level 7

Use this encounter the first time the PCs enter the building labeled E9 on the Barovia village map (page 24). Lighting conditions depend on what time of day the PCs arrive. The interior of the building is unlit. Illumination is shadowy at best during the day, and the place is completely dark at night.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

Nothing happens until one or more PCs attempt to enter the building, either through the door on the west wall or through the broken-down wall to the north.

If a character opens the door or looks into the room from the north, read the following text:

The interior of this building stinks like a slaughterhouse. Refuse lies thick on the floor, and the peeling walls are stained with some sort of dark liquid. A moldering mattress, still in one piece, lies near the front door.

If a character looks in through the door, add the following bits of information (assuming these features can be seen):

A wardrobe with claw marks visible across its door stands in a corner of this entry room. A door is set in the far wall.

If any PCs attempt to move inside, roll initiative, but do not place the infected zombies (Z), zombie rats (R), and dire maggots (M) in their indicated positions until their turn in the initiative order. Even if other creatures are alerted to the PCs' presence, a zombie rat hiding under the mattress and a zombie concealed inside the wardrobe do not attack immediately; see the text that accompanies the map.

If one or more PCs entered stealthily, they do not trigger an encounter unless someone opens the wardrobe or disturbs the mattress. The other creatures join in once combat begins. Place them as indicated on the tactical map and roll initiative.

THE MONSTERS

Infected Zombies: Identical to those described in encounter E1 on page 32.

Infected Zombie Rats: The necromantic infection doesn't restrict itself to humanoid; even vermin are susceptible. The extremely vicious Barovian rat proved an ideal host for the supernatural infection. The rats prefer to avoid the streets and instead move from house to house through cracks and crannies too small for zombies—though they are bigger than regular rats, and must often force holes large enough to squeeze through.

INFECTED ZOMBIES (3)

CR 2

HP 42 each

NE Medium undead

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6; DR 5/slashing

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4 plus disease)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Atk Options disease

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ plodding, undead traits

Feats Toughness

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Disease (Su) Necromantic infection—slam, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to –1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).

Plodding (Ex) Infected zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

Dire Maggots: Identical to those described in encounter E2 on page 34.

Zombie Tactics

On its turn, each zombie moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy; the one behind the interior door opens the door as part of its first move action. The zombie in the wardrobe waits to confront a PC who opens the wardrobe. The zombies try to overwhelm a single target if possible.

Zombies do not attack zombie rats, and they attack dire maggots only if provoked by them.

Zombie Rat Tactics

The zombie rat hidden beneath the mattress makes an attack of opportunity against any creature that moves through a square it threatens. Each other zombie rat moves from its starting position toward the closest enemy. The rats try to overwhelm a single target if possible. Unlike ordinary dire rats, Barovian rats viciously cling to their opponents and tear the flesh with their diseased bites.

Zombie rats do not attack zombies, and they attack dire maggots only if provoked by them.

Dire Maggot Tactics

The dire maggots squirm forth and attack the closest target (which might be a monster). Once a target is paralyzed, the maggots move on to the next nearest target.

INFECTED ZOMBIE RATS (6)**CR 1**

HP 16 each

NE Small undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 13

HD 2; DR 2/—

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run**Melee** bite +3 (1d4+1 plus disease)**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** -3**Atk Options** attach, savage the wound**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1**SQ** plodding, undead traits**Feats** Toughness**Skills** —**Disease (Su)** Necromantic infection—bite, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period instant, damage sickened. An infected creature that drops to -1 hit points or fewer, or that dies, rises as a zombie in 1d4+1 rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29).**Attach (Ex)** An infected zombie rat that hits with its bite attack latches onto the opponent's body. An attached rat can be struck with a weapon or grappled. To remove it through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.**Savage the Wound (Ex)** An infected zombie rat automatically deals 2d4+2 points of damage each round it remains attached.**Plodding (Ex)** Infected zombie rats can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.**DIRE MAGGOTS (2)****CR 2**

HP 33 each

N Small vermin

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14

HD 6

Immune mind-affecting

Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 5 ft.**Melee** bite +5 (1d8+1 plus paralytic saliva)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +1**Atk Options** paralytic saliva**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2**SQ** vermin traits**Feats** —**Skills** —**Paralytic Saliva (Ex)** Paralysis 1 round; Fort DC 14 negates. Each round, a paralyzed creature victim can attempt another Fortitude save to break the paralysis.**FEATURES OF THE AREA****Door, Exterior:** Simple wooden door, barricaded; hardness 5; 50 hp; break DC 20.**Door, Interior:** Simple wooden door, unlocked; hardness 5; 10 hp; break DC 10.**Mattress:** A zombie rat hidden beneath this mattress does not reveal itself but waits to make an attack of opportunity against a character who moves past it. A character who examines the mattress can locate the zombie rat and avoid this attack by making a successful DC 15 Search check.**Wardrobe:** This piece of furniture nestled into a corner has a door that opens along the west side. The wardrobe contains an infected zombie, which attacks any character who opens the door.

If the PCs encounter zombies, go to tactical encounter E2: Zombie Street Encounter.

If the PCs investigate more empty buildings and discover zombies within, refer to the Random Building Encounter instructions below.

Random Building Encounter

If the PCs randomly encounter zombies while exploring a building in Barovia (see Barovia Building Encounters, page 24), make a few changes to the setup. Remove either the rats or the dire maggots, reducing the Encounter Level by 1. Also remove the mattress and the wardrobe (although one or both previously hidden creatures might remain). Place the zombies and remaining creatures in different rooms or hide them behind other decrepit furniture as you see fit.

AFTER THE BATTLE

The PCs are free to explore the building and can locate minor treasure as described on page 24. They can continue exploring the town, but they are at risk of random attacks by roving zombies.

Illus. by D. Allsop



Three sisters gathered under a full moon. Three sisters dipped their spoons into a great bubbling cauldron. Three sisters eyed each other, and eyed the moon.

The eldest sister spoke words of prophecy. She told of the wild fanes destroyed, of the master's power broken. She told of ancient power reawakened and ancient evil undone.

"What will we three be in this future world you see?" her sisters asked.

To that question alone, of all questions that have ever been asked, Madam Eva had no answer.

She gazed at the moon. She gazed at her sisters, born of the same dark seed and feeble human flesh. And she gazed into the cauldron, and prayed that her sisters would not see her tremble.

Barovia is a small county nestled in a valley on the shoulders of a forbidding mountain range. Its altitude makes it cool in the summer and bitterly cold in winter, and the mist that clings to the sides of the mountains often fills the valley with dense fog. An ancient pine forest carpets the valley, the tops of the trees shrouded in mist. The ice-cold waters of the Ivlis River flow from a spring in the mountainside to the chill Ivlis Marsh before trickling down out of the valley to the world beyond.

Isolated as it is from the outside world, the valley of Barovia is completely under the control of Count Strahd von Zarovich. The mists, the river, and the earth itself obey his will. The people of the village do the same, motivated by fear and superstition and easily manipulated by Strahd's spies and agents.

USING THIS CHAPTER

The focus of this series of encounters is on creating an escalating sense of horror as the characters (and their players) learn more about Count Strahd and the land of Barovia. Along the way, they can also acquire items and information that will aid them in their battle against Strahd.

The trick is to convince the players that their characters need this help. Many players, after their characters arrive in Barovia and learn anything of the "Devil Strahd" who lives in the castle on the hill, will want to immediately make their way to the castle to confront this threat. Obscure Vistani fortunes won't dissuade them: They have identified the opponent, and they will want to go for the jugular.

It's certainly possible to play the adventure that way, especially if you're looking for a short adventure experience (see page 18). But in that case, the PCs had better be high enough in level to deal with the challenges of the castle, or they'll find their first encounter there to be deadly. If you plan a longer adventure and intend the characters to adventure in the surrounding lands before entering the castle,

an overpowering onslaught when they attempt to enter the castle is not the best way to steer them away. When players start to think “We’d better have some more encounters so we can be higher level when we enter the castle again,” this ruins the suspension of disbelief required to maintain interest in the game.

For that reason, the players and their characters need to be enticed into the encounters in this chapter, lured and seduced by the horrors they contain. Chapter 1 suggests some means for doing so. If the PCs are unaware of the vampiric threat in the castle, they might adventure around the lands of Barovia for some time in pursuit of other goals—perhaps even (unwittingly) at Strahd’s behest. On the other hand, if they are aware of exactly the threat they face in Castle Ravenloft, they might find encouragement to seek out powerful magic items—the *Sunsword* and the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*—to aid them in the epic fight against Strahd. These items might be hidden within the castle or they might lie somewhere outside, but the secrets to making best use of them are known only to the hags, Madam Eva and the Drowned Lady.

Whether the PCs are aware of Strahd or not, the villagers of Barovia can produce abundant reasons for them to explore the surrounding lands. The villagers fear the werewolves of the woods and the witches of Lysaga Hill, and might beg the PCs to help them deal with these threats. The Vistani of the Tser Pool encampment are frequently seen in town and might lead the PCs to their camp to meet their leader. Clouds of superstition around the crossroads and the Ivlis Marsh might lead the PCs to those sites purely out of curiosity.

In most adventures, the PCs will move between the village of Barovia and various sites in the surrounding lands. The village offers the relative safety of a “home base”—at least, once the zombie threat is eliminated. The PCs might also return to these sites after making one or more forays into Castle Ravenloft, particularly if they find the *Holy Symbol* or the *Sunsword* and don’t yet know what to do with these items.

THE THREE HAGS

The lands of Barovia are home to a covey of hags who serve Strahd, though they are each rather independent and at times strain both against the Count’s will and against each other. Whenever the PCs become involved with one of the hags, the other two are sure to take an interest and interfere to some extent. Similarly, if Strahd’s secondary goal involves one of the hags, the other two are sure to play a more active role in the adventure. Aside from Strahd, the three hags are the dominant force in the lands of Barovia, and any adventures the PCs undertake between the village and Castle Ravenloft are sure to involve at least one of the hags.

The three hags share a terrible secret. Over the centuries since Strahd’s arrival in this region and his descent into utter evil, his corruption has spread through the land. Strahd appropriated three wilderness fanes located near his castle—one in the Svalich Woods, one in the swamp to the east, and one high in the mountains. Performing dark rituals at each once-sanctified altar, Strahd bound himself to the land and the land to him, gaining great powers in the bargain.

The three hags of Barovia are a terrible byproduct of these rituals. Each of them was once a normal human woman, a priestess responsible for tending one of the fanes. Strahd’s rituals corrupted them just as he corrupted the land, warping them into monstrous creatures and twisting their hearts to mirror Strahd’s evil. They remain guardians of the fanes, responsible for protecting not just the unholy sites themselves, but the power that Strahd gains from them.

Madam Eva, the leader of the Vistani who camp at Tser Pool, is an annis hag. She uses *disguise self* to appear more human, but being surrounded by halflings and relatively short humans, her great size is hard to conceal. She is the nominal leader of the covey, being the oldest and strongest of the hags, but she is also the least interested in bending the others to her will. She has a strong mystical streak, and her true oracular powers come to light in her fortune tellings. She has been troubled for several months because she foresees the downfall of Strahd—and at that point the future becomes murky and impenetrable to her sight. She also possesses a key bit of lore that Strahd seeks: the key to the mystery of the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*.

Baba Zelenna, a green hag, leads the cult of witches that gathers at Lysaga Hill. She makes little effort to conceal her true appearance from the witches, attributing her unusual appearance to the touch of the Green God, but when she must travel among other humans she uses *disguise self* to appear as a human crone. She chafes under the rulership of Strahd and resents Madam Eva’s leadership of the covey, and her activities with the witches of Lysaga Hill are a direct attempt to free herself from both. Baba Zelenna has been inciting the witches to participate in summoning a powerful demon to Lysaga Hill, an act she hopes will destroy Strahd (and perhaps Madam Eva) and establish Zelenna as the ruler of Barovia.

The Drowned Lady is the common appellation for the sea hag of the Ivlis Marsh, and she uses that title now in preference to any other name she might possess. She is little more than a wretched monster living among the reeds and weeds of the marsh, and the other hags believe her to be mad. Trapped in her warped mind, however, is the secret of how to unlock the powers of the *Sunsword*.

THE MISTS

The mists that shroud the valley of Barovia are a tool Strahd uses to discourage visitors—and to prevent his victims from leaving.

The mists surround Barovia. To characters entering the region, they appear as nothing more than a light fog that does not significantly hamper vision. However, they act as a *mind fog* spell, imposing a –10 penalty on Wisdom checks and Will saves for creatures within the fog if they fail a DC 20 Will save. At Strahd’s command, the mists thicken into a denser fog that obscures all sight beyond 5 feet and grants concealment at closer ranges, as a *fog cloud* spell does. In addition, Strahd can create supernatural illusory patterns within the fog—horrific shapes and fearsome monsters—that cause characters to become panicked if they fail a DC 18 Will save. Strahd can choose whether these patterns appear between the characters and the outside world (causing panicked characters to flee back toward Barovia) or on the other side of the characters (making them flee away from his domain).

The first time characters encounter patterns in the mists, read this text aloud to describe the scene.

The fog grows thicker, and forms into snaky tendrils that seem to wrap themselves around you. Horrific forms shape themselves in the mist—gaping mouths and bony claws attached to monstrous forms that shift with the smallest movement of the air. The faintest hint of a ghostly moaning reaches your ears, sending a cold trickle of fear down your spine.

C. The Svalich Woods

Towering trees, their tops lost in heavy gray mist, allow only dim shafts of light to reach the dusky forest floor. Moss-covered trunks form a living labyrinth. The woods have the silence of a forgotten grave—until the wolves begin to howl.

The PCs' presence in the woods results in three encounters with werewolves and their tainted leader. The tactical maps provide details of these encounters.

Tactical Encounters: C1: Elf Ambush, on page 64; C2: Werewolf Attack, on page 66; and C3: Nymph Hideaway, on page 68.

Treasure: The elfwerewolves carry masterwork weapons the PCs can use or sell, and Valicia wears a mantle of second chances (described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide II* supplement and summarized in Valicia's statistics block). If Strahd's secondary goal is Untamed Allies, there is an additional treasure near the nymph's pool: two javelins of lightning, gifts from Strahd cementing his new relationship with Valicia. The werewolves and Valicia do not use these items.

Development: If a PC is looking for tracks in the woods, a successful DC 20 Survival check reveals the pawprints of many large wolves leading toward an area that is choked with underbrush. Following the tracks to this area brings the characters to a dead villager mostly hidden in the ferns and vines. His clothes are torn and his body partially eaten, but one dead hand still clutches a folded piece of parchment. A seal pressed into red wax holding the letter closed is a simple "B." The parchment contains a letter from the Burgomaster of Barovia dated two weeks ago. The letter is presented in the Appendix as letter G. Unlike the letter that brought the PCs here, this one was actually written by the burgomaster before his death.

WHY ARE THE PCS HERE?

The PCs might come to the Svalich Woods for one of the following reasons:

- They are searching for Jeref Maurgan (or his remains) as part of the hook that led them into the adventure.
- The letter they received at the start of the adventure mentioned the wolves of the forest (because Strahd's secondary goal is to bring the werewolves under his control).
- The Fortunes of Ravenloft reading determined that the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* lies "in the heart of the wilds, far from human hands"—in the Nymph Hideaway (C3).

D. Ivlis Marsh

At the lowest point of the valley, the river Ivlis stretches wide and seems to take over the land. Patches of dead-gray reeds and small stands of moss-hung trees replace the dense forest, and pools of murky water attract clouds of insects. Perhaps a quarter of a mile into this marsh, you can just make out the silhouettes of broken stone walls.

No trail leads into the marsh, so the PCs must pick their way slowly (half speed), skirting around the deeper pools and watching carefully for hazards. At this pace, it takes about 15 minutes to reach the ruins (the Swamp Fane) if the characters have a speed of 20 feet, or 10 minutes if they move at 30 feet. The distance is roughly 1,500 feet.

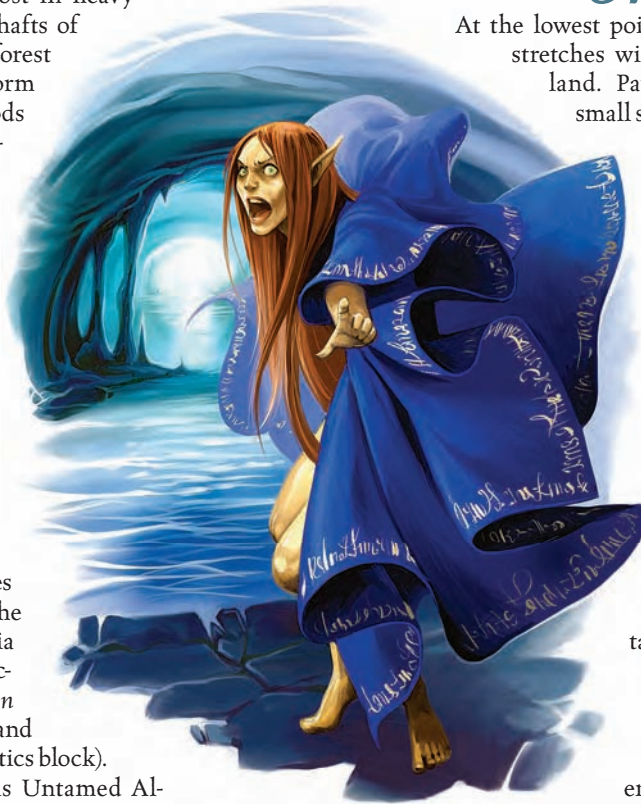
About halfway to the ruins, a swarm of undead bloodsuckers descends upon them. The tactical maps provide details of this encounter as well as the Swamp Fane itself.

Tactical Encounters: D1: Bloodmotes, on page 70, and D2: The Swamp Fane, on page 72.

Treasure: When Strahd's connection to the Swamp Fane is severed (see Development, below), a small chunk at the top the runestone begins to glow incandescent blue. A PC can break this chunk off with a DC 12 Strength check. When this happens, flakes of stone fall off, leaving a spherical shape—an incandescent blue *ioun stone* that grants a +2 enhancement bonus to Wisdom.

Development: Once they deal with the Drowned Lady, the PCs can try to sever Strahd's connection to the Swamp Fane. The means to accomplish this were determined in Madam Eva's reading of their fortunes (see The Fortunes of Ravenloft on page 56).

Hags' Blood: The PCs must kill the Drowned Lady and place her corpse on the runestone in the fane. Read the following text when they accomplish this:



The corruption of the land has driven Valicia mad

Only by its sudden absence do you realize that there had been a hum of power in this place, too low to register in your ears. It has utterly ceased, and the fane is now as dead as its guardian.

Unholy Reunion: Beneath the runestone, the PCs must dig for about a minute to uncover a small reliquary box, about the size of a spellbook. Its sides and lid are carved with images of devas, planetars, and solars—but the eyes of every angel are red with a sticky liquid suspiciously like blood. Inside the box is a tooth of Saint Bogdan, an artifact now bereft of any holy power. If the PCs already have the items from the other two fanes—the hair of Saint Markovia from the Forest Fane and the bone dust of Saint Ecaterina from the Mountain Fane—the three objects join together and animate into a creature called a blighted relic (see statistics block below). The PCs must destroy the blighted relic in order to remove the fane-signs from Strahd.

Reconsecration: The PCs must bring *Saint Bogdan's Fingerbone* from the crypts under Castle Ravenloft (Crypt 12), and use that artifact as an additional focus for a *consecrate* spell.

Vigil of Transference: One PC must keep awake and in constant prayer in the fane for an entire night. If the PC falls asleep or takes any standard action, the vigil fails. The other PCs can help keep their friend awake (making success automatic), but otherwise the PC on the vigil must succeed on a Constitution check every hour of the night. The DC for this check begins at 8 and increases by 2 every hour. Worse still, Strahd senses this threat to his power and sends his agents to attack the PCs. Around midnight, roll normally for Strahd's nighttime spies, but these spies attack immediately and without retreat.

If the character successfully completes the vigil, he or she gains the Swamp Fane-sign, and Strahd loses it.

Swamp Sign (Su) As a result of a connection to the swamps of Barovia, the character has resistance to acid 10, fire 10, and sonic 10. This resistance lasts as long as the character remains in Barovia.

WHY ARE THE PCS HERE?

The PCs might come to Ivlis Marsh for one of the following reasons:

- The Fortunes of Ravenloft reading determined that the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* lies “where the river flows into the land.”
- They are searching for the Swamp Fane in order to strip the Swamp Fane-sign from Strahd.

BLIGHTED RELIC

CR 10

CE Medium undead

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages Sylvan, Common

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; **Dodge**, **Mobility**

hp 143 (22 HD); **DR** 10/cold iron

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist acid 10, cold fire 10, fire 10, positive energy 10; nondetection; **SR** 18

Fort +7, **Ref** +13, **Will** +14

Weakness holy vulnerability, sunlight vulnerability

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee whirlwind of blows +13 (4d6+2) against each adjacent creature

Base Atk +11; **Grp** +13

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Deathmaster (on critical hit, target shaken 1 minute)

Special Actions unholy breath (30-foot cone; Will DC 21; 10d8 and sicken 1d4 rounds against good creatures), Daunting Presence (30 ft., Will DC 21 or shaken 10 min.)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 19, Con —, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 11

SQ force armor

Feats Combat Reflexes, Daunting Presence*, Deathmaster*, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Positive Energy Resistance*

*New feat described in *Libris Mortis*; effects summarized below.

Skills Climb +27, Jump +35

Nondetection (Su) A blighted relic benefits from a constant nondetection effect on itself. If a divination spell is attempted against the blighted relic, the caster of the divination must succeed on a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) against a DC of 19.

Holy Vulnerability A blighted relic takes double damage from spells with the good descriptor and from the additional damage dealt by holy weapons and similar effects. Thus, a holy sword deals an extra 4d6 points of damage against the blighted relic (instead of 2d6), and a paladin's smite evil ability deals double the paladin's level in extra damage.

Sunlight Vulnerability A blighted relic is dazzled when exposed to full natural sunlight (but not a *daylight* spell). Any spell or effect that is more effective against creatures with vulnerability to sunlight is also more effective against the blighted relic.

Whirlwind of Blows (Ex) A blighted relic's basic melee attack is a frenzied storm of claws and bites that targets every adjacent creature. The blighted relic makes separate attack and damage rolls against each creature.

Unholy Breath (Su) A blighted relic has a breath weapon similar in its effect to an *unholy blight* spell (PH 297). Evil creatures take no damage from this attack, and creature that are neither good nor evil take half damage. Good outsiders take 20d6 points of damage. Any good creature in the area must make a successful DC 21 Will save or be sickened for 1d4 rounds. Good and neutral characters can also reduce the damage by half with a successful save.

Feats A blighted relic's Daunting Presence feat allows it, as a standard action, to strike fear into foes within 30 feet. Those who fail a DC 21 Will save are shaken for 10 minutes. It rarely uses this ability. Its Deathmaster feat causes any creature hit by a blighted relic's critical hit to become shaken for 1 minute. The Positive Energy Resistance feat grants it resistance 10 to positive energy, which works like normal energy resistance.

A blighted relic is a vaguely draconic, but wingless, creature that appears to be formed of a shifting mass of teeth and bits of bone. One round eyeball stares out from what passes for its head. It moves with surprising swiftness, attacking in a blur of claws and teeth and sharp shards of bone.



Sir Urik fights a desperate battle

F. The Crossroads

An old wooden gallows creaks in a chill wind blowing down from the high ground to the west. A frayed length of rope dances from its beam. The well-worn road splits here, and a signpost opposite the gallows points off in three directions: “Barovia” to the east, “Tser Pool” to the north, and “Castle Ravenloft” to the west. Across from the gallows, a low wall, crumbling in places, partially encloses a small plot of graves—presumably housing those who died at the end of that rope.

The first time the PCs travel through the crossroads, they encounter its haunting presences. The tactical map provides details of this encounter.

Tactical Encounter: F: The Crossroads, on page 74.

Development: Sir Urik is a knight of the raven, a member of a new prestige class detailed in the Appendix. In addition to helping the PCs against the murks that haunt the crossroads, he can give the PCs information about his knightly order, so that a character who can cast divine spells can adopt the prestige class if desired. See the class description in the Appendix for more information.

WHY ARE THE PCS HERE?

The PCs might come to the crossroads for one of the following reasons:

- As its name suggests, the crossroads is likely to lie in the PCs’ way as they travel from the village of Barovia

either to Castle Ravenloft or to the Tser Pool camp or Tser Falls.

- The Fortunes of Ravenloft reading determined that the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* is buried at the crossroads.

G. Tser Pool Encampment

The canopy of mist and branches overhead suddenly gives way to open sky—though the sky is black with roiling storm clouds. A circle of colorful wagons and a scattering of tents are ranged around a dancing bonfire, and a handful of men and women in colorful garb sit quietly near the wagons. Beyond this camp, a small lake reflects the angry sky overhead.

The Vistani of Barovia are a loose gang of human and half-ling thieves, smugglers, extortionists, and con artists united under the leadership of the annis hag, Madam Eva. They travel the region in small groups, and they are the only natives of Barovia who are ever seen in the surrounding areas—which could account for the PCs’ presence here. They make use of this mobility to carry stolen goods and contraband between Barovia’s neighbors on all sides, making them the region’s most effective smuggling ring. Although the Barovian villagers fear and despise them, the Vistani are under the protection of Strahd and are among his most loyal and useful servants. They are generally aware of the

movements of any outsiders throughout the region, and report back to Madam Eva on a regular basis.

At any given time, about eight of the Vistani are present in this camp near the Tser Pool—and Madam Eva is always here. Another eighteen to twenty Vistani wander the village and countryside, keeping an eye on the activities of the villagers, the werewolves, the other hags, and any outsiders. They use carrier pigeons, trail markings, and occasionally magic to communicate with Madam Eva and each other, ensuring that the knowledge they gain is quickly shared among the entire gang.

When Madam Eva sends a group of Vistani on an important mission, she gives them a *hag eye* so that she can closely monitor their activities. The *hag eye* appears to be a large opal set in a brooch worn by the leader of the Vistani mission. Unfortunately (from Madam Eva's perspective), this also allows the other two hags to snoop into her business, so she does this only when the mission is of crucial importance.

Madam Eva is an exceptional annis. Long ago, she was an acolyte in the church in Barovia, but she was tormented by dreams of terrible catastrophes—dreams that always came true. Soon, the villagers drove her out of the village in fear, and over the course of many years, she slowly transformed into a monstrous hag, and gradually gathered the Vistani around her. She retains her inclination to prophetic visions, which she uses to perform genuine divinations using a deck of cards or other fortunetelling methods. Some of her Vistani followers share that gift, but most Vistani “fortune tellers” are accomplished con artists, nothing more. Madam Eva is also a 5th-level cleric, though she has nothing of the fervent devotion of her youth.

The arrival of the PCs at the Tser Pool encampment might signal the start of a combat encounter, but it is more likely to unfold into a complex set of interactions.

Tactical Encounters: G1: Interacting with Madam Eva, on page 55, is not a tactical encounter but an interaction encounter. G2: Tser Pool Encampment, on page 76, and G3: The Forest Fane, on page 78, are tactical combat encounters.

Treasure: When Strahd's connection to the Forest Fane is severed (see Development, below), a small chunk at the top of the runestone begins to glow pink and green. A character can break this chunk off with a successful DC 12 Strength check. When this happens, flakes of stone fall off, leaving a spherical shape—a pink and green *ioun stone* that grants a +2 enhancement bonus to Charisma.

Development: In addition to dealing with Madam Eva, the PCs can try to sever Strahd's connection to the Forest Fane. The means to accomplish this were determined in Madam Eva's reading of their fortunes (see The Fortunes of Ravenloft on page 56).

Hags' Blood: The PCs must kill Madam Eva and place her corpse on the runestone in the fane. Read the following text when they accomplish this:

Only by its sudden absence do you realize that there had been a hum of power in this place, too low to register in your ears. It has utterly ceased, and the fane is now as dead as its guardian.

Unholy Reunion: Beneath the runestone, the PCs must dig for about a minute to uncover a small reliquary box, about the size of a spellbook. Its sides and lid are carved with images of devas, planetars, and solars—but the eyes of every angel are red with a sticky liquid suspiciously like blood. Inside the box is a lock of hair from Saint Markovia, an artifact now bereft of any holy power. If the PCs already have the items from the other two fanes—the tooth of Saint Bogdan from the Swamp Fane and the bone dust of Saint Ecaterina from the Mountain Fane—the three objects join together and animate into a creature called a blighted relic (see statistics block on page 51). The PCs must destroy the blighted relic in order to remove the fane-signs from Strahd.

Reconsecration: The PCs must bring *Saint Markovia's Thighbone* from the crypts under Castle Ravenloft (Crypt 6) and use that item as an additional focus for a *consecrate* spell.

Vigil of Transference: One PC must stay awake and in constant prayer in the fane for an entire night. If the PC falls asleep or takes any standard action, the vigil fails. The other PCs can help keep their friend awake (making success automatic), but otherwise the PC on the vigil must succeed on a Constitution check every hour of the night. The DC for this check begins at 8, but increases by 2 every hour. Worse still, Strahd senses this threat to his power and sends his agents to attack the PCs. Around midnight, roll normally for Strahd's nighttime spies, but these spies attack immediately and without retreat.

If the character successfully completes the vigil, he or she gains the Forest Fane-sign, and Strahd loses it.

Forest Sign (Su) As a result of a connection to the swamps of Barovia, the character benefits from a constant nondetection effect on himself and his gear. If a divination spell is attempted against the character, the caster of the divination must succeed on a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) against DC19. This resistance lasts as long as the character remains in Barovia.

Vistani Smugglers: If the PCs came to Barovia to investigate a smuggling ring, they can find ample evidence here in the camp that the Vistani are the smugglers they seek. Each of the five wagons in the camp contains a secret compartment in the bottom (Search DC 25), and 1d4 of those compartments currently contain contraband goods of the kind being investigated by the PCs. If the PCs are searching for a particular stolen treasure, it is here. Killing Madam Eva will put an end to the smuggling activities as the Vistani disperse, leaderless, into the surrounding areas.

WHY ARE THE PCS HERE?

The PCs might come to the Tser Pool encampment for one (or more) of the following reasons:

- To have Madam Eva read their fortunes, at the encouragement of the Vistani in Barovia.
- To find the Forest Fane and use it to cut off one of Strahd's fane-sign abilities.
- To investigate the smuggling operation run by the Vistani, and perhaps fight Madam Eva.



Interaction Encounter

G1: MADAM EVA'S READING

The old woman before you is enormous, for a moment seeming more like an ogre or a small giant than the ancient, wrinkled human she is. She hunches over a table that is dwarfed by her bulk, and her black eyes gleam as she shuffles a deck of weathered playing cards. Her hands are bony and spotted with age. When she speaks, her voice crackles like dry weeds.

MADAM EVA

CN female annis hag cleric 5

Key Skills: Disguise +22 (+24 acting) [includes +20 bonus from *disguise self*], Sense Motive +9.

- Has ranks in Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate. She can't use these skills against PC targets, but they influence her demeanor in her interactions.
- To resist Intimidate: 1d20+16. Remember that Medium creatures take a -4 penalty on Intimidate checks against Madam Eva because she is Large.

Starting Attitude: Indifferent, although it is not strictly accurate to say that Madam Eva “doesn't care.” She cares deeply about the PCs, but has strongly conflicting feelings about them: They might bring her liberation from Strahd's rule, but they might also bring her doom.

Modifiers: Apply the following modifiers to any Diplomacy check made to influence Madam Eva's attitude, based on the PCs' manner and specific things they mention in their interaction with her. All of these bonuses stack with each other.

- The PCs make any reference to her size (-1)
- The PCs are fawning and flattering (+2)
- The PCs compliment her prophetic abilities (+1)
- The PCs speak favorably about one or both of the other hags (-2)
- The PCs insult one or both of the other hags (+2)
- The PCs speak disparagingly of Strahd (-1)
- The PCs say that they intend to destroy Strahd (+2)
- The PCs have killed any Vistani (-2)

If Hostile: Madam Eva calls for her Vistani guards and attacks the PCs. See tactical encounter G2 on page 76. This result is only possible if the PCs get a spectacularly bad Diplomacy check result (less than 1) and then get another result almost as bad (less than 5) in a futile attempt to set things right.

If Unfriendly (check result less than 1): Madam Eva refuses to give any help to the PCs and insults them, calling them “insolent buffoons,” “petulant whelps,” and “deluded incompetents.” If they respond to her insults by attacking, she gets outside her tent as quickly as possible and tries to flee into the woods to the southwest, followed by any surviving Vistani. She calls loudly for help, summoning the aid of her giant allies in 1d6 rounds. Use tactical encounter G3 when the giants arrive, whether Eva is still alive or not.



“At last you have arrived!”

If Indifferent (check result 1–14): Madam Eva offers to read the fortune of the PCs as a group. See the next page for rules and advice regarding this reading. Her tone and manner are guarded, and she does not expound on the basic information given by her reading.

If Friendly (check result 15–29): As indifferent, except her tone is casual and friendly, and she calls the PC who made the Diplomacy check “pet.” If the characters ask, she gives some explanation of the cryptic words she utters during the fortune reading. (Her explanations are included in the Fortunes of Ravenloft information in the next section.)

If Helpful (check result 30 or higher): As friendly, except she offers explanations without being asked. If asked, she casts any spell she has prepared, or uses her *potion of remove curse*, on the PCs' behalf. See tactical encounter G2 on page 76 for Eva's prepared spells. The only information she is cagey about is the location of the Forest Fane, though she admits that it is near the camp.

Illus. by A. Stokes

The Fortunes of Ravenloft

The most important encounter for the PCs in the lands of Barovia is at the Tser Pool encampment (see area G on page 52), where Madam Eva tells their fortunes. This reading not only gives the PCs information vital to the success of their battle against Strahd, it also randomly determines certain facts about the adventure.

Given its importance, you should give the Fortunes of Ravenloft portion of this adventure the attention it deserves. Spend some time familiarizing yourself with the contents of this section so that you can create the proper atmosphere at the table. Treat the fortune-telling as a performance that will keep your audience glued to their seats.

THE FORTUNE DECK

Effective use of props helps create the proper mood for the fortune-telling. Thus, it's best to use actual cards to perform the reading. You can use a tarot deck, standard playing cards, or a *Three-Dragon Ante*™ deck (abbreviated 3DA) for a more in-world D&D experience. Prepare the deck as described below.

Three-Dragon Ante Deck: Remove the mortals and the three special dragons (Bahamut, Dracolich, and Tiamat) from the deck. Four of the mortals, plus the Dracolich, serve as focus cards. Shuffle the remaining sixty-one cards for the reading.

Tarot Deck: Remove the major arcana from the deck. Five of these cards serve as focus cards. Also remove the court cards (pages, knights, queens, and kings). Shuffle the remaining forty cards for the reading.

Playing Cards: Remove the jacks, queens, and kings from the deck. Five of these cards serve as focus cards. Shuffle the remaining forty cards for the reading.

THE READING

The PCs must specify the items or events about which they seek information. In the village of Barovia, they might have heard of the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, the *Sunsword*, and the *Tome of Strahd*. Depending on when they seek out Madam Eva, they might also ask for advice about the village's zombie problem. They have certainly heard of the "Devil Strahd."

Roleplaying Suggestion: Madam Eva encourages the PCs to name anything they want to learn more about.

Focus Cards: Playing the role of Madam Eva, place an appropriate focus card face up for each topic the PCs name, as shown on the following table.

FOCUS CARDS

Topic	3DA	Tarot	Playing Cards
Strahd	Archmage	Devil	King of spades
<i>Sunsword</i>	Dragonslayer	Sun	Jack of diamonds
<i>Holy Symbol</i>	Priest	Priestess	Queen of hearts
<i>Tome of Strahd</i>	Druid	Emperor	Jack of clubs
Zombies	Dracolich	Death	Jack of spades

Covering Card: Once the focus cards have been determined, Madam Eva proceeds to the reading. Shuffle the

deck and ask one player to cut it. Address the focus cards in the order they appear in the table, placing two cards on top of each focus card as described below.

Place the first of the two cards so that it covers the focus card completely. This covering card determines a location—either the site where Strahd makes a stand, or the area where an item can be found.

Roleplaying Suggestion: Madam Eva takes the deck in her hands and closes her eyes in concentration, then deals the covering cards and crossing cards off the top of the deck, one at a time.

Crossing Card: Place the second card so that it lies atop the first card and perpendicular to it. A card that crosses the *Sunsword* or *Holy Symbol* focus card determines where to perform the ritual to awaken that item. A card that crosses the *Tome of Strahd* focus card determines what the PCs need to do at each wilderness fane to cut off Strahd's legacy powers. A card that crosses the zombies focus card or the Strahd focus card doesn't actually determine anything, but it provides an opportunity to reveal more information about the zombie threat and Strahd's goals.

Roleplaying Suggestion: The rest of this section provides the information that Madam Eva dispenses at the reading, depending on the focus card (or cards) displayed. As Madam Eva addresses a particular focus card, preparing to put down a covering card or a crossing card, she speaks the words immediately beneath the appropriate header. Then, as she puts the covering card or crossing card in place, she speaks the statement given immediately after the name or rank of the card. If her attitude toward the PCs is friendly or helpful, she also offers the information given in the following paragraph, after the word "Explanation."

STRAHD

Focus Card: Archmage (3DA), Devil (tarot), king of spades

COVERING CARD

"He who dwells in Castle Ravenloft is a powerful man whose enemy is light and whose powers are beyond mortality. You will seek him in the castle, and though he might find you many times, you will find him only once."

This card determines a location within Castle Ravenloft where Strahd will make a stand against the PCs. The first time they enter this room, Strahd attacks without fail (unless he is helpless in his crypt or otherwise incapacitated). This is the only time the PCs can choose the terms of their encounter with Strahd.

Associated with this covering card is an omen warning of the PCs' confrontation with Strahd in that location. Each omen describes a bonus or penalty, which applies only the first time the PCs face Strahd in that place. When reading Madam Eva's description of the location, add the text associated with its omen.

If Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness, the vampire also appears in this room the first time the PCs enter it after defeating the shapeless spawn. The omen (see below) applies to that battle as well as to any earlier confrontation with Strahd here.

Gold Dragon or Ace: Tomb of Sergei von Zarovich (K85, page 125). "You will find him where the light lies dead, slain by his own darkness."

Explanation: "Grief haunts the lord of the castle, grief for the brother he slew. Seek his brother's tomb in the deepest recesses of the castle."

Red Dragon or 10: Tomb of Strahd (K86, page 126). "You will find him in the very heart of darkness, his home, his source. This place is his center and his life, the one place to which he must return."

Explanation: "You should seek the crypts in the deepest recesses of the castle."

Silver Dragon or 9: Chapel of Ravenloft (K15, page 95). "You will find him amid the ruins of a place of supplication."

Explanation: "A chapel stands on the castle grounds. There is a great darkness among its ruin."

Bronze Dragon or 8: Dayheart Landing (K60A, page 108). "You will find him atop a dizzying height that all loathe to climb."

Explanation: "The castle's highest tower, where the road winds ever upward, gives the lord a commanding view of his domain."

Blue Dragon or 7: Warlock Alchemy (K55, page 105). "You will find him when the three servants of Hell are slain, in the place of their gathering."

Explanation: "A spawn of Hell has come to the top of one of the castle towers, and she is served by an unholy trio."

Copper Dragon or 6: Treasury (K41, page 100). "You will find him among his riches, hidden away from sight."

Explanation: "I see a blazing fire protecting the place where the lord hides his wealth."

Green Dragon or 5: Study (K37, page 99). "You will find him in a place of tranquility, a harbor for the mighty and powerful."

Explanation: "The lord seeks knowledge, and finds it in a place of wisdom, warmth, and despair."

Brass Dragon or 4: Audience Hall (K25, page 97). "You will find him on his throne."

Explanation: "Castle Ravenloft was once the seat of a kingdom, and the lord of the castle still sits on its throne."

Black Dragon or 3: Office of Vengeance (K72, page 112). "You will find him in the place where the officers of an ancient king once sat, upholding him from below."

Explanation: "Look beneath the main floor of the castle, in a place of shadow and despair."

White Dragon or 2: Tomb of Barov and Ravenovia (K88, page 127). "You will find him in the place where his birth lies dead."

Explanation: "Seek the crypt of the lord's mother, deep beneath the castle."



THE ARCHIMAGE • Moon
Pay 1 gold to the stakes. C
of an ante card.



RED DRAGON • Evil
The opponent with the strongest flight
pays you 1 gold. Take a random card
from that player's hand.

Omen: The covering card falls into one of the six categories described below, whether it is of a given rank within a 3DA deck or one of a particular suit in a tarot or standard playing card deck. Each entry lists the 3DA cards associated with the stated rank. The omen sets the circumstances of the encounter with Strahd in the location specified by the covering card. Each omen category includes a statement from Madam Eva that hints at the effect of that omen on the player characters.

Rank 6 Card, Swords, or Spades: The PCs gain a +2 bonus on damage rolls (including those for spells) when they fight Strahd here. "There is a very good influence in this place. Your blows will strike true and hard."

The rank 6 cards in 3DA are gold 13, red 12, silver 12, bronze 11, blue 11, copper 10, green 10, brass 9, black 9, and white 8.

Rank 5 Card, Cups, or Hearts: The PCs gain a +1 bonus on saving throws when they fight Strahd here. "The powers of good will ward you in this place."

The rank 5 cards in 3DA are gold 11, red 10, silver 10, bronze 9, blue 9, copper 8, green 8, brass 7, black 7, and white 6.

Rank 4 Card (3DA only): The PCs gain a +1 bonus to AC when they fight Strahd here. "The powers of good will protect you from harm in this place."

The rank 4 cards in 3DA are gold 9, red 8, silver 8, bronze 7, blue 7, copper 7, green 6, brass 5, black 5, and white 4.

Rank 3 Card, Pentacles (Coins), or Diamonds: The PCs gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls when they fight Strahd here. "There is a good influence here that will guide your blows."

The rank 3 cards in 3DA are gold 6, red 5, silver 6, bronze 6, blue 4, copper 5, green 4, brass 4, black 3, and white 3.

Rank 2 Card (3DA only): The PCs take a -1 penalty on attack rolls when they fight Strahd here. "There is a bad influence here that will hinder your blows."

The rank 2 cards in 3DA are gold 4, red 3, silver 3, bronze 3, blue 2, copper 3, green 2, brass 2, black 2, and white 2.

Rank 1 Card, Staves (Wands), or Clubs: The PCs take a -2 penalty to AC when they fight Strahd here. "There is a very bad influence in this place. The powers of death will strip away your protections."

The rank 1 cards in 3DA are gold 2, red 2, silver 2, bronze 1, blue 1, copper 1, green 1, brass 1, black 1, and white 1.

CROSSING CARD

"Out of the darkness and chaos, this card finds its reason and foundation. It shows the purpose of all things—the key to life and death and else beyond."

This card provides no concrete information, but it explains more about Strahd's secondary goal. The exact card doesn't matter, only the goal that applies. If you are running

Expedition to Castle Ravenloft as a short adventure or a one-night session, Strahd has no secondary goal.

Brook No Rival: "The darkness desires a light; death seeks warmth from the living. Yet the darkness fears a greater dark, and it strikes out against those who would replace it."

Explanation: "The lord of the castle seeks a lady to reign beside him, but he fears rebellion from his subjects."

Descent Into Madness: "There is no reason, no pattern to this chaos. The darkness seeks light, desiring fulfillment or perhaps destruction."

Explanation: "The lord of the castle has sunk into madness, perhaps because of his love for a woman."

Strahd's Dynasty: "The darkness desires a light; death seeks warmth from the living. To win the light, the darkness seeks to be illuminated, to face the rays of the sun without fear."

Explanation: "The lord of the castle seeks to found a dynasty, ruled with a lady by his side."

Undead Legions: "The darkness seeks to consume all light, and death to devour all warmth from the living."

Explanation: "The lord of the castle seeks a lady, but he will consume her until death is all that remains."

Untamed Allies: "The darkness seeks allies among both the light and the dark."

Explanation: "The lord of the castle seeks a lady, and also seeks new allies from the woods."

No Secondary Goal: "The darkness desires a light; death seeks warmth from the living."

Explanation: "The lord of the castle seeks a lady to reign beside him."

SUNSWORD

Focus Card: Dragonslayer (3DA), Sun (tarot), jack of diamonds

COVERING CARD

"What you seek is a blade of light, a weapon for vengeance."

This card determines a location outside Castle Ravenloft where the PCs can find the *Sunsword*.

Gold Dragon or Ace: Tser Pool Encampment (page 52). "Seek it . . ." —Madam Eva shows visible surprise at this card, but collects herself quickly—"This card speaks of a place where wanderers rest."

Explanation: "Apparently the weapon is hidden right beneath my nose, in this very camp."

Red Dragon or 10: Cemetery (E8, page 28). "Seek it in the place of death, among the dead."

Explanation: "This is a card of the grave. The weapon is buried, entombed."

Silver Dragon or 9: Church (E7, page 27). "Seek it in the place of holiness, where humans reach to the sky."

Explanation: "This is a card of aspiration and religion. The weapon should be in the village church, perhaps in its highest place."

Bronze Dragon or 8: Varikov's Cave (H2, page 82). "Seek it where the river flies."

Explanation: "This is a card of water and air. The weapon should be near the falls."

Blue Dragon or 7: Lysaga Hill (page 63). "Seek it in the place of blasphemy, where humans plumb their darkest nature."

Explanation: "This is a card of debasement and debauchery. The weapon should be on the hill where the witches gather."

Copper Dragon or 6: Bildrath's Mercantile (E4, page 26). "Seek it in a place of commerce."

Explanation: "This card speaks of money changing hands. The weapon is in a shop, or in the possession of a merchant."

Green Dragon or 5: Nymph Hideaway (C3, page 68). "Seek it in the heart of the wilds, far from human hands."

Explanation: "This card speaks of the wildness of nature. The weapon is deep in the woods, perhaps guarded by a fey spirit."

Brass Dragon or 4: The Crossroads (page 52). "Seek it where paths cross and the damned lie buried."

Explanation: "This is a card of the crossroads."

Black Dragon or 3: Ivlis Marsh (page 50). "Seek it where the river flows into the land."

Explanation: "This card speaks of elemental forces mingling together. The weapon should be in the marsh downriver from here."

White Dragon or 2: Cemetery (E8, page 28). "Seek it where the wilds reach close to the town, where chaos threatens order."

Explanation: "This is a card of boundaries and limits. The weapon should be in the place where the village comes closest to the forest."

CROSSING CARD

"The sword's light sleeps."

This card determines a location within Castle Ravenloft where the PCs must bring the *Sunsword* to perform the bonding ritual that awakens its full powers (see the description of the legacy item on page 218 of the Appendix).

Gold Dragon or Ace: Tomb of Sergei von Zarovich (K85, page 125). "To wake it, bring it to where the light lies dead, slain by the darkness that shrouds the castle."

Explanation: "Seek the tomb of the fallen prince in the deepest recesses of the castle."

Red Dragon or 10: Tomb of Strahd (K86, page 126). "To wake it, you must bring it into the heart of darkness. Take it to the home of the castle's lord, his source, his life."



Explanation: "You should seek the crypts in the deepest recesses of the castle."

Silver Dragon or 9: Chapel of Ravenloft (K15, page 95). "To wake it, take it to the place of supplication."

Explanation: "A chapel stands on the castle grounds. There the light may yet awaken."

Bronze Dragon or 8: Dayheart Landing (K60A, page 108). "To wake it, bring it to the dizzying height that all loathe to climb."

Explanation: "The castle's highest tower, where the road winds ever upward, may yet pierce the clouds that shroud the sun."

Blue Dragon or 7: Warlock Alchemy (K55, page 105). "To wake it, bring it to the place where hellish magic is made."

Explanation: "A spawn of Hell has come to the castle, and the servants of this fiend work their magic at the top of one of the towers."

Copper Dragon or 6: Treasury (K41, page 100). "To wake it, bring the sword to join the other treasures of the castle."

Explanation: "I see a blazing fire protecting the place where the lord hides his wealth."

Green Dragon or 5: Study (K37, page 99). "To wake it, bring the sword to join the ancient lore of the castle."

Explanation: "The castle's library is a place of wisdom, warmth, and despair."

Brass Dragon or 4: Audience Hall (K25, page 97). "To wake it, you must place the sword on the throne of an ancient king."

Explanation: "Castle Ravenloft was once the seat of a kingdom."

Black Dragon or 3: Office of Vengeance (K72, page 112). "To wake it, bring the sword to the place where the swords of the king upheld his word."

Explanation: "Look beneath the main floor of the castle, in a place of shadow and despair."

White Dragon or 2: Tomb of Barov and Ravenovia (K88, page 127). "Darkness was born from light. Bring the sword to where that light lies dead."

Explanation: "Seek the crypt of the lord's mother, deep beneath the castle."

HOLY SYMBOL OF RAVENKIND

Focus Card: Priest (3DA), Priestess (tarot), queen of hearts

COVERING CARD

"This symbol is a powerful force for good and protection against the forces of darkness."

This card determines a location outside Castle Ravenloft where the PCs can find the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*.

Gold Dragon or Ace: Tser Pool Encampment (page 52). "Seek it in a place where wanderers rest."

Explanation: "This card's meaning is hidden from me."

Special: If Madam Eva's attitude is helpful (not merely friendly), she admits that the item is in her possession and gives it to the PCs.

Red Dragon or 10: Cemetery (E8, page 28). "Seek it in the place of death, among the dead."

Explanation: "This is a card of the grave. The symbol is buried, entombed."

Silver Dragon or 9: Church (E7, page 27). "Seek it in the place of holiness, where humans reach to the sky."

Explanation: "This is a card of aspiration and religion. As is fitting, the symbol is in the village church, perhaps in its highest place."

Bronze Dragon or 8: Varikov's Cave (H2, page 82). "Seek it where the river flies."

Explanation: "This is a card of water and air. The symbol should be near the falls."

Blue Dragon or 7: Lysaga Hill (page 63). "Seek it in the place of blasphemy, where humans plumb their darkest nature."

Explanation: "This is a card of debasement and debauchery. The symbol has been brought low, to the hill where the witches gather."

Copper Dragon or 6: Bildrath's Mercantile (E4, page 26). "Seek it in a place of commerce."

Explanation: "This card speaks of money changing hands. The symbol is in a shop, or in the possession of a merchant."

Green Dragon or 5: Nymph Hideaway (C3, page 68). "Seek it in the heart of the wilds, far from human hands."

Explanation: "This card speaks of the wildness of nature. The symbol is deep in the woods, perhaps guarded by a fey spirit."

Brass Dragon or 4: The Crossroads (page 52). "Seek it where paths cross and the damned lie buried."

Explanation: "This is a card of the crossroads."

Black Dragon or 3: Ivlis Marsh (page 50). "Seek it where the river flows into the land."

Explanation: "This card speaks of elemental forces mingling together. The symbol should be in the marsh downriver from here."

White Dragon or 2: Cemetery (E8, page 28). "Seek it where the wilds reach close to the town, where chaos threatens order."

Explanation: "This is a card of boundaries and limits. The symbol should be in the place where the village comes closest to the forest."

CROSSING CARD

"The holiness in this item waits for hands of holiness to touch it once more, but that is not enough to bring its power back to life."

This card determines a location within Castle Ravenloft where the PCs must bring the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* to perform the bonding ritual that awakens its full powers (see the description of the legacy item on page 217 of the Appendix).



Gold Dragon or Ace: Tomb of Sergei von Zarovich (K85, page 125). "You must bring the symbol to where virtue lies dead, slain by the unholy hand that rules the castle."

Explanation: "Seek the tomb of the fallen prince in the deepest recesses of the castle."

Red Dragon or 10: Tomb of Strahd (K86, page 126). "You must bring the symbol into the heart of darkness. Take it to the home of the castle's lord, his source, his life."

Explanation: "You should seek the crypts in the deepest recesses of the castle."

Silver Dragon or 9: Chapel of Ravenloft (K15, page 95). "You must bring the symbol home, to the last remaining shred of sacred ground in the defiled castle."

Explanation: "There is a chapel on the castle grounds. Perhaps it is not entirely desecrated."

Bronze Dragon or 8: Dayheart Landing (K60A, page 108). "You must bring the symbol to the dizzying height that all loathe to climb."

Explanation: "The castle's highest tower, where the road winds ever upward, reaches to the heavens."

Blue Dragon or 7: Warlock Alchemy (K55, page 105). "You must bring the symbol to the place of its antithesis, where hellish magic is made."

Explanation: "A spawn of Hell has come to the castle, and the servants of this fiend work their magic at the top of one of the towers."

Copper Dragon or 6: Treasury (K41, page 100). "You must bring the symbol to join the other treasures of the castle."

Explanation: "I see a blazing fire protecting the place where the lord hides his wealth."

Green Dragon or 5: Study (K37, page 99). "You must bring the symbol to join the ancient lore of the castle."

Explanation: "The castle's library is a place of wisdom, warmth, and despair."

Brass Dragon or 4: Audience Hall (K25, page 97). "You must place the symbol on the throne of an ancient king."

Explanation: "Castle Ravenloft was once the seat of a kingdom."

Black Dragon or 3: Office of Vengeance (K72, page 112). "You must bring the symbol to the place where the officers of the king upheld his word."

Explanation: "Look beneath the main floor of the castle, in a place of shadow and despair."

White Dragon or 2: Tomb of Barov and Ravenovia (K88, page 127). "You must reunite it with the one who carried its name."

Explanation: "The raven has long been a symbol of holiness in this land. Seek the crypt of Ravenovia."



TOME OF STRAHD

Focus Card: Druid (3DA), Emperor (tarot), jack of clubs

COVERING CARD

"The tome you seek holds knowledge of the ancient and knowledge of the land."

This card determines a location, either inside or outside Castle Ravenloft, where the PCs can find the *Tome of Strahd*. Do not include this focus card in the deck for a short adventure or a one-night session.

Gold Dragon or Ace: Tomb of Sergei von Zarovich (K85, page 125). "The volume is entombed along with the evidence of the crimes it records."

Explanation: "Seek the tomb of the fallen prince in the deepest recesses of the castle."

Red Dragon or 10: Tomb of Strahd (K86, page 126). "The tome is the heart of the lord, and he keeps it close to his heart."

Explanation: "You should seek the crypts in the deepest recesses of the castle."

Silver Dragon or 9: Chapel of Ravenloft (K15, page 95). "Though it is a mockery of all that is holy, the tome lies in a place of holiness."

Explanation: "There is a chapel on the castle grounds, polluted by the tome's presence."

Bronze Dragon or 8: Varikov's Cave (H2, page 82). "Seek it where the river flies."

Explanation: "This is a card of water and air. The tome should be near the falls."

Blue Dragon or 7: Lysaga Hill (page 63). "Seek it in the place of blasphemy, where humans plumb their darkest nature."

Explanation: "This is a card of debasement and debauchery. The tome has become a manual for witches."

Copper Dragon or 6: Treasury (K41, page 100). "The tome lies among the other treasures of the castle."

Explanation: "I see a blazing fire protecting the place where the lord hides his wealth."

Green Dragon or 5: Study (K37, page 99). "The tome sits amid the ancient lore of the castle."

Explanation: "The castle's library is a place of wisdom, warmth, and despair."

Brass Dragon or 4: Audience Hall (K25, page 97). "The tome lies on the throne of an ancient king."

Explanation: "Castle Ravenloft was once the seat of a kingdom."

Black Dragon or 3: Office of Vengeance (K72, page 112). "The tome lies in the place where the officers of the king upheld his word."

Explanation: "Look beneath the main floor of the castle, in a place of shadow and despair."

White Dragon or 2: Tomb of Barov and Ravenovia (K88, page 127). "The tome tells of Strahd's origins, and lies buried with those who gave him the life he now mocks."

Explanation: "Seek his parents' crypt, far beneath the castle."

CROSSING CARD

"If you find the tome and delve into its secrets, you will discover the source of the lord's strength. If you read it carefully, you may also discover how to rob him of that strength."

The *Tome of Strahd* describes the vampire's fane-signs, connections to three ancient sites of worship located in the lands around his castle. These connections grant him significant defensive abilities, as described in his statistics block.

Quest: The crossing card falls into one of the four categories described below, whether it is of a given rank within a 3DA deck or one of a particular suit in a tarot or standard playing card deck. Each entry lists the 3DA cards associated with the stated rank. The card describes what the PCs must do at each of the fanes to sever Strahd's connection to them and cut off their power. The description of each wilderness fane encounter area includes details on completing the required action. Each quest category includes a statement from Madam Eva that hints at the nature of what the characters must accomplish.

Rank 6 Card, Swords, or Spades: Hags' Blood. The PCs must kill each of the hags that guard the wilderness fanes.

Madam Eva chuckles. "Your quest is doomed. You must find the three defiled places described in the tome. At each fane, you must kill its dread guardian and place the guardian's body inside. At this you will never succeed."

After interpreting this card, Madam Eva makes a subtle sign to a Vistani outside the tent. (A character who makes a successful Sense Motive check against Eva's Bluff check of +12 notices this exchange.) When the PCs leave Madam Eva's tent, the Vistani outside attack them. Refer to tactical encounter G2, page 76.

The rank 6 cards in 3DA are gold 13, red 12, silver 12, bronze 11, blue 11, copper 10, green 10, brass 9, black 9, and white 8.

Rank 5 Card, Cups, or Hearts: Unholy Reunion. The PCs must recover three holy artifacts buried at the fanes and then battle a horrific monster that arises from them.

"You must find the three defiled places described in the tome. At each fane, you must unearth the relic it contains. When you have all three relics, you must destroy what you have created."

The rank 5 cards in 3DA are gold 11, red 10, silver 10, bronze 9, blue 9, copper 8, green 8, brass 7, black 7, and white 6.

Rank 4 or 3 Card, Pentacles (Coins), or Diamonds: Reconsecration. The PCs must bring an appropriate artifact from the castle to each fane and use it in a consecration ritual.

"You must first find the three holy relics hidden deep beneath the castle. Then bring the relics to the three defiled places described in the tome. You must consecrate each fane anew with the relic of its proper saint."

The rank 4 and 3 cards in 3DA are gold 9 and 6, red 8 and 5, silver 8 and 6, bronze 7 and 6, blue 7 and 4, copper 7 and 5, green 6 and 4, brass 5 and 4, black 5 and 3, and white 4 and 3.

Rank 2 or 1 Card, Staves (Wands), or Clubs: Vigil of Transference. A character must spend a night in prayer at each fane to steal its power from Strahd.

"Strip away his strength and make it your own. You must find the three defiled places described in the tome. At each one, keep a vigil through the night and make its power yours."

The rank 2 and 1 cards in 3DA are gold 4 and 2, red 3 and 2, silver 3 and 2, bronze 3 and 1, blue 2 and 1, copper 3 and 1, green 2 and 1, brass 2 and 1, black 2 and 1, and white 2 and 1.

ZOMBIES

Focus Card: Dracolich (3DA), Death (tarot), jack of spades

COVERING CARD

"Death walks the streets of Barovia. Death leads to death, all stemming from a first death."

This card provides no information, but it helps guide the PCs to the source of the necromantic infection. Read the following text, regardless of the card revealed, unless Strahd's secondary goal is Undead Legions:

"Put an end to the blasphemy of the death that refused to die, and the plague will cease."

If Strahd's secondary goal is Undead Legions, read this text instead:

"You must put an end to the blasphemy of the death that refused to die, but that will not stop the plague. The lord of the castle is the source of all."

CROSSING CARD

"To end the plague of death, you must end its source."

This card also determines nothing, but it further guides the PCs to the source of the necromantic infection. Read the following text, regardless of the card revealed, unless Strahd's secondary goal is Undead Legions:

"You must visit the church in the village, which is desecrated by its presence."

If Strahd's secondary goal is Undead Legions, read this text instead:

"The village church is desecrated by the first blasphemy. The castle is ruled by the greater one."



H. Tser Falls

Draped in a cloak of mist, a beautiful waterfall plummets over a high cliff carved from the shoulders of the mountains. Far above, a bridge crosses over the river at what seems to be a dizzying height.

Formed primarily of runoff from melting snow high in the mountains, the Ivlis River runs clear and cold down into the valley of Barovia, forming a spectacular waterfall called Tser Falls. For all the beauty of the cascade, its name commemorates a terrible story: A century ago, a Barovian villager named Tsertsimir Bobrishchev leaped over the falls to his death, driven by grief at the death of his lover. His body was found in the pool just downstream, and his nickname is now the name by which both the falls and the pool are known.

A cave behind the waterfall is the lair of Varikov the Trapper, a dwarf ranger who is one of Strahd's human spies in Barovia. Teetering on the brink of madness, Varikov has given up hunting wolves (in fact, his animal companion is a wolf) and started hunting, skinning, and stuffing human prey. The results of this grisly work are displayed in his cavern lair.

Tactical Encounters: H1: Tser Falls Approach, on page 80, and H2: Varikov's Cave, on page 82.

Development: Jeref Maurgen is stuffed and mounted in Varikov's cave, his wedding ring still on his finger. If they return the ring to Helene Maurgen in the city they departed from, they earn her gratitude. She does not offer a monetary reward, but she has some good connections in the city and can introduce them to influential people. Helene's glowing introduction grants the PCs a +5 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks.

WHY ARE THE PCS HERE?

The PCs might come to Tser Falls for one of the following reasons:

- The Fortunes of Ravenloft reading determined that the *Sunsword*, the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, or the *Tome of Strahd* is located "where the river flies."
- The PCs are searching for Jeref Maurgen because of the hook that drew them into the adventure.
- The PCs encountered Varikov in the wilderness and tracked or followed him back to his lair.



Varikov wants to add you to his collection

I. Lysaga Hill

The forest parts around a large hill, a spur of bare rock jutting up from the earth. Near the hill's highest point, you can see a blackened tower of crumbling stone, the ruins of some ancient site. Storm clouds churn in the sky overhead.

The Mountain Fane is the most ancient site of the three wilderness fanes, and its history is twisted. The site had profane significance long before the arrival of Strahd, when an evil cult held vile sacrifices on moonless nights. Saint Ecaterina believed that she had sanctified the hill when she built her monastery here, and for some time after the destruction of the tower and the saint's death, the people of Barovia revered Lysaga Hill as a holy site. As more and more pilgrims met grisly ends on the hill, however, the villagers' reverence waned. Now, the hill once again hosts gatherings of witches and ghosts, and the fane feeds the evil power of Strahd.

The witches of Lysaga Hill are men and women from the village and scattered farmsteads located near the valley. They have modest magical abilities thanks to their induction into the cult of the demon Chernovog under the leadership of the green hag, Baba Zelenna. They gather at the hill monthly, when the moon is new, but Baba Zelenna herself is never far from the Mountain Fane.

If Strahd's secondary goal is Brook No Rival, then Baba Zelenna has grand plans for the group's next new-moon gathering. She plans to summon Chernovog himself and persuade the demon prince to kill Strahd (as well as the other two hags) so that she can rule the valley uncontested. If the PCs do not interfere, Barovia could be in for some sweeping changes.

When the PCs reach the burned-out tower at the crest of the hill, refer to tactical encounter I1—and encounter I2 when they delve into its depths. If they come to the hill on the night of the new moon, use encounter I3.

Tactical Encounters: I1: The Ecaterine Husk, on page 84, I2: The Mountain Fane, on page 86; and I3: The Summoning, on page 88.

Treasure: When Strahd's connection to the Mountain Fane is severed (see Development, below), a small chunk at the top the runestone begins to glow scarlet and blue. A character can break this chunk off with a DC 12 Strength check. When this happens, flakes of stone fall off, leaving a spherical shape—a scarlet and blue *ioun stone* that grants a +2 enhancement bonus to Intelligence.

Development: Once they deal with Baba Zelenna, the PCs can try to sever Strahd's connection to the Mountain Fane. The means to accomplish this were determined in Madam Eva's reading of their fortunes (see The Fortunes of Ravenloft on page 56).

Hags' Blood: The PCs must kill Baba Zelenna and place her corpse on the runestone in the fane. Read the following text when they accomplish this:

Only by its sudden absence do you realize that there had been a hum of power in this place, too low to register in your ears. It has utterly ceased, and the fane is now as dead as its guardian.

Unholy Reunion: Beneath the runestone, the PCs must dig for about a minute to uncover a small reliquary box, about the size of a spellbook. Its sides and lid are carved with images of devas, planetars, and solars—but the eyes of every angel are red with a sticky liquid suspiciously like blood. Inside the box is a folded piece of parchment containing powdered bones of Saint Ecaterina, an artifact now bereft of any holy power. If the PCs already have the items from the other two fanes—the tooth of Saint Bogdan from the Swamp Fane and the hair of Saint Markovia from the Forest Fane—the three objects join together and animate into a creature called a blighted relic (see statistics block on page 51). The characters must destroy the blighted relic in order to remove the fane-signs from Strahd.

Reconsecration: The PCs must bring Saint Ecaterina's burial shroud from the crypts under Castle Ravenloft (area K88), and use that object as an additional focus for a *consecrate* spell.

Vigil of Transference: One character must keep awake and in constant prayer in the fane for an entire night. If the PC falls asleep or takes any standard action, the vigil fails. The other PCs can help keep their friend awake (making success automatic), but otherwise the PC on the vigil must succeed on a Constitution check every hour of the night. The DC for this check begins at 8, but increases by 2 every hour. Worse still, Strahd senses this threat to his power and sends his agents to attack the PCs. Around midnight, roll normally for Strahd's nighttime spies, but these spies attack immediately and without retreat.

If the PC successfully completes the vigil, she gains the Mountain Fane-sign, and Strahd loses it. The PC who performed the vigil is fatigued until she rests for 8 hours.

Mountain Sign (Su) As a result of a connection to the mountains of Barovia, the character is surrounded by a field of force armor that grants him a +6 armor bonus, exactly as if he were wearing bracers of armor +6. This bonus lasts as long as the character remains in Barovia.

WHY ARE THE PCS HERE?

The PCs might come to Lysaga Hill for one of the following reasons:

- The letter they received at the start of the adventure mentioned the witches of the hill (because Strahd's secondary goal is to squelch Baba Zelenna's nascent rebellion).
- The Fortunes of Ravenloft reading determined that the *Sunsword*, the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, or the *Tome of Strahd* lies "in the place of blasphemy, where humans plumb their darkest nature."
- They are searching for the Mountain Fane in order to strip the swamp sign from Strahd.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTERS

The following pages provide detailed information for combat encounters in the lands of Barovia. A creature's position on a tactical map is indicated by a circled letter symbol, which is associated with the creature in the encounter's descriptive text. Information about the features of a room or an area is provided in a sidebar format along with the tactical map for the encounter.

ELF AMBUSH

Encounter Level 7 or 8

SETUP: Use this encounter at night, early in the PCs' ventures into the forest. The dense undergrowth and tight tree growth encourages PCs to travel on clearer paths, but you should ask the PCs before placing or drawing the map whether they want to walk on clearer ground or forge their way through the undergrowth. Then ask the players to arrange their characters in the northern part of the map. Read the text provided below, then ask them to make Spot checks to see if they notice the werewolves hiding (DC 20 for the one in elf form, DC 27 for the two in wolf form). Place any werewolves the PCs see on the map.

There are two werewolves in wolf form (**W**) hiding in the heavy undergrowth, and one in elf form (**E**) behind a massive tree in the clear area.

Read this text to begin the encounter:

The forest thins somewhat as you make your way deeper among the trees. Dim gray light spills through the trees, and the ground is choked with undergrowth. A wide swath of clearer ground forms something like a path or trail, though there are no clear marks of anything passing this way.

WEREWOLF HUNTER, ELF FORM

CR 4

HP 29
Elf werewolf ranger 2
CE Medium humanoid (elf, shapechanger)
Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +9, Spot +9
Languages Elven, Common

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12

HD 4

Immune sleep

Fort +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +2 (+4 against enchantments)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk greatsword +5 (2d6+1)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +6/+6 (1d8+1) with Rapid Shot or

Ranged mwk composite longbow +8 (1d8+1)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +4

Atk Options favored enemy humans +2

Special Actions alternate form

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of greater magic fang* (+2), *potion of haste*

Abilities Str 13, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ wolf empathy, wild empathy

Feats Rapid Shot^B, Track^B, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Hide +10, Jump +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Search +2, Spot +9, Survival +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str bonus), masterwork greatsword

Alternate Form (Su) A werewolf hunter can assume a bipedal hybrid form or the form of a wolf.

WEREWOLF HUNTERS, WOLF FORM (2)

CR 4

HP 29 each

Elf werewolf ranger 2

CE Medium humanoid (elf, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Elven, Common

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14

HD 4; **DR** 10/silver

Immune sleep

Fort +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +2 (+4 against enchantments)

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +6 (1d6+2 plus trip [+2], curse of lycanthropy)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Atk Options favored enemy humans +2

Special Actions alternate form

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of greater magic fang* (+2), *potion of haste*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ wolf empathy, wild empathy

Feats Rapid Shot^B, Track^B, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Hide +12, Jump +15, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Search +2, Spot +9, Survival +7

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Fort DC 15 or contract lycanthropy.

Trip (Ex) A werewolf in animal form that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+2 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the werewolf.

Alternate Form (Su) A werewolf hunter can assume a bipedal hybrid form or the form of an elf.

AMBUSH!

If the PCs show signs of having spotted any of the werewolves, the one in elf form steps out from behind the tree, holding his bow at the ready.

"What evil do you bring to this forest?" he calls out, first in Elven, then in accented Common.

He interacts with the PCs in this manner, playing the part of an innocent, if defensive, woodland elf. While this conversation goes on, his two allies (in wolf form) move around in the heavy undergrowth to the points on either side of the trail that are closest to the PCs, moving at half speed and trying to remain unnoticed (Hide +17).

The werewolf in elf form might make one or more of the following statements in response to the PCs' questions or remarks. His responses are essentially truthful, if not literally honest. His general attitude seems to be defensive rather than outright hostile. However, a Sense Motive check (against his untrained Bluff check result of -1) can reveal that something is amiss. In particular, his eyes constantly flick toward the undergrowth near the PCs.

"My people call this woods our home. It is not dangerous."

"Of course the ignorant villagers fear the woods! What do they know of elves and our ways?"

WRAITH**CR 5**

HP 32

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +12, Spot +12**Aura** unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)**Languages** Common, Infernal**AC** 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12**HD** 5**Immune** nonmagical attacks, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Resist** turn resistance +2**Fort** +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6**Weakness** daylight powerlessness**Speed** fly 60 ft. (good) (12 squares)**Melee** incorporeal touch +5 (1d4 plus Constitution drain)**Atk Options** Constitution drain (Fort DC 14, 1d6 Con)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** —**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes**Abilities** Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15**SQ** create spawn**Feats** Alertness^B, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative^B**Skills** Diplomacy +6, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +12**Incorporeal** Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See *DMG* 295 for more information.**Unnatural Aura (Su)** Animals can sense the presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that, and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.**Constitution Drain (Su)** Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 14 Fort save or take 1d6 points of Constitution drain. The wraith gains 5 temporary hit points if this attack succeeds.

"You are the first outsiders we have seen in these woods in many years. We know nothing of any others."

When the werewolves in wolf form get close enough to the PCs, they spring out from the undergrowth and attack—catching them unawares and getting a surprise round's worth of action. At the same time, the one in elf form looses an arrow.

Reusing this Encounter

You can reuse this map and these werewolf statistics blocks for later encounters in the Svalich Woods. You should draw or place the map at a different orientation on the table, and have the PCs come from a different direction. The werewolf in elf form makes no attempt to talk to the PCs, but all three circle around the PCs to surround them before attacking.

Werewolf Tactics

The werewolves do not change form during this encounter. They want the PCs to think that they are up against elves with powerful wolf allies.

The werewolves in wolf form try to make good use of their surprise round, charging the nearest PCs and attempting to trip them. In later rounds, they gang up on a single PC (preferring a human target because of their favored enemy bonus), flanking that character. If their chosen target proves too difficult to hit, they switch targets.

The werewolf in elf form tries to hang back and use his bow, using Rapid Shot every round he can.

STRAHD'S ASSISTANCE

If Strahd's secondary goal is Untamed Allies, then he eventually sends aid to the werewolves to help them fight the PCs. If this is the PCs' second or later foray into the forest, then one of Strahd's servants accompanies the werewolves in this encounter. The wraith (WR) begins hidden inside a massive tree, where it is impossible to detect.

The wraith increases the EL from 7 to 8.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Light Undergrowth: Light green squares along the edge of the path are light undergrowth. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Heavy Undergrowth: The deeper green color on the map indicates heavy undergrowth. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter these squares, and running and charging are impossible. They provide concealment with a 30% miss chance and grant a +5 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 5.

Trees: A creature standing in the same square as a tree gains a +2 bonus to AC and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves. Climb DC 15.

Massive Trees: A massive tree (one of the dark blotches inside the heavy undergrowth, or the one on the path) takes up an entire square and provides cover to anyone behind it. Climb DC 15.

In a small hollow within the massive tree that the werewolf in elf form was hiding behind, the other werewolves stowed their gear. A DC 15 Search check is sufficient to uncover two additional sets of equipment that are the same as the combat gear and possessions of the werewolf in elf form.



WEREWOLF ATTACK

Encounter Level 8 or 9

SETUP: Use this encounter as the PCs explore deeper into the forest, whether they are hunting werewolves or searching for the Forest Fane. Before placing any monsters on the map, allow the PCs to place themselves anywhere on the map they would like. Then ask for Spot checks to detect the werewolves (DC 22) and the vampire spawn, if appropriate (DC 20), and place any monsters they see on the map.

There are two werewolves in hybrid form (H) and two in wolf form (W) hiding among the massive trees.

Read this text to begin the encounter:

The howls of wolves have grown more frequent—and louder—as you make your way farther into the forest. Several patches of tangled growth mark the ground, but wide expanses of bare ground separate them. A clear paw print in a patch of mud signals the likely presence of wolves nearby.

WEREWOLF HUNTERS, HYBRID FORM (2) CR 4

HP 29 each

Elf werewolf ranger 2

CE Medium humanoid (elf, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Elven, Common

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14

HD 4; **DR** 10/silver

Immune sleep

Fort +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +2 (+4 against enchantments)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk greatsword +6 (2d6+3) and bite +1 (1d6+1 plus curse of lycanthropy); or

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d4+2) and bite +1 (1d6+1 plus curse of lycanthropy)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +8/+8 (1d8+2) with Rapid Shot or

Ranged mwk composite longbow +6 (1d8+2)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Atk Options favored enemy humans +2

Special Actions alternate form

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of greater magic fang* (+2), *potion of haste*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ wolf empathy, wild empathy

Feats Rapid Shot^B, Track^B, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Hide +12, Jump +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Search +2, Spot +9, Survival +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str bonus), masterwork greatsword

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Fort DC 15 or contract lycanthropy.

Alternate Form (Su) A werewolf hunter can assume a bipedal hybrid form or the form of a wolf.

WEREWOLF HUNTER (WOLF FORM)

CR 4

HP 29 each

Elf werewolf ranger 2

CE Medium humanoid (elf, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Elven, Common

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14

HD 4; **DR** 10/silver

Immune sleep

Fort +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +2 (+4 against enchantments)

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +6 (1d6+2 plus trip [+2], curse of lycanthropy)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Atk Options favored enemy humans +2

Special Actions alternate form

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of greater magic fang* (+2), *potion of haste*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ wolf empathy, wild empathy

Feats Rapid Shot^B, Track^B, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Hide +12, Jump +15, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Search +2, Spot +9, Survival +7

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Fort DC 15 or contract lycanthropy.

Trip (Ex) A werewolf in animal form that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+2 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the werewolf.

Alternate Form (Su) A werewolf hunter can assume a bipedal hybrid form or the form of an elf.

STRAHD'S ASSISTANCE

If Strahd's secondary goal is Untamed Allies, then he eventually sends aid to the werewolves to help them fight the PCs. If this is the PCs' second or later foray into the forest, then some of Strahd's servants accompany the werewolves in this encounter. Two vampire spawn (V) travel with the werewolves.

The vampire spawn increase the EL of this encounter from 8 to 9.

Werewolf Tactics

The werewolves do not change form during this encounter. They wait in hiding until the PCs draw near or begin attacking, then leap out and attack.

The werewolves in wolf form charge the nearest PC and attempt to trip that character. They gang up on a single PC (preferring a human target because of their favored enemy bonus), flanking that character. If their chosen target proves too difficult to hit, they switch targets.

The werewolves in hybrid form begin by hanging back out of melee and using their bows, using Rapid Shot every round they can. They try to take out enemy spellcasters, rather than concentrating their attacks on the same foes that

VAMPIRE SPAWN (2)

CR 4

HP 29 each

CE Medium undead

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

HD 4; Fast healing 2; DR 5/silver

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist cold 10, electricity 10; turn resistance +2

Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +5

Weaknesses see Vampire Characteristics, page 8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee slam +5 (1d6+4 plus energy drain 1 negative level)

Base Atk +2; Grp +5

Atk Options

Special Actions blood drain (1d4 Con per round), domination (30 ft., Will DC 14), gaseous form

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14

Feats Alertness, Improved Energy Drain*, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

*Feat described in *Libris Mortis*. Its effects are described in the Energy Drain entry below.

Skills Bluff +6, Climb +8, Diplomacy +4, Hide +10, Jump +8, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11

Fast Healing (Ex) If reduced to 0 hp in combat, a vampire spawn automatically and immediately assumes gaseous form and makes its way toward the catacombs (K84), which it must reach within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. Any additional damage it takes in gaseous form has no effect.

Spider Climb (Ex) A vampire spawn can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a vampire spawn's slam attack gain two negative levels, losing 10 hit points and taking a –2 penalty on skill checks, ability checks, saving throws, and effective level. At the same time, the spawn gains 10 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on skill checks, ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for 1 hour. (This bonus derives from its Improved Energy Drain feat, which is described in *Libris Mortis*.) If the victim is a spellcaster, she loses access to two spells as if she had cast her two highest-level, currently available spells. See DMG 293 for more information about energy drain and negative levels.

Blood Drain (Ex) A vampire spawn can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the spawn gains 5 temporary hit points that last for up to 1 hour. This ability does not affect elementals, plants, or creatures that lack a Constitution score.

Domination (Su) A vampire spawn can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack with a range of 30 feet, except that the spawn must use a standard action and choose a single target—those merely looking at him are unaffected. The vampire's target must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or fall instantly under the spawn's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th).

Gaseous Form (Su) As a standard action, a vampire spawn can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (CL 5th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability. Its Armor Class in gaseous form is 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10.

their companions are ganging up on. They readily drop their bows and draw their greatswords by the third or fourth round of combat, or sooner if PCs move up to attack them in melee.

Reusing this Encounter

You can reuse this map and these werewolf statistics blocks for later encounters in the Svalich Woods. You should draw or place the map at a different orientation on the table, and have the PCs come from a different direction. You can place the werewolves (and vampire spawn) at a different starting position on the map to further mix things up.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Light Undergrowth: Lighter green squares in the northeast corner and cutting through the center of the map are light undergrowth. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Heavy Undergrowth: The northwest corner and the southern part of the map contain heavy undergrowth. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter these squares, and running and charging are impossible. They provide concealment with a 30% miss chance, and grant a +5 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 5.

Trees: A creature standing in the same square as a tree gains a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves. Trunk has AC 4, hardness 5, and 150 hp. Climb DC 15.

Massive Trees: A massive tree (one of the dark blotches in various places on the map) takes up an entire square and provides cover to anyone behind it. Trunk has AC 3, hardness 5, and 600 hp. Climb DC 15.

The werewolf in wolf form stowed his gear among the roots of one of these trees. A DC 15 Search check is sufficient to uncover one additional set of equipment that is the same as the combat gear and possessions of the werewolves in hybrid form.



NYMPH HIDEAWAY

Encounter Level 9

SETUP: Read the text below to the players before revealing the map. They spot the rock outcrop from roughly 300 feet away, and must decide to approach closer before the encounter can begin. When they do decide to approach, have them place themselves anywhere along the edge of the map outside of the cave, depending on how they want to approach the cave. (They might walk straight up to it and approach from the west, or steer wide of the cave and approach from north or south.)

If the PCs use stealth in their approach, roll Spot and Listen checks (both +9) for the nearest werewolf. If it detects their approach, have everyone roll initiative and play through a full round (not a surprise round). On the nearest werewolf's first turn, it growls loudly to alert the others, so they can act in the next round.

If the PCs make no attempt at stealth, they and the werewolves detect each other at the same time. Roll initiative for all three werewolves and begin combat.

There are three werewolves in hybrid form (H) around the entrance to the cave. Valicia (V), the corrupted nymph who leads the werewolves, begins the encounter in the back cave.

Before the PCs reach the cave, read this text:

A huge rock outcrop juts up from the forest floor ahead of you. From where you are, you can see a dark opening in the side of the rock.

Werewolf Tactics

The two werewolves outside the cave initially move to intercept the PCs, while growling a warning to the third werewolf. As soon as one of the werewolves outside falls, the other withdraws into the cave and attempts to hide near the pool to drink its potion of cure moderate wounds before rejoining the fight.

The werewolf that begins in the cave entrance retreats into the cave and alerts Valicia to the presence of intruders; it then takes up a position behind the spike stones in the northern cave and drinks its potion of haste.

In the cave, the werewolves try to focus their attacks on stunned or blinded PCs. They prefer to use their bows from behind the spike stones. As soon as a PC closes to melee with Valicia, the werewolves shift to melee as well and focus their attacks on that PC. If Valicia uses *dimension door* to escape the fight, the werewolves flee as well.

VALICIA

Valicia is a nymph, a fey creature with ancient and powerful ties to the land of Barovia. As Strahd's corruption has spread through the land, however, it has tainted all the creatures of nature, and Valicia is no exception. She has acquired the tainted raver template (presented in *Heroes of Horror*), reflecting the madness that has consumed her.

WEREWOLF HUNTERS, HYBRID FORM (3) CR 4

HP 29 each

Elf werewolf ranger 2

CE Medium humanoid (elf, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Elven, Common

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14

HD 4; **DR** 10/silver

Immune sleep

Fort +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +2 (+4 against enchantments)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk greatsword +6 (2d6+3) and bite +1 (1d6+1 and curse of lycanthropy); or

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d4+2) and bite +1 (1d6+1 and curse of lycanthropy)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +8/+8 (1d8+2) with Rapid Shot or

Ranged mwk composite longbow +6 (1d8+2)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Atk Options favored enemy humans +2

Special Actions alternate form

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of greater magic fang* (+2), *potion of haste*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ wolf empathy, wild empathy

Feats Rapid Shot^B, Track^B, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Hide +12, Jump +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Search +2, Spot +9, Survival +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str bonus), masterwork greatsword

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Fort DC 15 or contract lycanthropy.

Alternate Form (Su) A werewolf hunter can assume a bipedal hybrid form or the form of a wolf.

Valicia appears as a beautiful fey with wild auburn hair and equally wild green eyes. Her body is draped in a brilliant blue mantle embroidered with symbols of good fortune.

Valicia's Tactics

As soon as she is alerted, Valicia casts *shillelagh* on her quarterstaff. She positions herself at the location shown on the map, where she has some cover but can still see—and be seen by—any PC who enters the cave. She targets each PC who enters the cave with her stunning glance. If she cannot see a PC who isn't stunned, she casts *produce flame* and begins hurling flames at stunned PCs.

If forced into melee, Valicia uses any remaining *produce flame* attacks (she can make seven in total), then swings her *shillelagh* in a fury. She uses *cure light wounds* to supplement her fast healing. If she starts her turn with less than 10 hit points, she uses *dimension door* to get 680 feet away from the cave, then flees on foot into the depths of the woods. She does not return to bother the PCs for the rest of the adventure, but she might reappear if you conduct future adventures around Barovia and Castle Ravenloft.

VALICIA

HP 39

Female tainted raver nymph

CE Medium fey

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, Listen +9, Spot +9**Aura** blinding beauty (30 ft., Fort DC 20 or blinded)**Languages** Sylvan, Common

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12; Dodge

HD 6; fast healing 3; **DR** 10/cold iron**Immune** confusion**Fort** +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +18**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 20 ft.**Melee** shillelagh +6 (2d6+4)**Ranged** produce flame +7 touch (1d6+5)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +5**Special Actions** stunning glance (30 ft., Fort DC 20, stun 2d4 rounds)**Combat Gear** mantle of second chances (1/day, reroll one roll and use new result)**Druid Spells Prepared** (CL 7th):

1st—cure light wounds (2), produce flame, shillelagh

0—detect magic, flare (DC 10), guidance (2), light, resistance

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th):

1/day—dimension door

CR 7

Abilities Str 14, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 25**Taint** corruption 13 (moderate), depravity 13 (moderate)**SQ** perpetual rage, madness, unearthly grace, wild empathy**Feats** Combat Casting, Dodge, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Concentration +12 (+16 casting defensively), Diplomacy

+9, Escape Artist +12, Handle Animal +16, Heal +9, Hide

+12, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Ride +5, Sense Motive

+9, Spot +9, Swim +10, Use Rope +3 (+5 with bindings)

Possessions mantle of second chances (DMG II page 269; 6,000 gp value)**Blinding Beauty (Su)** Humanoids within 30 feet who look directly at Valicia must succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save or be blinded permanently as though by the blindness spell. Valicia can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.**Stunning Glance (Su)** As a standard action, Valicia can stun a creature within 30 feet with a look. The target creature must succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save or be stunned for 2d4 rounds.**Perpetual Rage (Ex)** This ability is detailed in the statistics block for the Drowned Lady, which is part of encounter D2 on pages 72 and 73.**Madness (Ex)** This ability is detailed in the statistics block for the Drowned Lady, which is part of encounter D2 on pages 72 and 73.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Dense Rubble: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Light Undergrowth: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the bushes provide concealment. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Spike Stones: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and a creature entering one takes 1d8 points of damage. In addition, the creature must succeed on a DC 16 Reflex save or have its speed reduced to half normal for 24 hours because of injuries to its feet and legs. A cure spell restores the creature's speed in addition to lost hit points. A DC 16 Heal check and 10 minutes also removes the penalty.

Tainted Column: A perfectly smooth column of translucent green rock stretches from floor to ceiling in the middle of the cave entrance. On close examination (Search DC 18), a faint green light is visible, pulsating slightly, in its depths. The column contains a presentient evil intellect that responds with psychic force to anyone touching the column—or to bloodshed nearby.

A character who touches the column must succeed on a DC 20 Will save) or be stunned for 1 round. A character who takes damage from any source while adjacent to the column must make the same saving throw.

Slopes: Characters moving uphill to an adjacent square of higher elevation must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of these steep slopes. Characters running or charging downhill (moving to an adjacent square of lower elevation) must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check upon entering the first steep slope square. Characters who fail this check stumble and end their movement 1d2 × 5 feet later. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone in the square and end their movement.

Characters gain a +1 bonus on melee attacks against foes downhill from them.

A steep slope increases the DC of Tumble checks by 2.

Nymph's Pool: This pool is about 2 feet deep. Characters can wade through this pool at half speed, so entering a pool square costs 2 squares of movement. The water is extremely cold, so a character in the water takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute.

BLOODMOTES

Encounter Level 8

SETUP: Have the players place their characters along the western edge of the map to reflect their marching order through the swamp, then read them the text below. The bloodmote cloud (B) is immediately visible, but the PCs must beat the shambler's (S) Hide check result (it takes 10, for a result of 25) with their Spot checks to notice it lurking in the water nearby.

BLOODMOTE CLOUD

Read this text to begin the encounter:

As you make your way toward the ruins, still a hundred and fifty yards ahead of you, a large stretch of water blocks your path. It seems pretty deep, but a shallow and narrow stretch seems to offer the best way through to more dry ground. A cloud of buzzing insects hovers in the way, however, droning ominously in a strangely deep pitch. An acrid smell of blood washes over you.

IMPROVED GRAB AND GRAPPLING

If a shambling mound hits a single character with both slam attacks in a single round, it can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. Use this sequence of events when the shambler hits twice:

1. The shambler deals normal damage with both slam attacks.
2. The shambler and the target make opposed grapple checks. The shambler has a +15 grapple check modifier. If the PC wins, the shambler failed to grab hold and combat proceeds as normal. If the shambler wins, continue with step 3, below.
3. The shambler deals an extra 2d6+7 points of damage to the character, and the creature and the PC are now grappling. Both the shambler and the character do not threaten any squares. The PC loses his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) against creatures other than the shambler, and moves into the shambler's space.

The shambler deals 4d6+12 points of damage with each successful grapple check on subsequent turns (2d6+7 from its constrict ability, plus 2d6+5 for its basic slam damage). It usually constricts every round until its victim drops unconscious. It might move in an attempt to escape with its prey, dragging the character into a shallow bog (a successful grapple check allows it to move half its speed as a standard action). If the grappling character is proving too much to handle, or if another character is dealing so much damage that it provides a more tempting target, it tries to escape the grapple in order to attack another target (a successful grapple check allows it to leave the grapple, and the grappling character can voluntarily fail his grapple check if he wishes to allow it to leave the grapple).

BLOODMOTE CLOUD

CR 6

HP 65

NE Fine undead (swarm)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura distraction (Fort DC 15 or nauseated 1 rd.)

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

HD 10

Immune weapon damage, flanking, trip, grapple, bull rush, targeted effects, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

Weaknesses +50% damage from area effects, turned as 5 HD undead, wind vulnerability

Speed fly 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee swarm always hits (1d4 plus blood drain 1d2 Con damage)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +5; **Grp** —

Abilities Str 4, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

Swarm Attack (Ex) A bloodmote cloud deals automatic damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move. This attack is not subject to a miss chance for concealment.

Blood Drain (Ex) In addition to damage, a bloodmote cloud's swarm attack drains blood from living creatures that take damage, dealing 1d2 points of Constitution damage. This ability does not affect elementals, plants, or creatures that lack a Constitution score.

Distraction (Ex) Any living creature vulnerable to a bloodmote cloud's damage that begins its turn with the swarm in its space is nauseated for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills that require patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check.

Wind Vulnerability (Ex) For the purpose of determining the effects of wind on a bloodmote cloud, treat the swarm as a creature of the same size as its constituent creatures (see *Winds*, DMG 95). This means that a bloodmote cloud (Fine creatures) can be blown away by a severe wind, such as that created by a *gust of wind* spell. Wind effects deal 1d6 points of nonlethal damage to a swarm per spell level (or Hit Dice of the originating creature, in the case of effects such as an air elemental's whirlwind). A swarm rendered unconscious by means of nonlethal damage becomes disorganized and dispersed, and does not re-form until its hit points exceed its nonlethal damage.

SHAMBLING MOUND**CR 6**

HP 60

CN Large plant

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +8, Spot +8**AC** 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20**HD** 8**Immune** electricity (grants 1d4 temporary Con), mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, polymorph, stunning, critical hits**Resist** fire 10**Fort** +9, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 20 ft.**Melee** 2 slams each +11 (2d6+5)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +15**Atk Options** improved grab, constrict 2d6+7, Power Attack**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9**Feats** Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)**Skills** Hide +3 (+15 in swamp or forest), Listen +8, Move Silently +8**Electricity Immunity** Not only does a shamblender take no damage from electricity attacks, any such attack temporarily grants it 1d4 points of Constitution.**Improved Grab (Ex)** If a shambling mound hits with both slam attacks in a round, it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.**Constrict (Ex)** A shambling mound deals 2d6+7 points of damage with a successful grapple check.**Bloodmote Cloud Tactics**

The bloodmote cloud starts moving toward the PCs immediately, attempting to engulf them in its space. The bloodmote cloud makes no effort to include the shambling mound in its area, since it cannot draw blood from the plant creature.

SHAMBLING MOUND

If the PCs notice the shambling mound nearby, read this text:

A dark, hulking shape lurches up out of a pool. Water streams off the leafy mass and tangled vines that form its body as it shamblers forward on stumpy legs. Long vines snake out from it, grasping toward you.

Shambling Mound Tactics

At the same time that the bloodmote cloud moves, the shambling mound swims toward them, remaining underwater and trying to keep out of sight (Hide +15, Move Silently +6, taking the bog penalty into account). The shambling mound focuses attacks on PCs within the swarm even if it has to enter the swarm's area itself. It is unaffected by the swarm's blood drain, but subject to the damage and distraction effects of the swarm, and for that reason doesn't enter the swarm unless there is no other way for it to attack PCs who are in the swarm.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Light Undergrowth: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the bushes provide concealment. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Heavy Undergrowth: It costs 4 squares of movement to enter these squares, and running and charging are impossible. They provide concealment with a 30% miss chance, and grant a +5 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 5.

Shallow Bog: The mud and water in these areas is about 1 foot deep. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Deep Bog: There is about 4 feet of standing water in these squares. It costs 4 squares of movement for Medium characters to enter deep bog squares, or characters can swim if they wish. Small creatures must swim. Tumbling is impossible, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

The water provides cover for Medium or larger creatures, while Small or smaller creatures gain improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex). Medium or larger creatures can crouch as a move action to gain this improved cover. Creatures with improved cover take a -10 penalty on attacks against creatures that aren't underwater.



THE SWAMP FANE

Encounter Level 9

SETUP: Place the PCs at the western edge of the map in their marching order, and read the text below aloud. This map and encounter assume that the PCs have continued straight eastward toward the Swamp Fane. They could circle around the fane and approach from the east, but the change in direction alters little about the encounter. The fane is situated on a small island with the runestone near its center (about 100 feet long and 80 feet wide), surrounded by shallow bog and pockets of deeper bog. If the PCs approach from a different direction, redraw the map, filling in bog spaces and additional willow trees as you see fit.

As soon as you have read the first paragraph of read-aloud text, ask the PCs to make Spot checks to determine whether they spot the blood eels in the water (DC 7). Assuming they succeed, read the second paragraph as well.

There are three blood eels (**E**) lurking in the deeper water, and the Drowned Lady (**DL**) paces around the runic circle on dry land.

When the PCs reach the edge of the map, read this text:

You look up from the murky water sloshing around your ankles to see the ruined walls close now, rising on dry land about 60 feet ahead of you. A square stone column, worn with incredible age, juts up out of the water nearby, and two gnarled willow trees seem to form a natural gateway to the island beyond.

BLOOD EELS

Assuming at least one PC spots the blood eels, read:

Something large is moving in the deeper water ahead of you. Its flesh is the sickly white of a drowned worm, but it writhes and twists in the water like an angry snake. Then it rears up out of the water, revealing a disgusting sucker-mouth in its eyeless white head.

Blood Eel Tactics

Each of the blood eels attacks immediately and mindlessly, going for the nearest character. They do not recognize the Drowned Lady as an enemy.

BLOOD EELS (3)

CR 5

HP 59

N Large vermin (aquatic)

Init -2; **Senses** tremorsense 80 ft.; Listen -1, Spot -1

AC 18, touch 7, flat-footed 18

HD 7; fast healing 2

Immune mind-affecting, gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, other attacks that rely on sight

Resist fire 10

Fort +9, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1

Speed 5 ft. (1 square), swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +10 (2d8+9)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +15

Atk Options attach, blood drain 1d4 Con damage/round

Abilities Str 23, Dex 6, Con 19, Int —, Wis 8, Cha 5

Tremorsense (Ex) Though blind, a blood eel is sensitive to vibrations in the water and can automatically pinpoint the location of anything that touches the water within 80 feet.

Attach (Ex) A blood eel that hits with its bite attack latches onto the opponent's body with its suckerlike mouth. An attached blood eel is considered flat-footed. It can be struck with a weapon or grappled, and removed by achieving a pin against the creature.

Blood Drain (Ex) A blood eel drains blood for 1d4 points of Constitution damage each round it remains attached. This ability does not affect elementals, plants, or creatures that lack a Constitution score.

THE DROWNED LADY

Like the nymph in the Svalich Woods, the Drowned Lady has gone quite mad as a result of Strahd's evil polluting the land of Barovia. She appears as an old and horrendously ugly human woman, with sickly yellow skin, covered in warts and oozing sores, and a mad tangle of greenish-brown hair resembling rotting seaweed. Her eyes stare wildly, and her face is twisted in a perpetual mask of grief.

The Drowned Lady's Tactics

As soon as combat begins, the Drowned Lady begins moaning pitifully as she wanders out from the runic circle toward the PCs, forcing saves against her horrific appearance. She stops when she gets within 30 feet of any character, and then uses her evil eye against that character. She repeats this maneuver on different PCs the next 2 rounds, expending all her uses of the evil eye. During this time she might engage in conversation, giving listless answers to any questions the PCs ask. On the next round, her demeanor shifts abruptly, and her rage seethes forth. She launches herself at the nearest PC who is not afflicted with the evil eye, attacking with her claws. At this point, she no longer speaks, and only death deters her from attacking.

THE DROWNED LADY

CR 4

HP 25

Sea hag tainted raver

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6

Aura horrific appearance (sight; Fort DC 16, 2d6 Str)

Languages Giant, Common

AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 11

HD 3; fast healing 3

SR 14

Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +9 (1d4+6)

Base Atk +3; Grp +9

Special Actions evil eye 3/day

Abilities Str 23, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 20

Taint corruption 11 (n/a), depravity 11 (n/a)

SQ perpetual rage, madness, amphibious

Feats Alertness, Toughness

Skills Knowledge (religion) +3, Hide +4, Listen +3, Spot +3, Swim +14

Horrific Appearance (Su) Anyone who sets eyes upon the Drowned Lady must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take 2d6 points of Strength damage (min. 0). Creatures that are affected by this power or successfully save against it cannot be affected again by the Drowned Lady's horrific appearance for 24 hours.

Evil Eye (Su) Three times per day, the Drowned Lady can cast her dire gaze upon a creature within 30 feet, who must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or be dazed for three days (*remove curse* or *dispel evil* cures). Affected creature must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or die from fright. This is a fear effect.

Perpetual Rage (Ex) A tainted raver is constantly in a state of insane fury similar to a barbarian's rage. In this state, the raver gains a +4 bonus on its Strength and Constitution scores, a +2 bonus on Will saves, and a –2 penalty to Armor Class (included in the statistics above). An effect that counters rage, such as the *calm emotions* spell, temporarily suppresses this ability and negates these bonuses and penalties.

Unlike a barbarian's rage, a tainted raver's perpetual fury does not prevent it from taking actions that require reasoned thought or concentration. A tainted raver can cast spells, use skills, activate magic items, and even act calmly and rationally.

Madness (Ex) A tainted raver is irretrievably mad. It uses its Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of its Wisdom modifier and has immunity to *confusion* and *insanity* effects. Anyone targeting a tainted raver with a thought detection, mind control, or telepathic ability makes direct contact with its tortured mind and takes 1d3 points of taint (depravity) from that contact. (Ignore this effect if you are not using the taint rules.)

A tainted raver cannot be restored to sanity by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell. If restored to sanity, a tainted raver loses this template and all the modifiers it applies.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Willow Trees: These three massive trees each take up an entire square and provide cover to anyone behind them. Their branches drape down to form a curtain that extends across three adjacent squares. Anyone standing in this area has concealment (20% miss chance). Climb DC 18.

Light Undergrowth: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the bushes provide concealment. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Shallow Bog: The mud and water in these areas is about 1 foot deep. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

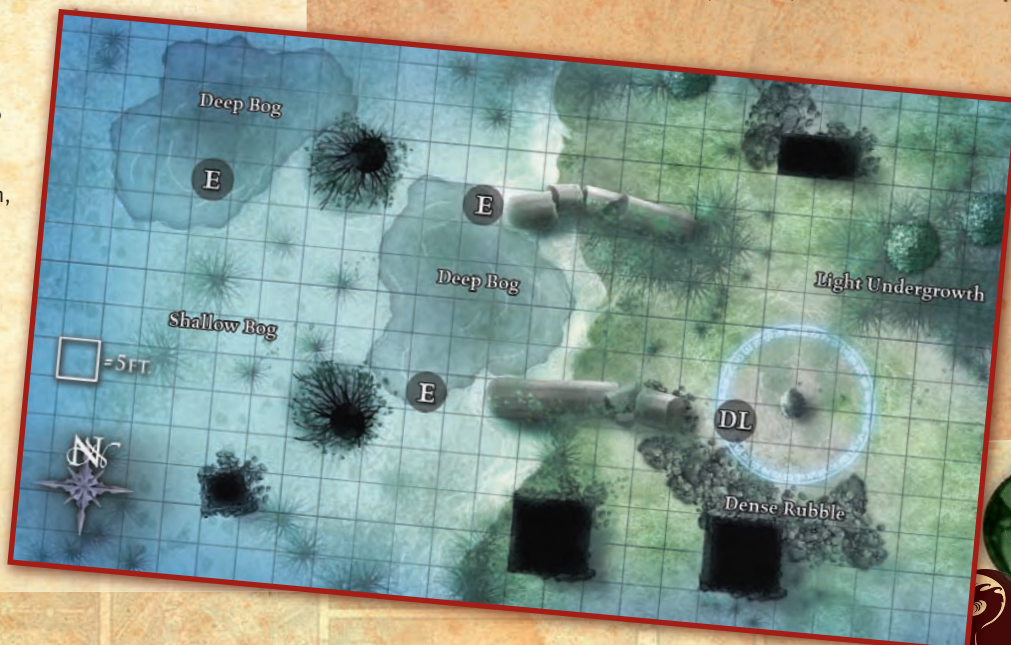
Deep Bog: There is about 4 feet of standing water in these squares. It costs 4 squares of movement for Medium characters to enter deep bog squares, or characters can swim if they wish. Small creatures must swim. Tumbling is impossible, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

The water provides cover for Medium or larger creatures, while Small or smaller creatures gain improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex). Medium or larger creatures can crouch as a move action to gain this improved cover. Creatures that have improved cover take a –10 penalty on attacks against creatures that aren't underwater.

Dense Rubble: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Runestone: This stone, near where the deathlock is located, is the center of the fane's power. Beneath it lies a reliquary holding a tooth of Saint Bogdan, a once-holy artifact now bereft of any sacred power. See the main encounter text for the Ivlis Marsh on page 50 for details about how to sever Strahd's connection to the Swamp Fane.

Runic Circle: Creatures within 10 feet of the runestone (in the area bounded by the light-colored circle) gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls. Any attacks they make are considered magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction or hitting incorporeal creatures. A creature standing within this circle also has resistance to acid 10, fire 10, and sonic 10.



THE CROSSROADS

Encounter Level 8

SETUP: When the PCs arrive at the crossroads for the first time, have the players place themselves on the road in their marching order. Most likely, they have come from the village of Barovia, so they are on the eastern branch of the road, heading west. Read the text below and immediately have them roll initiative. Sir Urik (U) stands just off the road toward the graveyard, surrounded by three murks (M). Another murk is deeper in the graveyard, and a fifth is near the gallows.

SIR URIK

CR 7*

HP 47
Male human paladin 4/knight of the raven 2
LG Medium humanoid
Init -1; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1
Aura courage (allies within 10 ft. +4 on saves against fear)
Languages Common, speak with ravens
AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 22
HD 6
Immune fear, disease
Fort +11, **Ref** +2, **Will** +9
Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee +1 *silvered longsword* +11/+6 (1d8+3/19-20)
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9
Atk Options smite evil 1/day (+2 attack, +4 damage), smite undead 1/day (+2 attack, +2 damage), Cleave, Power Attack
Special Actions lay on hands 4 points/day, turn undead 5/day (+2, 2d6+3, 1st)
Combat Gear scroll of *remove curse*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *oil of bless weapon*
Paladin Spells Prepared (CL 3rd):
1st—*lesser restoration* (2)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th):
At will—*detect evil*
Abilities Str 16, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15
SQ aura of good
Feats Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)
Skills Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (religion) +9, Sense Motive +8
Possessions combat gear plus +1 *full plate*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *silvered longsword*, *cloak of Charisma* +2, *amulet of natural armor* +1
*Because Sir Urik has equipment appropriate to a PC rather than an NPC, his CR is higher than normal.

SIR URIK

When the PCs reach the crossroads, read this text:

A yell grabs your attention as you approach the crossroads, and you see an armored man charging toward the graveyard, drawing a gleaming silver sword as he runs. A jet-black raven flies at his shoulder. Then you see three dark smears of air encircling him, like shadows cast by clouds.

The man has long black hair and a neatly trimmed beard. He wears full plate armor and carries a shield and longsword. An amulet shaped like a raven's head hangs around his neck.

Sir Urik is a fierce fighter and does not grant his trust easily. However, by leaping into combat alongside him, the PCs earn his trust. He is devoted to his crusade against the evil that plagues Barovia, while remaining well aware of how large a task it is. He considers himself the heir to a priceless ancient tradition and its sole living custodian—yet he is not afraid to risk his life in pursuing his mission.

Sir Urik's Tactics

Sir Urik fights intelligently and competently, almost as if he were a PC. Assuming the PCs help him against the murks, he tries to aid them, providing them with flanking bonuses and using his lay on hands ability to help them, if needed.

HURRN

CR —

HP 23
Celestial raven harrier
NG Tiny magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +5
AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12
HD 6; **DR** 5/magic
Resist acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5; **SR** 11
Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6
Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 40 ft. (average)
Melee claws +4 (1d2-5)
Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.
Base Atk +0; **Grp** -13
Atk Options smite evil 1/day (+6 damage)
Special Actions harry
Abilities Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 6
Feats Weapon Finesse
Skills Listen +3, Spot +5

Harry (Ex) As a swift action, Sir Urik can command Hurrn to distract a single enemy within 30 feet of him. Hurrn enters that enemy's space, provoking an attack of opportunity (against AC 18). The target must then attempt a DC 14 Will save. If it fails, it takes a -2 penalty to its AC as long as the raven remains in its space.

MURKS (5)**CR 3**

HP 19

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Listen +7, Spot +7

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11

HD 3

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist incorporeal**Fort** +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4**Speed** fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (good)**Melee** incorporeal touch +3 (1d6 Wis)**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** —**Atk Options** Wisdom damage, confer negative level, Combat Reflexes**Abilities** Str —, Dex 15, Con —, Int 7, Wis 13, Cha 12**Feats** Alertness*, Combat Reflexes

*If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, replace the Alertness feat with Touch of Taint. The murk's incorporeal touch increases the target's depravity score by 1 in addition to dealing Wisdom damage. Its skills become Listen +5, Spot +5.

Skills Hide +8, Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7

Incorporeal Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See DMG 295 for more information.

Wisdom Damage (Su) The touch of a murk deals 1d6 points of Wisdom damage to a living foe. If you are using the taint rules in *Heroes of Horror*, it also increases the foe's depravity score by 1.

Confer Negative Level (Su) Any humanoid reduced to Wisdom 0 by a murk gains one negative level (Fort DC 12 to remove after 24 hours). The murk gains 5 temporary hit points (10 on a critical hit) that last for up to 1 hour.

MURKS

When the murks enter the fray, read this text:

These creatures appear as the wavering silhouettes of humanoid figures, roughly human in size and shape, with the merest suggestion of eyes.

Murk Tactics

The murks seek flanking positions, but do not give combat tactics much more thought than that.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the battle, Sir Urik thanks the PCs for their help and offers whatever assistance he can in exchange, including the use of his spells and magic items. As a knight of the raven, Sir Urik can introduce the PCs to this prestige class. He could also serve as a replacement for a dead player character. See the prestige class description in the Appendix and the Crossroads encounter on page 74 for more information.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Light Undergrowth: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the bushes provide concealment. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Lich Wall: The small graveyard is surrounded by a low (about 4 feet high) wall made of superior masonry. The wall is about 1 foot thick, so a character can stand on top of it to gain a bonus for being on higher ground (+1 to attack rolls) or on either side of it to gain cover against attacks from the other side (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). Climb DC 25, break DC 35, hardness 8, 90 hp.

Dense Rubble: The ancient lich wall has collapsed in places, leaving large chunks of masonry and scattered rubble. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Gravestone: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with a gravestone in it. A creature standing in the same square as a gravestone gains a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves (these bonuses don't stack with cover bonuses from other sources). A gravestone has hardness 8 and 45 hp.

A character can hop up to the top of a gravestone with a DC 10 Jump check. Perching on top of a gravestone can give a character the +1 attack bonus for attacking from higher ground. Remaining perched requires balancing on a surface about 3 inches wide that is slick with rain (Balance DC 17).

Gallows: The gallows stands atop a platform 5 feet high, with a narrow staircase leading up to it. A character standing on the platform gains the higher ground bonus (+1) on attack rolls made against creatures on the ground, and also gains a minor cover bonus (+2 AC, +1 Reflex) from the gallows' support pole.

Signpost: This signpost near the intersection in the path points toward Barovia (to the east), Tser Pool (to the northwest), and Castle Ravenloft (to the southwest). A character standing in the same square as the signpost can use it for cover, gaining a +2 bonus to AC and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves, but the protruding signs hinder her attacks, imposing a –1 penalty on attack rolls.



TSER POOL ENCAMPMENT

Encounter Level 11

SETUP: You do not need to use this encounter if the PCs are going to the Vistani camp just to talk—whether to have Madam Eva read their fortunes or otherwise gain information from the Vistani. However, if they head to the camp with violence in mind, you should place them on the trail at the southern edge of the map and let them describe their approach to the camp.

If violence erupts as the PCs are talking to Madam Eva, then the PCs begin this encounter in or near her tent—possibly squeezing into that cramped space with the Large annis hag.

In addition to Madam Eva (E), four halfling Vistani (1/2) and six human Vistani (H) are in the camp at any given time.

Six colorful round tents, ten feet in diameter, stand outside the ring of wagons. Each one contains two or three piles of sleeping furs and blankets for the Vistani family, but their inhabitants are either among the wagons near the bonfire or out doing the work of Strahd or Madam Eva in the countryside.

Madam Eva's Tactics

If the PCs attack Madam Eva, she gets outside her tent as quickly as possible and tries to flee into the woods to the southwest, followed by any surviving Vistani. She calls loudly for help, summoning the aid of her giant allies as she runs toward the Forest Fane, depicted on tactical map G3. After leaving the tactical map, she must hustle 100 feet through light undergrowth (under 3 rounds) to reach the fane. If she makes it that far, proceed immediately to tactical encounter G3 on the following pages. If the PCs kill her before she reaches the fane, use encounter G3 if they explore further to see what she was running toward.

HUMAN VISTANI (6)

CR 3

HP 19 each

Male and female human rogue 3

NE Medium humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common, Giant

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15

HD 3

Resist evasion

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +0

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk scimitar +6 (1d6+2/18–20)

Ranged composite shortbow +3 (1d6+2/×3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4

Atk Options sneak attack +2d6

Combat Gear *potion of shield of faith* +3 (AC 19, touch 14; 6 min.), *potion of cure serious wounds*
Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10

SQ trapfinding, trap sense +1

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Balance +2, Bluff +6, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +6 (+8 acting), Gather Information +6, Hide +6, Intimidate +2, Jump +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Perform +6, Spot +5, Survival +2, Tumble +6

Possessions combat gear plus *elixir of hiding*, *elixir of sneaking*, masterwork scimitar, composite shortbow (+2 Str bonus), masterwork chain shirt, masterwork buckler

HALFLING VISTANI (4)

CR 3

HP 19 each

Male and female halfling rogue 3

NE Small humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common, Giant, Halfling

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16

HD 3

Resist evasion

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +1

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee mwk scimitar +5 (1d4/18–20)

Ranged short bow +6 (1d4/×3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4

Atk Options sneak attack +2d6

Combat Gear *potion of shield of faith* +3 (AC 22, touch 17; 6 min.), *potion of cure serious wounds*
Abilities Str 11, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10

SQ trapfinding, trap sense +1

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Balance +4, Bluff +6, Climb +1, Diplomacy +2, Gather Information +6, Hide +12, Intimidate +2, Jump –3, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Perform +6, Spot +5, Survival +2, Tumble +8

Possessions combat gear plus *elixir of hiding*, *elixir of sneaking*, masterwork scimitar, shortbow, masterwork chain shirt, masterwork buckler

MADAM EVA

CR 8

HP 93

Female annis hag cleric 5

CN Large monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +16, Spot +16

Languages Common, Giant, Halfling

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 19

HD 12; DR 2/bludgeoning

SR 19

Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +13

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee 2 claws +16 (1d6+7) and

bite +11 (1d6+3)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +10; Grp +21

Atk Options improved grab, rake 1d6+7, rend 2d6+10, Blind-Fight, Power Attack

Special Actions rebuke undead (+2, 2d6+7, 5th), spontaneous casting (*inflict* spells)

Combat Gear wand of hold person, potion of sanctuary, potion of magic fang (bite +12, 1d6+4), potion of mage armor (AC 25, 1 hour)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th):

3rd—*bestow curse* (2), *protection from energy*^D

2nd—*augury*, *death knell*, *detect thoughts*^D, *silence*

1st—*bane*, *cause fear*, *command*, *cure light wounds*, *entropic shield*^D

0—*detect magic* (2), *guidance*, *purify food and drink*, *read magic*

D: Domain spell. Domains: Knowledge, Luck.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):

At will—*divination*

3/day—*disguise self*, *fog cloud*

Abilities Str 24, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 14

SQ aura of chaos

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Power Attack

Skills Bluff +12, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Hide +8, Intimidate +4, Listen +16, Sense Motive +9, Spot +16

Possessions combat gear plus *amulet of health* +2, *potion of remove curse*

Improved Grab (Ex) If Eva hits a Large or smaller opponent with a claw attack, she can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Rake (Ex) Eva can attack a grappled foe with both claw attacks with no penalty (+13 attack, 1d6+7 damage).

Rend (Ex) If Eva hits with both claw attacks, she deals an extra 2d6+10 points of damage.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Light Undergrowth: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the bushes provide concealment. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Heavy Undergrowth: A small patch of heavier undergrowth lies just off the path. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter these squares, and running and charging are impossible. They provide concealment with a 30% miss chance, and grant a +5 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 5.

Wagon: Four ornately decorated wagons circle a large fire, forming the heart of the Vistani campsite. Entering or exiting a wagon is a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening foes (but not from foes standing alongside the wagon, because their attacks would be blocked by cover). A character can enter or exit from either side, and while inside a wagon, a character has total cover.

Each wagon contains a bench, a table, and several cabinets full of personal belongings, cooking gear, clothing, and the like. Moving from the back to the front of the wagon, or vice versa, costs 4 squares of movement because of the very close quarters.

Campfire: A large fire burns at the center of the camp. A character who moves into or through the bonfire takes 1d6 points of fire damage and must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save or catch on fire. A character who catches on fire takes another 1d6 points of fire damage immediately, and must make another Reflex save each round or take an additional 1d6 points of fire damage. A successful Reflex save indicates the fire has gone out. Jumping into the river extinguishes the flames. Rolling on the ground or otherwise smothering the fire allows the character a new saving throw with a +4 bonus.

Ivlis River: The river runs swift and deep here. Anything floating or swimming in the river moves downstream (toward the east) 2d4 squares per round. Characters swimming in the river must attempt DC 15 Swim checks: Success allows movement at up to one-half their speed (as a full-round action) or at one-quarter their speed (as a move action). A check result of 10 or less indicates the character goes underwater and must hold his breath. The water is 15 feet deep.

Madam Eva's Tent: This tent is considerably larger than the others, but it's still tight quarters for Madam Eva and any visitors she might have.

Eva keeps a few personal possessions in a small chest in the tent: a metal comb, several colorful scarves, and her deck of fortune-telling cards, each one depicting a dragon of a certain age and color.



THE FOREST FANE

Encounter Level 8

SETUP: If Madam Eva flees from combat with the PCs, she enters at the northeast corner of the map and runs toward the runic circle. As soon as she arrives on the map, her giant allies arrive as well. Place the two ogres (O) and the hill giant (G) on the map immediately and roll initiative for them; they act at the start of the next round. The PCs might arrive on the map at different times, depending on how well they were able to keep up with Madam Eva on the chase through the forest.

If the PCs explore the Forest Fane on their own, without chasing Madam Eva (or after having killed her), the giant and the ogres arrive at the marked positions when the PCs reach the runic circle, and they immediately move in to attack. Read the following text:

A loud rustling in the undergrowth and snapping of branches in the trees announces the arrival of three hulking figures. They tower above even Madam Eva's monstrous form, and their bestial faces snarl down at you in fury.

CHEATING WITH POWER ATTACK

The table below shows how much Power Attack these monsters should use in order to dish out the maximum amount of damage. For the hill giant, each -1 to its attack rolls grants a +2 on damage rolls with his greatclub, while Madam Eva gets only a +1 bonus on damage rolls for each -1 to her attack rolls. Because of Madam Eva's rend ability, she should use Power Attack when making a full attack only if her target's AC is quite low (17 or lower).

Target's AC	Hill Giant		Madam Eva	
	Single Atk	Full Atk	Single Atk	Full Atk
10	9	8	8	8
11	8	7	8	7
12	8	6	7	6
13	7	6	7	5
14	7	5	6	4
15	6	5	6	3
16	6	4	5	2
17	5	4	5	1
18	5	4	4	0
19	4	3	4	0
20	4	2	3	0
21	3	2	3	0
22	3	2	2	0
23	2	1	2	0
24	2	1	1	0
25	1	0	1	0
26	1	0	0	0
27+	0	0	0	0

HILL GIANT CR 7

HP 102

CN Large giant

Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision, Listen +3, Spot +6

Languages Common, Giant

AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20

HD 12

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee greatclub +16/+11 (2d8+10)

Ranged rock +8 (2d6+7)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +20

Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack

Special Actions Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush

Abilities Str 25, Dex 8, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7

SQ rock throwing, rock catching

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub)

Skills Climb +7, Jump +7, Listen +3, Spot +6

ADVANCED OGRES (2)

CR 3

HP 39

CN Large giant

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common, Giant

AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16

HD 6

Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee greatclub +8 (2d8+7)

Ranged javelin +1 (1d8+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +13

Atk Options Blind-Fight

Abilities Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Iron Will

Skills Climb +5, Listen +5, Spot +5

Tactics

The three giants converge as quickly as they can (moving at half speed through the undergrowth) on Madam Eva, barreling through any PCs who get in their way. Once they reach Eva (or her corpse), they stand and fight, focusing on any PCs who are engaging her in melee. The hill giant uses Awesome Blow to knock PCs away from Eva if he can. (Using Awesome Blow is a standard action; the giant makes one greatclub attack at +12; if it hits, the target must make a Reflex save against a DC equal to the damage dealt or be knocked back 10 feet. If the flung PC hits a tree, he takes 1d6 points of damage.)

MADAM EVA

CR 8

HP 93

Female annis hag cleric 5

CN Large monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +16, Spot +16**Languages** Common, Giant, Halfling**AC** 21, touch 11, flat-footed 19**HD** 12; **DR** 2/bludgeoning**SR** 19**Fort** +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** 2 claws +16 (1d6+7) and
bite +11 (1d6+3)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +21**Atk Options** improved grab, rake 1d6+7, rend 2d6+10, Blind-Fight, Power Attack**Special Actions** rebuke undead (+2, 2d6+7, 5th),
spontaneous casting (*inflict* spells)**Combat Gear** *wand of hold person*, *potion of sanctuary*, *potion of magic fang* (bite +12, 1d6+4), *potion of mage armor* (AC 25, 1 hour)**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 5th):3rd—*bestow curse* (2), *protection from energy*^D2nd—*augury*, *death knell*, *detect thoughts*^D, *silence*1st—*bane*, *cause fear*, *command*, *cure light wounds*,
entropic shield^D0—*detect magic* (2), *guidance*, *purify food and drink*,
*read magic*D: Domain spell. *Domains*: Knowledge, Luck.**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th):At will—*divination*3/day—*disguise self*, *fog cloud***Abilities** Str 24, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 14**SQ** aura of chaos**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Power Attack**Skills** Bluff +12, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +6, Disguise
+2 (+4 acting), Hide +8, Intimidate +4, Listen +16, Sense
Motive +9, Spot +16**Possessions** combat gear plus *amulet of health* +2, *potion of remove curse***Improved Grab (Ex)** If Eva hits a Large or smaller opponent with a claw attack, she can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.**Rake (Ex)** Eva can attack a grappled foe with both claw attacks with no penalty (+13 attack, 1d6+7 damage).**Rend (Ex)** If Eva hits with both claw attacks, she deals an extra 2d6+10 points of damage.

If Eva is still alive, she drinks her *potion of sanctuary* in an attempt to buy the time she needs to heal herself and protect herself, casting *cure light wounds* and drinking her *potion of mage armor*. She uses her *wand of hold person* to try to neutralize PCs who harry her. If forced into melee, she grimly sets about with her claws and does her best to tear the PCs to shreds.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Dense Rubble: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square of dense rubble. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Light Undergrowth: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the bushes provide concealment. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Heavy Undergrowth: It costs 4 squares of movement to enter these squares, and running and charging are impossible. They provide concealment with a 30% miss chance, and grant a +5 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 5.

Low Stone Walls: Scattered throughout this area are a series of low stone walls (about 4 feet high) wall made of masonry. Each wall is about 1 foot thick, so a character can stand on top of it to gain a bonus for being on higher ground (+1 to attack rolls) or on either side of it to gain cover against attacks from the other side (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). Climb DC 20, break DC 35, hardness 8, 90 hp.

Runic Circle: Creatures within the area of this stone circle gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls. Any attacks they make are considered magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction or hitting incorporeal creatures. A creature standing within this circle also benefits from a nondetection effect, though that is unlikely to come into play during this encounter.

Runestone: This stone, at the center of the runic circle, is the heart of the fane's power. Beneath it lies a reliquary holding a lock of Saint Markovia's hair, now bereft of any holy power. See the main encounter text for the Tser Pool Encampment on page 52 for details about how to sever Strahd's connection to the Forest Fane.



TSER FALLS APPROACH

Encounter Level 8

SETUP: Use this encounter when the PCs approach Tser Falls. The encounter setup and readaloud text assume they are coming up the river along the south bank. If they come from the top of the falls, they might stumble into a bear trap above the falls, but they do not encounter the worgs unless they climb down the cliff.

Ask the players to arrange their characters in the southeast corner of the map, anywhere between the cliff and the edge of the map. Read the text provided below and place the four worgs (W) on the map as shown. Then ask the PCs to make Spot checks (DC 20) to see if they notice the dire wolf (D) hiding in the undergrowth. If they spot the dire wolf, place it on the map; otherwise, it springs out as the PCs approach the undergrowth and enter battle with the worgs.

When the PCs approach the falls, read the following:

The roar of the falls drowns out all other sounds as you approach it. A clump of thorny bushes hugs the bottom of the cliff to your left, and beyond it, a narrow path climbs up the cliff toward the falls. A large, black wolf stands on the path like a sentry, and three similar creatures range around the base of the cliff.



WORGs (4)

CR 2

HP 30 each

NE Medium magical beast

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Worg, Common

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

HD 4

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +7 (1d6+4 plus trip)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7

Atk Options trip (+3 check)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 10

Feats Alertness, Track

Skills Hide +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Spot +6, Survival +2 (+6 to track by scent)

Worg Tactics

The worgs know the locations of the three bear traps, and they try to maneuver PCs into them. In combat, the worgs use flanking and the aid another action to make high-AC characters easier to hit. If a worg manages to trip a PC, the other worgs concentrate their attacks on the tripped character and stay in position to make attacks of opportunity when the character tries to stand. (Remember that a worg

cannot use that attack of opportunity to trip the character again, since the character is already prone when the attack of opportunity occurs.) Flanking worgs often take turns fighting defensively (−4 attack, +2 AC), but if their foe concentrates attacks on one worg, that one goes on total defense (+4 AC, no attacks) while the other attacks to make best use of flanking.

DIRE WOLF**CR 3**

HP 45

N Large animal

Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Listen +7, Spot +7

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12

HD 6

Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +11 (1d8+10 plus trip +11)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +4; Grp +15

Abilities Str 25, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Alertness, Run, Track^B, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Hide +0, Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Spot +7, Survival +2 (+6 tracking by scent)

Trip (Ex) If it hits with its bite, a dire wolf can attempt to trip its target as a free action (+11 against target's Str or Dex check).**Dire Wolf Tactics**

The dire wolf is much less intelligent than the worgs, and thus it does not coordinate its attacks quite as well. It does avoid the bear traps and seek to set up flanks, but it tends to attack the last opponent that damaged it, occasionally even provoking attacks of opportunity in order to move closer to a dangerous ranged attacker (such as a wizard who has hit it with spells).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Dense Rubble: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Light Undergrowth: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares, and the bushes provide concealment. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2. (*DMG* 87)

Trees: A creature standing in the same square as a tree gains a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves. Climb DC 15.

200-Foot Cliff: Climb DC 15. For every 50 vertical feet a character climbs, move the character one square toward the top of the cliff.

Slippery Rock: Water runs ankle- to knee-deep over this shelf of rock, and mossy algae covers its surface. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks made here is increased by 5. Characters who run or charge across this rock must attempt Balance checks (DC 15, including the modifier). A character who fails by 4 or less (rolling 11 to 14) cannot run or charge, but can otherwise act normally. A character who fails by 5 or more (rolling 10 or lower) falls prone.

Path: A narrow, steep path rises up along the cliffside and leads into Varikov's cave home. The path rises 20 feet over its 30-foot length, and averages about 2 feet wide—wide enough that Balance checks are not necessary for characters climbing toward the cave. A character or creature bull rushed off the path tumbles down the cliff and into the river, unless he catches himself on the cliff (Climb DC 35). Because the water is 10 feet deep below the path, the fall deals no damage to characters falling from the path.

To enter the cave, characters must pass through a thin sheet of water cascading down the falls. Doing so extinguishes torches and candles and soaks the PCs and their gear, but carries no other dangers.

Bear Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger (stepping in square); manual reset; Atk +20 melee (2d6 plus leg trap); leg trap (target held in place; Strength DC 15 to get free; speed reduced by one-half for 24 hours or until treated by DC 15 Heal check); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 15.

Removing a bear trap from a trapped character (DC 15 Strength check) is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.



VARIKOV'S CAVE

Encounter Level 8

SETUP: The PCs enter the cave through the falls at the southeast corner of the map. Read the text below as the PCs enter. Draw or reveal only the outer cave at first, until the PCs move into a position (and bring light) so they can see into Varikov's inner sanctum. Varikov (V) is standing at his workbench, while his animal companion Farkash (F) is curled on the floor in the eastern part of the cave. Make a Listen check for Varikov (+4 modifier, counting the penalty for about 70 feet of distance between him and the cave entrance) to see whether he hears the PCs enter.

If the PCs are using stealth as they enter, use their Move Silently check results as the DC for this check. Otherwise, the DC is 5.

When the PCs enter the cave, read the following text:

A musty stench greets you as you emerge from the waterfall into a cave behind it. A sheet of water roars over the mouth of the cave, spraying a fine mist into the air. A brown bear the size of a man stands motionless on its hind legs at the other side of the cave. Deeper in, the cavern widens and rises into a larger cave above and behind this one.

Varikov stuffed a smallish brown bear (B) and posed it erect on its hind legs near the entrance of the cave to frighten unwelcome visitors.

When the PCs get close enough to make out details of Varikov's appearance, read the following text:

This dwarf's face is twisted in a lunatic rage, his mouth contorted in a sadistic smile. He wears a chain shirt and swings an axe in each hand. A necklace of teeth hangs around his neck, clattering as he moves—and clearly including human teeth as well as more bestial fangs.

Varikov's Tactics

Varikov's darkvision allows him to see almost all of the large cavern from his position at the workbench. If he hears intruders, he blows a soft whistle to Farkash and slowly, quietly moves toward the rope bridge across the chasm while drawing and loading his crossbow. He fires at the first PC to enter the cave, then draws his waraxe and charges across the bridge.

Varikov uses his Surge of Malevolence ability on his first melee attack. Varikov and Farkash coordinate their attacks, using flanking and trying to maneuver foes into the chute trap or the chasm. Both fight to the death. If Varikov finds himself adjacent to Farkash, he casts *magic fang* on his companion.

VARIKOV THE TRAPPER

CR 7

HP 45

Male dwarf ranger 4/rogue 3

CE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages Common, Dwarven, empathic link

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; +4 against giants

HD 7

Resist +2 on saves against poison, spells, spell-like effects; evasion

Fort +7 (+9 against poison), **Ref** +9, **Will** +0

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee +1 *dwarven waraxe* +11/+6 (1d10+4/×3) or

Melee +1 *dwarven waraxe* +9/+4 (1d10+4/×3) and
mwk hand axe +7 (1d6+1/×3) or

Ranged heavy crossbow +9 (1d10/19–20)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9

Atk Options sneak attack +2d6, favored enemy humans +2, +1 attack against orcs and goblinoids, Surge of Malevolence

Ranger Spell Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st—*magic fang*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 6

Taint corruption 0, depravity 20 (moderate)

SQ depravity symptoms (bestial, weak-willed), wild empathy +4, stonecunning

Feats Endurance^B, Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow), Surge of Malevolence, Track^B, Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe)

Skills Bluff +3, Climb +7, Diplomacy –1, Escape Artist +6, Handle Animal +0, Hide +6, Intimidate +5, Jump +1, Listen +11, Move Silently +6, Ride +4, Spot +11, Survival +11

Possessions +2 *chain shirt*, +1 *dwarven waraxe*, masterwork hand axe, heavy crossbow with 20 bolts, necklace of human and animal teeth

Depravity Varikov's evil has warped his mind, making him slightly mad. His bestial nature grants him a +2 bonus on Handle Animal, Ride, and wild empathy checks, while imposing a –1 penalty on other Charisma-based ability checks and skill checks. The constant presence of demonic voices whispering in his mind has sapped his will, imposing a –3 penalty on Will saves. These adjustments are included in the numbers above.

(These symptoms are described in *Heroes of Horror*.)

Surge of Malevolence 1/day, add +6 to one attack roll, saving throw, or check. Decide before rolling. (This feat is described in *Heroes of Horror* and relies on Varikov's depravity score.)

FARKASH

CR —

HP 13

Wolf animal companion

N Medium animal

Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Listen +3, Spot +3

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

HD 2

Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1 plus trip [+1])

Base Atk +1; Grp +2

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Feats Track⁸, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Hide +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Spot +3, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent)

DEVELOPMENT

If you want to make the chasm more of an obstacle for the characters, you can indicate to them (perhaps in the opening read-aloud text) that the ceiling of the cave is only about 6 feet above the floor. That fact means that the PCs (or most of them) can't get across the opening by making long jumps (PH 77), since a certain amount of vertical space is necessary for this tactic to succeed.

For an added level of difficulty, have Varikov cut the ropes holding up the bridge once he has charged across the bridge into the eastern chamber—now, in order for the PCs to get to Varikov's inner sanctum without negotiating the chasm, they need to take the southern passage and risk exposing themselves to the chute trap.

FEATURES OF THE CAVE

Stairs: The wide stairs in the cave do not impede movement, but can grant a benefit (+1 on attack rolls) to a character who is at a higher elevation than his target. Arrows on each staircase show the direction of descent.

Chute Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; deposits character in pool outside the falls; Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 19. A character who succumbs to this trap, located in the narrow passageway in the southern end of the area, finds himself in the pool at the base of the Tser Falls.

Camouflaged Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 19. This trap, in the eastern part of the chamber, is positioned to catch unwary intruders who approach the "werewolf" standing a short distance away.

Chasm: A chasm bisects the northern part of the cave. It is 50 feet deep, so characters who fall in take 5d6 points of damage. Scaling the sides to get out requires a successful DC 15 Climb check.

Rope Bridge: This bridge is solid and sturdy, a reliable way to cross the chasm. Two ropes form railings along the sides, giving characters a +2 circumstance bonus on opposed Strength checks to avoid being bull rushed off the bridge.

It is possible to untie the ends of the rope bridge. It takes two full-round actions to untie one end of the bridge, but a DC 15 Use Rope check reduces the time to a move action. If only one of the two supporting ropes is attached, everyone on the bridge must succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid falling off, and thereafter must make successful DC 15 Climb checks to move along the remnants of the bridge. The two ropes that support the bridge have 8 hit points each.

Workbench: This long, high table adjacent to where Varikov begins this encounter contains the tools of the taxidermist's trade—numerous knives,

scrapers, needles and thread, saws, cleavers, glass eyes, brushes, and other tools with less obvious purposes, none of them clean.

Stuffed "Werewolf" (W): In his time, Varikov has killed a real werewolf, but he was disappointed that she reverted to her humanoid form when she died. Seeking to commemorate this remarkable battle of his in a different way, Varikov killed several wolves and a burly villager and assembled various pieces together to create this prize of taxidermy—his masterpiece. It resembles a werewolf in hybrid form, with wolf fur adorning its head, hands, back, and feet. A wolf tail, ears, and claws complete the ensemble. Varikov has placed this decoration next to the eastern end of the rope bridge. It contains nothing of interest.

Stuffed Human (H): Varikov's first work of human taxidermy was this adventurer he killed almost three months ago. He is dressed in his banded mail and posed as if in combat, holding a greatsword in one hand and a sprig of wolfsbane in the other. He bears a plain gold band on the ring finger of his left hand.

The name of this adventurer was Jeref Maurgan. His wife, Helene, would appreciate word of his fate, even though the news is bad. See the development entry for encounter area H on page 62.

Bed: The pile of furs in the southwestern corner of the cave serves as Varikov's rude bed. He keeps a pouch with 116 gp buried under the furs (Search DC 18).



THE ECATERINE HUSK

Encounter Level 9

SETUP: The PCs can see the ruined tower from the base of the hill and can choose their direction of approach. They can arrange themselves near any edge of the map. As soon as they reach the perimeter of the map, the caller in darkness (CD) emerges from the ground in the tower. Read the text below to the players, then start combat.

When the PCs reach the tower, read the following:

The burned-out tower is a husk of a building, with only three portions of its tall outer wall still reaching some 20 feet off the ground. Within their bounds, shorter stone walls, about 10 feet high, delineate the chambers of the ancient site,

while piles of rubble choke much of the open space. As you draw near, a hideous mass of glowing spirits, like a roiling cloud of pale mist bearing dozens of silently screaming faces, rises up from the ground. The tortured expressions of the faces in the mist speak of undying torment and mind-numbing terror.

The ghostly cloud is a caller in darkness, a terrible undead creature composed of the spirits of the monks who died in the tower's destruction—and all those whose lives they have claimed since. The caller in darkness fears Baba Zelenna and does not appear when she and her witches are in the area.

CALLER IN DARKNESS

CR 9

HP 71

CE Large undead (incorporeal, psionic)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14

Aura unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)

Languages Common

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11

HD 11

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist incorporeal

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9

Weakness vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee incorporeal touch +7 (2d6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +5; **Grp** —

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes

Special Actions steal essence

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th):

At will—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *concussion blast**, *detect magic*, *ego whip**, *mind thrust**

3/day—*death urge**, *psychic crush** (DC 13), *suggestion** (DC 14)

*Detailed below

Abilities Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Skills Hide +9, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Listen +14, Search +12, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +12, Spot +14

Incorporeal Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See DMG 295 for more information.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals can sense the presence of a caller in darkness at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that, and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex) A caller in darkness is powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flees from it. A caller in darkness caught in sunlight cannot attack and can take only a single move or attack action in a round.

Spell-Like Abilities Many of a caller in darkness's spell-like abilities duplicate psionic powers, with the following effects:

Concussion Blast: Range 170 ft., two targets, no save, 3d6 force damage.

Death Urge: Range 170 ft., one living target, Will DC 16 negates, target seeks to end own life for 1 round. If armed, makes full-round attack on self, dealing critical hit damage. If unarmed, provokes attack of opportunity from nearest enemy.

Ego Whip: Range 170 ft., one target, Will DC 16 half, 2d4 Cha damage and dazed 1 round (save negates).

Mind Thrust: Range 40 ft., one target, Will DC 16 half, 7d10 damage.

Psychic Crush: Range 40 ft., one target, Will DC 13 partial: on failed save, target is dying at –1 hp; on successful save, 3d6 damage.

Suggestion: As the spell, but up to three creatures, no two of whom are more than 15 feet apart.

Steal Essence (Su) Any living, intelligent creature slain by a caller in darkness's touch attack is mentally absorbed into the monster's consciousness. (The physical body of the victim remains intact.) Stealing a victim's essence is a free action; it grants the caller 12 temporary hit points, and a permanent new screaming face appears within its cloud.

A caller in darkness can also steal the essence of living, intelligent creatures within 30 feet that are paralyzed or sleeping, or that are helpless due to having a mental ability score reduced to 0 (often by the caller's *ego whip* attack). Doing so is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. The victim dies, and the caller gains 12 hit points.

The caller in darkness appears in *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. The version presented here is slightly modified and includes all the information you need to run the monster without reference to the psionics rules.

Caller in Darkness Tactics

The caller in darkness hungers for more essences to incorporate into itself, and it moves implacably toward the PCs unless they shelter in the sacred circle. It starts off using *ego whip* in an attempt to incapacitate and incorporate a weak-willed PC, but switches to *mind thrust* and *concussive blast* against single or multiple opponents that anger it (by dealing significant damage).

If it can steal a PC's essence, either by using a touch attack against a PC with few hit points left or by incapacitating a foe with its *ego whip* and using a standard action to steal that character's essence, it does so in preference to attacking another character. It employs its most powerful abilities (its spell-like abilities usable three times per day) against characters who seriously anger it, either by using tricky maneuvers or dealing more than 20 points of damage with a single attack.

PSYCHIC WHISPERS

The caller in darkness is an undead creature formed in part from the psychic energy of the dead. It is more than a terrifying monster—it is almost literally a nightmare. Consider adding any or all of the following “special effects” to its attacks, reading or paraphrasing the following text when appropriate:

Incorporeal Touch: A clump of ghostly faces surges toward you, eyes bulging and mouth gaping. Wisps of its smoky substance wrap around you, corrupting your flesh with necromantic power.

Death Urge: Ghostly voices whisper in your mind, urging you to join them in the blissful release of death. Their voices are strangely compelling.

Ego Whip: Visions of failure flash through your mind, filling you with a momentary certainty that your quest is doomed.

Mind Thrust: For a moment it seems as though you have always been fighting this creature. It haunts your every memory, its ghostly faces leer from every thought. Can there be any escape?

Psychic Crush: Your every nightmare seems to come alive in your mind, threatening to swallow you up in their dark embrace.

Suggestion: A terrible certainty fills your mind—there is a much greater threat than this creature you now face, and it lurks somewhere in the earth below your feet. You feel an inescapable need to search for a means to reach this threat before it arises and devours you. Your allies can handle the monster that stands before you.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

Dense Rubble: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these squares. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Thick Stone Walls: These massive stone walls are 5 feet thick and range between 15 and 20 feet high. A character can climb the walls (Climb DC 25) and walk along the top, at a cost of 2 squares of movement to enter each square.

Interior Walls: Crumbling masonry walls (Climb DC 18, 1 ft. thick, break DC 32, hardness 8, 90 hp) surround what were once interior chambers of the tower. The walls reach about 10 feet off the ground, but no roof remains to cover these spaces. As a result, these areas are only slightly more sheltered than the courtyard areas outside, still cluttered with rubble.

Sacred Circle: A tiny remnant of Ecaterina's holy power remains in the tower grounds in the form of this sacred circle, though it no longer distinguishes between holy and unholy. Any creature standing within the circle gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls, and attacks made from within the circle are considered magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction or harming incorporeal creatures. The caller in darkness avoids the circle, but does not hesitate to target creatures within it using ranged spell-like attacks.

Trap Door: Mostly covered by rubble, this wooden trap door is difficult to find (Search DC 28) but easy to open. Beneath the door is a ladder stretching 50 feet down into the darkness (leading to tactical map I2; see the following encounter). A character who falls through the trap door takes 5d6 points of falling damage.

THE MOUNTAIN FANE

Encounter Level 8 or 9

SETUP: The PCs access the Mountain Fane through the trap door buried in the rubble in tactical encounter area I1. The ladder is 50 feet long and perfectly vertical, anchored firmly in the ground at the bottom. Although characters might feel (and are) quite vulnerable as they climb down the ladder, nothing attacks them here. Read the text below as they descend.

Two babau demons (B) lurk in the twisted tunnels to the southwest. Baba Zelenna (BZ) is in the runic circle—unless Strahd's secondary goal is Brook No Rival, in which case Baba Zelenna is not present at the hill until the night of the new moon (see tactical encounter I3 on the following pages).

Read this text as the PCs descend the ladder:

The ladder stretches down into darkness through a narrow shaft in the rock. Soon the shaft opens into a larger cavern, and none too soon you reach the bottom of a large cave. From this cave, two tunnels curve off to the sides, disappearing into darkness.

TALKING TO BABA ZELENNA

Even after fighting through demonic assassins, it's conceivable that the PCs might try to negotiate with Baba Zelenna rather than launching immediately into combat with her. Alternatively, they might manage to take her captive in order to learn more about her role in Barovia. Her starting attitude is hostile. A very high Diplomacy check result can make her unfriendly (DC 20), indifferent (DC 25), friendly (DC 35), or even helpful (DC 50). Her opposed check to resist the Intimidate skill is 1d20+12.

Baba Zelenna is devoted to a demon lord (Chernovog, whom she calls "the Green God"), and her devotion might make her seem a bit unhinged. If the PCs manage to make her more cooperative, she might convey the following information:

"Eva is the prophetic one. I make no claims of special sight, save what the Green God reveals to me."

"This place was once a holy fane of Saint Ecaterina. Now it is dedicated to the Green God!"

"The Green God will drape the land in gentle night, and the screams of the damned shall be our lullaby!"

"The people call them witches, but the loyal ones who gather here are devout in the worship of the Green God."

"The Green God is Chernovog, ruler of the Verdant Chasm."

BABAU DEMONS (2)

CR 6

HP 66 each

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +19, Spot +1

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

HD 7; **DR** 10/cold iron or good

Immune electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; protective slime; **SR** 14

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d6+5) and

bite +10 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +12

Atk Options sneak attack +2d6, Cleave, Power Attack

Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th):

At will—darkness, dispel magic, see invisibility, greater teleport (self plus 50 lb. of objects only)

Abilities Str 21, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 16

Feats Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills Climb +15, Disable Device +12, Disguise +13, Escape

Artist +11, Hide +19, Listen +19, Move Silently +19,

Open Lock +11, Search +20, Sleight of Hand +11,

Spot +1

Protective Slime (Su) A slimy red jelly coats a babau's skin, dealing 1d8 points of acid damage (ignoring hardness) to any weapon or natural attack that strikes it. Magic weapons and creatures attacking with natural weapons can attempt a DC 18 Reflex save to avoid the damage.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) 1/day, summon 1 babau 40%.

Equivalent to 3rd-level spell.

BABAU DEMONS

When the PCs get close enough to see the demons lurking in the tunnels, read the following text:

Reeking of decay, these gaunt humanoids are covered in black, leathery skin. Each has a single, crooked horn rising from the back of its head and curling forward like a scorpion's tail. Its claws are impossibly long, and it has a huge number of needlelike teeth. A substance like blood oozes from its skin and drops in gelatinous globs to the ground.

Babau Demon Tactics

As soon as they have any indication that enemies are coming (Listen +19), the babaus use *see invisibility* on themselves and hide among the narrow passages (Hide +19). They attempt to sneak attack PCs who come within their reach. Once forced into the open, the demons team up to grant each other flanking bonuses so they can continue to sneak attack. If a babau gets stuck where it can't maneuver to a flanking position, it uses *greater teleport* to get into such a position, sacrificing its attack that turn in order to grant its

BABA ZELENNA

CR 5

HP 60

Female advanced green hag

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +1; Senses darkvision 90 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages Common, Giant; *tongues* at will

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21

HD 11

SR 18

Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws each +9 (1d4+10) or

Melee weakness +13 touch (2d4 Str)

Base Atk +11; Grp +15

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Power Attack (6 points included)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th):

At will—*dancing lights*, *disguise self*, *ghost sound* (DC 12),
invisibility, *pass without trace*, *tongues*, *water breathing*

Abilities Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ mimicry

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Power Attack, Thrall to Demon

Skills Concentration +7, Hide +11, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +11, Spot +11

Weakness (Su) Baba Zelenna can weaken a foe by making a touch attack dealing 2d4 points of Str damage (Fort DC 17 negates).**Power Attack** If Baba Zelenna chooses not to use Power Attack, her claw attacks are +15 (1d4+4).**Thrall to Demon** Feat described in *Book of Vile Darkness*.

Once per day, while performing an evil act, Baba Zelenna can gain a +1 luck bonus on any one roll.

companion a flank and sneak attack. If the PCs retreat back toward the ladder, the babaus follow. In the entry cavern, they try to bull rush one PC over the cliff and then teleport down to fight the character alone. If one of the babaus dies, the other tries *summon tanar'ri* to bring a fresh ally. If that fails, the babau uses *greater teleport* again to escape.

If Baba Zelenna is present, the babaus try to herd the PCs down the slope toward the runic circle.

BABA ZELENNA

Baba Zelenna regularly uses *disguise self* to appear as a very old female human. A DC 20 Spot check reveals that she is not quite human—her skin has the faintest tinge of green, and the texture of her hair is almost vinelike.

Baba Zelenna's presence in this encounter raises the EL to 9; if she is not here (because Strahd's secondary goal is Brook No Rival), the EL is 8.

Baba Zelenna's Tactics

If Baba Zelenna is present, she uses *invisibility* when she first hears sounds of a disturbance, then lashes out with her claws at the first PC to come within her reach. She tries to remain within the runic circle (increasing her AC to 28 and her attack bonus to claws +11 or weakness +5 touch), and also tries to keep PCs out of the circle.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Ladder: 50 feet long. Climb DC 0.

Cliff: PCs who travel north after descending the ladder soon come across a 20-foot cliff that separates them from the lower portion of the cavern. A character who falls (or is pushed) off the cliff takes 2d6 points of damage. Ascending or descending the cliff safely requires a successful DC 15 Climb check.

Steep Slopes: Characters who move south and then west after descending the ladder find themselves on the uphill side of a steep slope. If they move through the southwest chamber (where the babau demons begin the encounter), they come upon a steep slope heading up to the area where Baba Zelenna awaits. Characters who move uphill to an adjacent square of higher elevation must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of these steep slopes. Characters running or charging downhill (moving to an adjacent square of lower elevation) must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check upon entering the first steep slope square. Characters who fail this check stumble and must end their movement 1d2×5 feet later. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone in the square where they end their movement.

Characters gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes at a lower elevation.

A steep slope increases the DC of Tumble checks by 2.

Runestone: This stone, in the center of the 20-foot-diameter runic circle, is the heart of the fane's power. Beneath it lies a reliquary holding the powdered bones of Saint Ecatrina, a once-holy artifact now bereft of any sacred power. See the main encounter text for Lysaga Hill on page 63 for details about how to sever Strahd's connection to the Mountain Fane.

Runic Circle: Creatures within 10 feet of the runestone (occupying any square inside the circle) gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls. Any attacks they make are considered magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction or hitting incorporeal creatures. A creature standing within this circle also gains a +6 armor bonus from a sheath of force armor encasing its body (as if it were wearing *bracers of armor* +6). This effect fades when the creature leaves the circle.



THE SUMMONING

Encounter Level 9 or 11

SETUP: You should use this encounter only if the PCs come to the hill on the night of the new moon. At this time, Baba Zelenna (BZ) summons six witches (W) together for their monthly gathering.

If Strahd's secondary goal is Brook No Rival, there is more going on here than just a gathering of witches. Baba Zelenna has brought an aspect of Chernovog (AC), the demon prince she serves, to the Ecaterine husk, and with the aspect's assistance seeks to open a portal to the Abyss through which Chernovog himself can walk. The aspect of Chernovog increases the Encounter Level to 11.

As with encounter 11, the PCs can choose the direction of their approach. Baba Zelenna and the witches are engrossed in their ritual and are automatically surprised in the first round of combat, so the PCs (and perhaps the aspect of Chernovog) can take a single action in the surprise round before the witches roll initiative.

BABA ZELENNA

CR 5

HP 60

Female advanced green hag

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 90 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages Common, Giant; *tongues* at will

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21

HD 11

SR 18

Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws each +9 (1d4+10) or

Melee weakness +13 touch (2d4 Str)

Base Atk +11; **Grp** +15

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Power Attack (6 points included)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th):

At will—*dancing lights*, *disguise self*, *ghost sound* (DC 12), *invisibility*, *pass without trace*, *tongues*, *water breathing*

Abilities Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ mimicry

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Power Attack,

Thrall to Demon*

*Feat described in *Book of Vile Darkness*. Once per day, while performing an evil act, Baba Zelenna can gain a +1 luck bonus on any one roll.

Skills Concentration +7, Hide +11, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +11, Spot +11

Weakness (Su) Baba Zelenna can weaken a foe by making a touch attack dealing 2d4 points of Str damage (Fort DC 17 negates).

Power Attack If Baba Zelenna chooses not to use Power Attack, her claw attacks are +15 (1d4+4).

Thrall to Demon Feat described in *Book of Vile Darkness*.

Once per day, while performing an evil act, Baba Zelenna can gain a +1 luck bonus on any one roll.

LYSAGA WITCHES (6)

CR 3

HP 18 each

Male and female human adept 4

CE Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +2 (+6*), Spot +2

Languages Common

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

HD 4

Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares) (40 ft.*)

Melee morningstar +3 (1d8) and
gore -3 (1d4)*

Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d8)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +2

Atk Options Blind-Fight*

Adept Spells Prepared (CL 4th):

2nd—*scorching ray* (+2 ranged touch)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 13), *cure light wounds* (2)

0—*touch of fatigue* (3) (+2 melee touch, DC 12)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 9

Feats Great Fortitude, Thrall to Demon*, Weapon Focus (morningstar)

Skills Craft (various) +6, Knowledge (local) +0, Knowledge (nature) +1, Knowledge (religion) +1, Knowledge (the planes) +1

Possessions fiendish grafts (see below)

***Fiendish Grafts** Each witch has one fiendish graft that affects its abilities. Two witches have fast leg grafts, which increase their speed to 40 feet and grant a +5 bonus on Climb and Jump checks. Two witches have fiendish ears, which grant them a +4 bonus on Listen checks (to +6) and the benefit of the Blind-Fight feat. Two have fiendish jaw grafts, which grant them gore attacks.

Thrall to Demon Feat described in *Book of Vile Darkness*.

Once per day, while performing an evil act, a Lysaga witch can gain a +1 luck bonus on any one roll.

When the PCs reach the tower, read:

The burned-out tower is a husk of a building, with only three portions of its tall outer wall still reaching some 20 feet off the ground. Within their bounds, shorter stone walls, about 10 feet high, delineate the chambers of the ancient site, while piles of rubble choke much of the open space. Among the ruins, several figures shrouded in dark cloaks stand around a bonfire blazing with unearthly green fire. A many-pointed star is traced on the ground with glowing green powder.

ASPECT OF CHERNOVOG

CR 9

HP 95

CE Large outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +16, Spot +16

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Giant; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20

HD 10; DR 5/epic

Immune electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +10

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws each +15 (1d6+6) and bite +10 (1d8+3)

Ranged *eldritch blast* +12 touch (5d6/19–20)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +10; Grp +20

Atk Options *beshadowed blast*, *frightful blast*, *hideous blow*, *eldritch chain*, Power Attack, Cleave

Abilities Str 22, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 21

Feats Cleave, Improved Critical (*eldritch blast*), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (*eldritch blast*)

Skills Bluff +18, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +9, Hide +11, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Listen +16, Move Silently +15, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16

Telepathy (Su) An aspect of Chernovog can speak telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.**Eldritch Blast (Sp)** This is a ray attack with a range of 60 feet, equivalent to a 5th-level spell with a caster level of 10th.**Beshadowed Blast (Sp)** At will, alter *eldritch blast* so a target struck by the blast must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 20) or be blinded for 1 round.**Frightful Blast (Sp)** At will, alter *eldritch blast* so a target struck by the blast must succeed on a Will save (DC 20) or be shaken for 1 minute. A creature already shaken is not further frightened. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.**Hideous Blow (Sp)** At will, use standard action to make melee attack and deliver *eldritch blast* (claw +15 melee; damage 1d6+6 plus 5d6).**Eldritch Chain (Sp)** At will, alter *eldritch blast* to affect two secondary targets within 30 feet of the primary target, making separate attack rolls to deal half damage. Missing any target ends the chain.

Baba Zelenna's Tactics

Baba Zelenna regularly uses *disguise self* to appear as a very old female human. A Spot DC 20 check reveals that she is not quite human—her skin has the faintest tinge of green, and the texture of her hair is almost vinelike.

Although Baba Zelenna and the witches are engrossed in their ritual, they quickly abandon it. Baba Zelenna uses *invisibility* when she first hears sounds of a disturbance, then lashes out with her claws at the first PC to come within her reach.

Witches' Tactics

The two witches that have fiendish jaws (as you designate) are the only ones willing to wade into melee at the side of Baba Zelenna. The other four prefer to use ranged attacks.

Aspect of Chernovog Tactics

The aspect of Chernovog remains in the sacred circle as long as doing so remains practical, taking advantage of the attack bonus it grants him. If he can't see a target, however, he emerges from the sacred circle to find one.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Dense Rubble: See page 85 in encounter I1 for details on this terrain type.

Thick Stone Walls: See page 85 in encounter I1 for details on this feature.

Interior Walls: See page 85 in encounter I1 for details on this feature.

Sacred Circle: A tiny remnant of Ecaterina's holy power remains in the tower grounds in the form of this sacred circle, though it no longer distinguishes between holy and unholy. Any creature standing within the circle gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls, and attacks made from within the circle are considered magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction or harming incorporeal creatures.

Trap Door: See page 85 in encounter I1 for details on this feature.

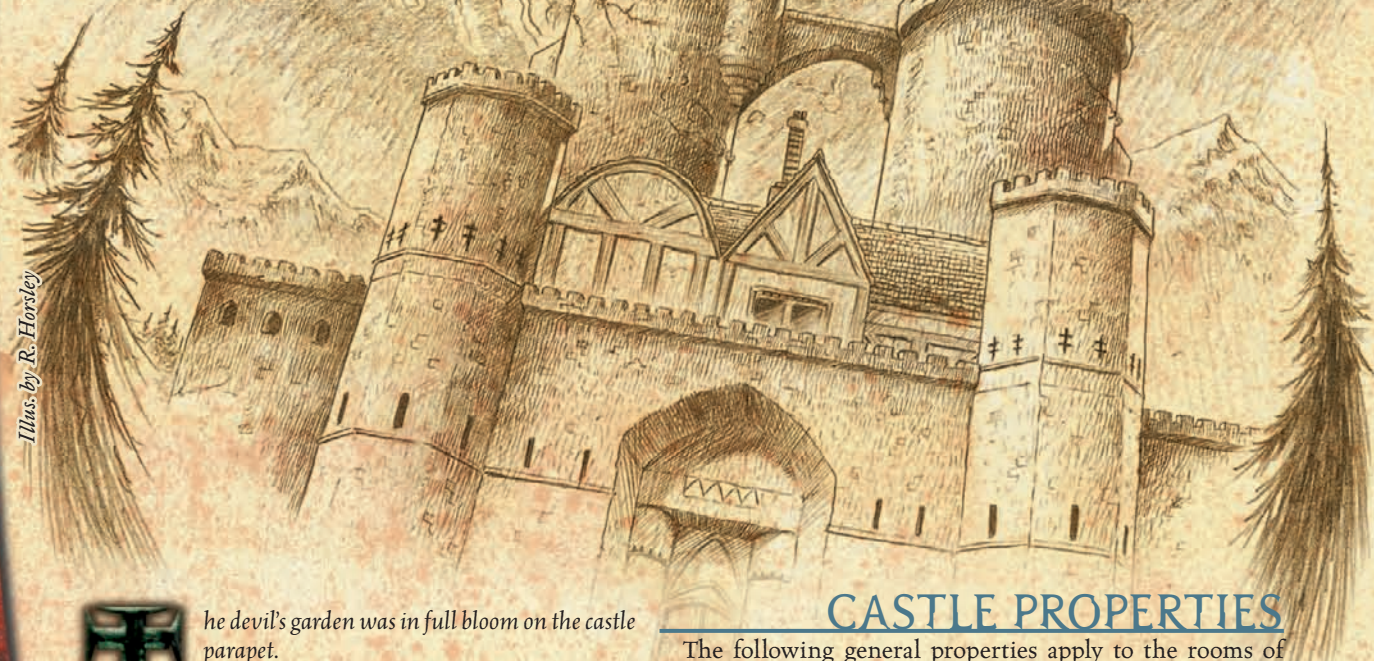
Bonfire: A huge, unholy bonfire rages at the center of the camp. A character who moves into or through the bonfire takes 1d6 points of fire damage and 1d6 points of damage from unholy power, and must also make a successful DC 15 Reflex save or catch on fire. A character who catches on fire takes another 1d6 points of fire damage immediately, and must make another Reflex save each round or take an additional 1d6 points of fire damage. A successful Reflex save indicates the fire has gone out. Rolling on the ground or otherwise smothering the fire allows the character a new saving throw with a +4 bonus.

Characters who catch on fire must also make a DC 15 Reflex save for each flammable item they carry, with failure indicating the item takes the same damage as the character.

A character can grab a stick from the bonfire to use as a torch (or improvised weapon) as a move action. As an improvised weapon, a flaming brand imposes a –4 penalty on attack rolls and deals 1d3+1 points of damage plus an extra 1 point of fire damage.



Illus. by R. Horsley



The devil's garden was in full bloom on the castle parapet. Fleshy limbs, devoid of character or feature, swayed gently under cruel stars. No dreams visited these rooted forms, whose minds had been stripped out so that their souls could be forged into an unholy conduit. While the garden was tended, the Dayheart beat.

In the office of the castle spymaster, one born in a celestial realm plotted and connived for its Master.

Golden fur, a lion's tawny mane, and a paladin's stature; yet this one had a heart of hollowed darkness. In that space, something else lurked, something born of demonic abysses. If ever the original spirit were allowed its freedom once more, what grace left to it would gutter and fail. While the spymaster plotted, the Master ruled.

Unclean, oily water lay still across floors of the lightless castle dungeons.

But under that surface reclined the dead, in the motionless effigy of sleep, waiting for the commands of their mistress Necromancer to rise. She busied herself in her sanctum, molding death as a sculptor shaped clay. While the Necromancer stitched, the dead walked.

Over all, under all, and through all, the Master of the Castle's mad plans moved toward their ultimate fulfillment.

CASTLE PROPERTIES

The following general properties apply to the rooms of Castle Ravenloft unless otherwise noted in a room or encounter description.

Walls: The construction is of the finest quality, superior masonry covered with plaster. Climb DC 25.

Floors: The flagstone floors are smooth and level.

Ceiling Height: Ceilings on the floors above ground level are 30 feet high, while underground floors have 15-foot ceilings.

Doors: Most doors in the castle are good wooden doors (1-1/2 inches thick, hardness 5, 15 hp).

Object or Spell	Bright	Shadowy
Candle	n/a	n/a
Everburning torch	10 ft.	20 ft.
Lamp, common	5 ft.	15 ft.
Lantern, bullseye	30-ft. cone	60-ft. cone
Lantern, hooded	15 ft.	30 ft.
Sunrod	15 ft.	30 ft.
Torch	10 ft.	20 ft.
Continual flame	10 ft.	20 ft.
Dancing lights	10 ft. (each)	20 ft. (each)
Daylight	30 ft.	60 ft.
Light	10 ft.	20 ft.

Illumination: Castle Ravenloft is dark, even when characters bring bright light within its gloomy walls. All light sources created or brought within the castle have their

ranges halved. A candle's light is barely visible, while a daylight spell shines bright light only out to 30 feet. The table summarizes changes to *Player's Handbook* Table 9–7 (page 165).

Low-light vision and darkvision function normally within the castle.

J. Gates of Ravenloft

After passing through the craggy peaks, the road takes a sudden turn to the east and the startling presence of Castle Ravenloft towers before you. Twin guardhouses of turreted stone keep a silent watch over the approach, broken from years of use and exposure. Beyond these, a wide chasm gapes between the Balinok cliffs and the walls of Ravenloft, disappearing into the fog-shrouded distance far below. The lowered drawbridge of old wooden beams hangs precariously between you and the arched entrance to the castle courtyard. The



Welcome to Castle Ravenloft

chains of the drawbridge creak in the wind, their rust-eaten iron straining with the weight. From atop the high strong walls, stone gargoyles stare at you from hollow sockets and grin hideously. A rotting wooden portcullis, green with growth, hangs in the entry tunnel. Beyond this, the main doors of Castle Ravenloft stand open, a rich warm light spilling into the courtyard.

The drawbridge creaks and groans under any weight, but it is relatively sturdy. Each time anyone except Strahd walks across the drawbridge, there is a 5% chance of a cross board breaking. A character who breaks a cross board must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall partway through the drawbridge, forcing the character to spend a full-round action to extricate his legs and stand safely on the drawbridge again. When simply crossing the drawbridge, this is a minor inconvenience at worst, but in the middle of a battle on the bridge it can be a fatal interference.

Two 5-foot patches of green slime cling to the portcullis over the entry tunnel. It drops onto the first

living creatures to pass beneath it, dealing 1d6 points of Constitution damage per round while it devours flesh. On

TAINT IN CASTLE RAVENLOFT

If you are using the taint rules from *Heroes of Horror*, Castle Ravenloft is considered a tainted locale (see *Heroes of Horror* page 68). Entering the castle requires the PCs to make a DC 20 Will save or have their depravity score increased by 1. If the characters spend at least 24 hours in the castle, they must repeat this save at an easier DC (10 + 1 per consecutive 24 hours in the castle).

Whenever a character casts a spell with the evil descriptor in a tainted area, he gains a +1 bonus to effective caster level but must make a Will save (DC 15 + spell level) or have his deprav-

ity score increase by 1. Whenever a character casts a spell with the good descriptor or a spell from the healing subschool in a tainted area, he takes a –1 penalty to effective caster level.

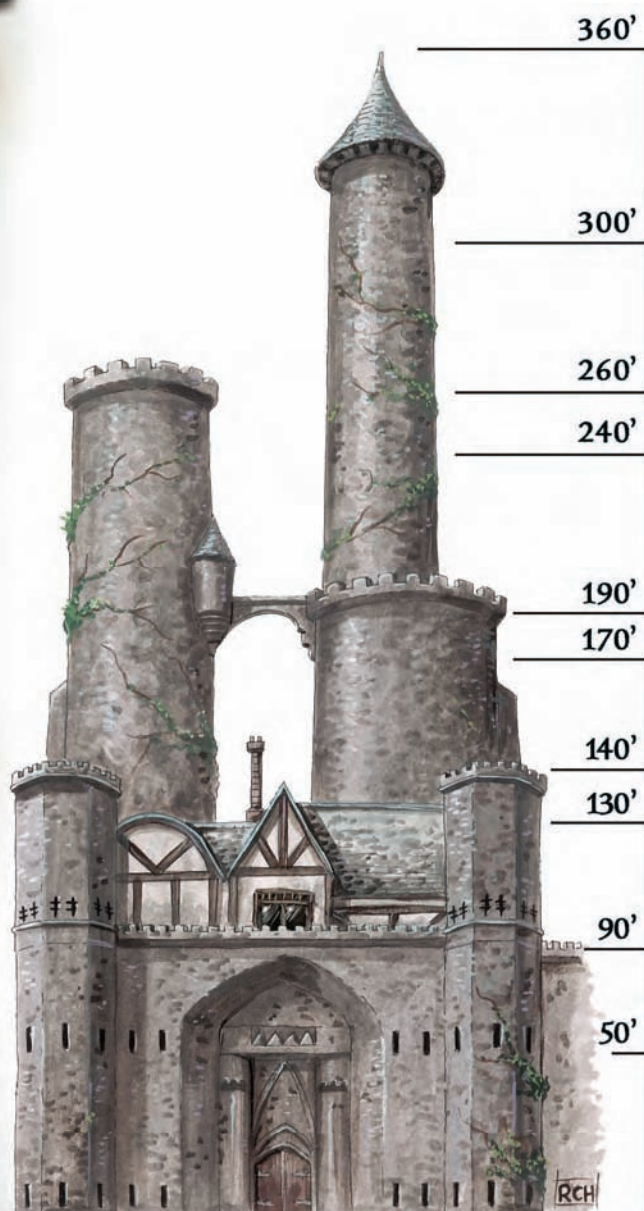
Any creature that dies in a tainted area animates in 1d4 hours as a zombie of the appropriate sort. Burning a corpse protects it from this effect.

Anything that deals cold or fire damage, sunlight, or a *remove disease* spell destroys a patch of green slime. Against wood or metal, green slime deals 2d6 points of damage per round, ignoring metal's hardness but not that of wood. It does not harm stone.

the first round of contact, the slime can be scraped off (most likely destroying the tool used to scrape it), but after that it must be frozen, burned, or cut away (dealing damage to the victim as well).

K. The Castle

A large walled enclosure surrounds the inner keep, encompassing an area 280 feet by 320 feet. The surrounding walls are 90 feet high and range from 20 feet thick at the bottom to 10 feet thick at the top. A pair of walls jutting from the sides of the keep divide the courtyard; each is 10 feet thick and 90 feet high. A similar wall stretches eastward from the chapel, while a shorter wall (only 30 feet high) encloses the south end of the chapel garden (K5). The tall walls are all crowned with parapets (see K46), but no guards walk these paths any more. The walls are not plastered, so a successful DC 20 Climb check is needed to scale them.



K1. FRONT COURTYARD

Thick cold fog swirls around in this darkened courtyard. Sporadic flashes of lightning lance the angry clouds overhead. Thunder pounds the courtyard. A light drizzle begins to fall. Ahead, torch flames flutter in the wind on each side of the keep's open main doors. Warm light spills out from the doorway. Although windows and arrow slits are visible in the walls above you, no illumination escapes from them.

The main doors to the keep are unlocked and lead into area K7 (2 inches thick, hardness 5, 20 hp, break DC 23).

Two towers flank the entrance to the courtyard, each 100 feet high, with locked strong wooden doors on the courtyard side (2 inches thick, hardness 5, 20 hp, break DC 25, Open Lock DC 25). These towers are occupied with the mechanisms for raising and lowering the drawbridge and the portcullis. Both mechanisms are magically activated through a command word known only to Strahd. Neither the drawbridge nor the portcullis will move until both latches are activated or their magic is suppressed with *dispel magic* (caster level 10th).

K2. CENTER COURT GATE

A massive wall here joins the outer walls of the castle to the keep. A single gate, 20 feet wide, leads through this joining wall. A rusting portcullis blocks the gate.

The portcullis is unlocked (2 inches thick, hardness 10, 50 hp because of the rust, lift DC 25). If it is lifted, the portcullis falls back into place as soon as the lifting character releases it.

K3. SERVANTS' COURT

This portion of the courtyard encloses what looks like a stable in the far corner, while a two-story wooden building is attached to the corner of the keep here. A small wooden door leads into this addition.

A small wooden door here, the servants' entrance, leads into room 23 (1-1/2 inches thick, hardness 5, 15 hp, break DC 18, Open Lock DC 20).

K4. STABLES

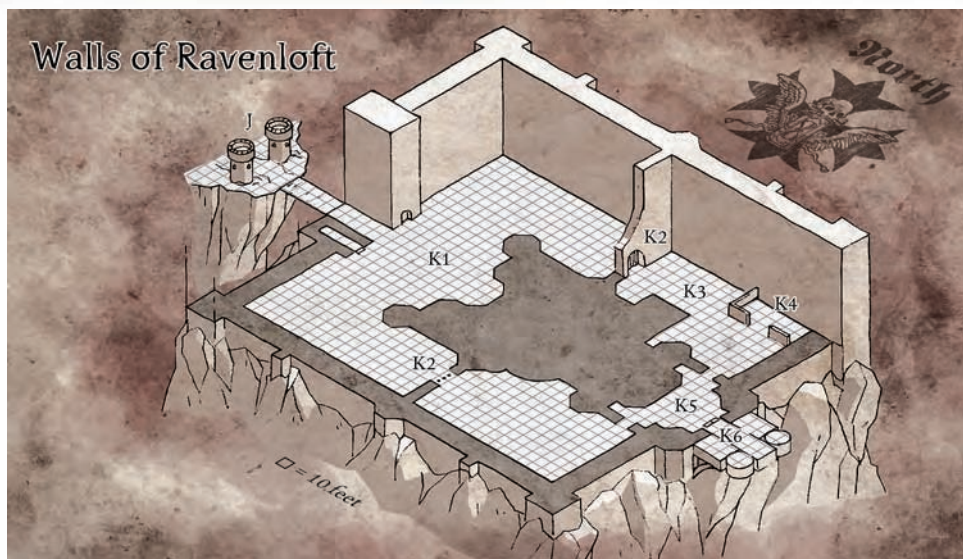
Three spacious stalls are littered with moldering hay. Apparently nothing has lived in this stable for some time.

K5. CHAPEL GARDEN

Behind the towering boarded windows at the back of the keep, a small garden struggles to survive. Small flowers press sadly skyward against the gloom.

A large iron gate leads to the overlook at area 6 (2 inches thick, hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28).

Walls of Ravenloft



Tactical Encounter:

K7–K9: The Entry on page 128. This room and areas K8, K9, and possibly K19 form a single encounter.

K8. GREAT ENTRY

Cobwebs hang from dust-covered columns in this great hall. Stone gargoyles squat motionlessly on the edge of a balcony circling some 20 feet above the floor. Cracked and faded frescoes adorn the domed ceiling, nearly obliterated by centuries of decay.

Two great bronze doors stand closed opposite the arched entry. To the left of the entry, a wide staircase climbs into darkness. A wide hallway extends to the right.

K6. OVERLOOK

Dead leaves spiral about your feet, wheeling and careening over a low stone railing. Far below this balcony, the little village of Barovia huddles under a constant drizzle.

This overlook juts some 50 feet over the edge of the cliff, supported by gracefully arching buttresses. The stained-glass windows of Barov and Ravenovia's crypt, area K88, are set into the cliff face 110 feet below. The cliffs drop 1,000 feet to the rocky base of the Pillarstone of Ravenloft.

MAIN FLOOR

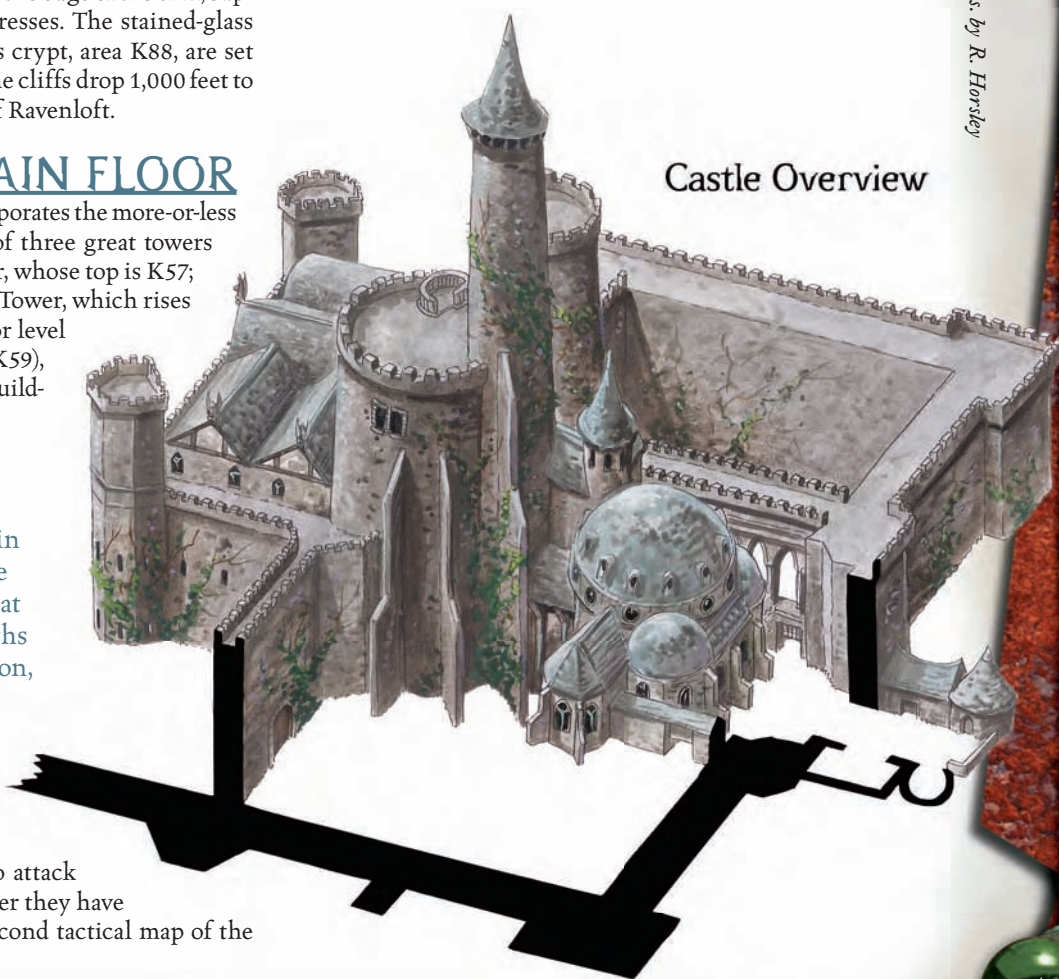
The ground floor of the castle incorporates the more-or-less square keep (K7–K13), the bases of three great towers (K21 is the base of the South Tower, whose top is K57; K20 is the bottom of the Dayheart Tower, which rises to K60; and K18 is the ground-floor level of the High Tower, whose peak is K59), the chapel (K15), and the servant's building (K23–24).

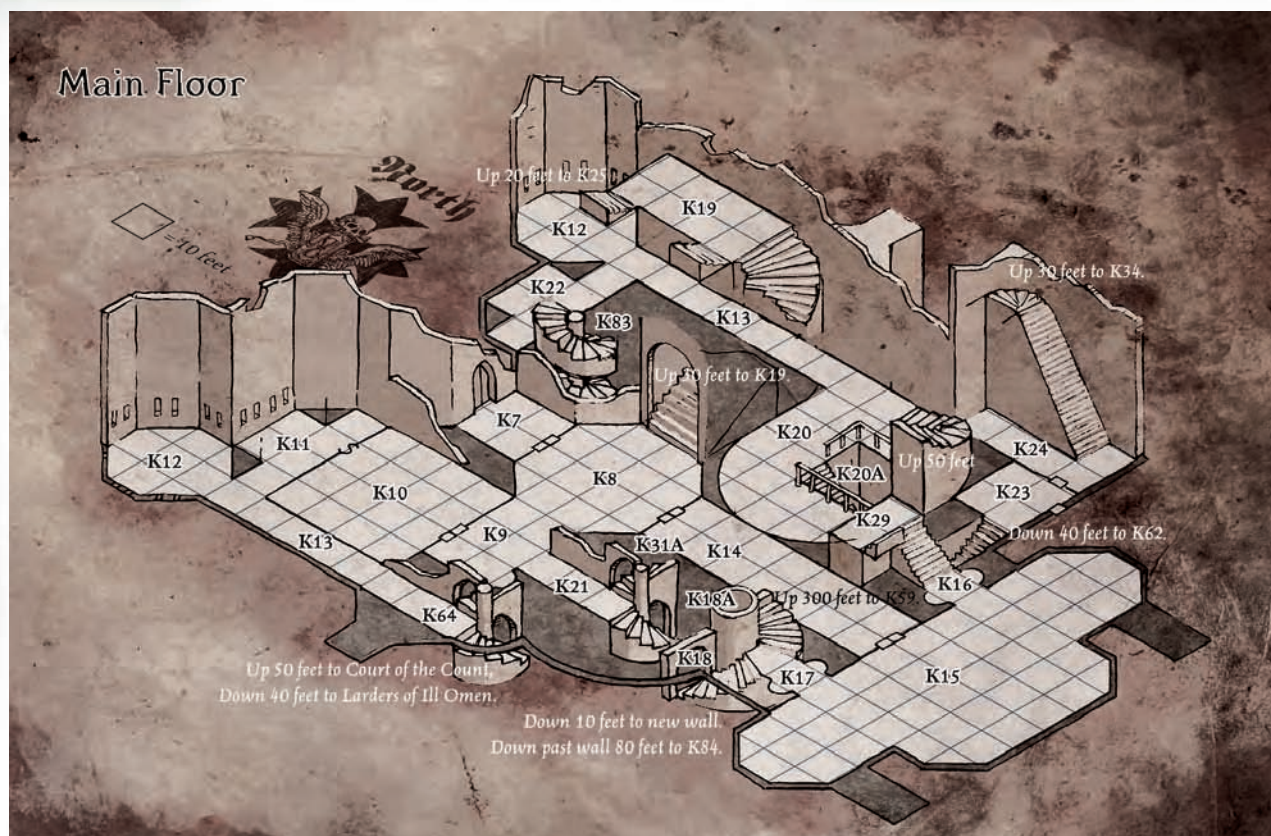
K7. ENTRY

This small entry chamber is illuminated by flickers of fire in the mouths of two coiled stone dragons that form an archway at the room's far end. Their mouths direct the light in your direction, cloaking the room beyond the archway in darkness.

If PCs pass through the arch into K8, the tactical map provides details of the resulting encounter. Likewise, if Strahd chooses to attack the PCs in this area at any time after they have defeated the listed guardians, a second tactical map of the area provides further details.

Castle Overview





The ceiling is a great dome, curving up from the level of the balcony (20 feet above the floor) to 40 feet at its highest.

If PCs enter this room, the tactical map provides details of the resulting encounter.

Strahd might choose to attack the PCs in this area at any time after they have defeated the listed guardians, usually to try to prevent them from leaving the castle. If Strahd attacks the PCs here, a second tactical map of the area provides further details.

Tactical Encounter: K7–K9: The Entry on page 128. This room and areas K7, K9, and possibly K19 form a single encounter.

K9. GUESTS' HALL

This hallway is draped in shadow. To the left, a narrow passage leads to a spiral staircase, and an alcove holds a suit of full plate armor posed with a halberd in one hand. A pair of double doors stands opposite this alcove.

If PCs enter K8, the tactical map provides details of the resulting encounter. Likewise, if Strahd chooses to attack the PCs in this area at any time after they have defeated the listed guardians, a second tactical map of the area provides further details.

Tactical Encounter: K7–K9: The Entry on page 128. This room and areas K7, K8, and possibly K19 form a single encounter.

Treasure: The armor is a suit of masterwork full plate. Removing it from its mounting requires 1d4+1 minutes. The weapon in its hand is a mundane halberd.

K10. DINING HALL

A wind whistles through this vast room. Crystal sings in the darkness as great chandeliers swing, dancing and sparkling in the light you carry. Motes of light dance in glass and china on a great dining table.

The first time the PCs enter this room, if they have not encountered Strahd before, he greets them here. The tactical map provides details of this encounter.

There is a secret door (Search DC 15) on the west wall, leading to K11. The door is not particularly well hidden, and can be easily detected by the cracks separating it from the surrounding wall—cracks that Strahd can use to escape the room in gaseous form. If a PC has seen Strahd escape through these cracks, that character gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Search checks to find and open the door.

Tactical Encounter: K10: Dining Room on page 132. This tactical encounter encompasses K11, one of the posts marked K12, and a section of hallway marked K13.

K11. SOUTH GROUND ARCHER'S POST

This small, square area was once a defensive position for the castle's archers. Through narrow arrow slits lining the walls, you can just make out the courtyard beyond.

This area is identical to the three areas marked K22, except that Strahd can use this area to escape an encounter in area K10.

Tactical Encounter: This archer's post is included in tactical encounter K10: Dining Room on page 132. This tactical encounter encompasses K11, one of the posts marked K12, and a section of hallway marked K13.

K12. TURRET POST

A high domed ceiling caps the room before you. Frescoes adorn the ceiling, but they are faded with age and impossible to make out. Tall, thin arrow slits open out onto the courtyard.

The arrow slits are 2-1/2 feet tall and 4 inches wide. A character standing behind one has nearly perfect cover against a creature on the other side, gaining a +8 bonus to Armor Class, a +4 bonus on Reflex saves, and the benefits of the improved evasion class feature against attacks originating from the other side.

Tactical Encounter: One of the main-floor turret posts is included in tactical encounter K10: Dining Room on page 132. This tactical encounter encompasses K11, one of the posts marked K12, and a section of hallway marked K13.

One of the second-floor turret posts is included in tactical encounter K25: Audience Hall on page 136 (as well as K25A: Hall of Madness on page 138). These tactical encounters include one of the posts marked K12, one of the archer's posts marked K22, and a section of hallway marked K13.

K13. TURRET POST ACCESS HALL

Cobwebs choke this long corridor, obstructing sight beyond a few feet.

Like fog, the cobwebs obscure sight beyond 5 feet in this corridor. However, the view-obscuring webs do little except to contribute to a growing sense of dread in the PCs, since no foe lurks within this hall to attack them. The exception is the section of hallway outside the dining hall (K10), which Strahd might use as an escape route. See the tactical map for details.

Tactical Encounter: One of the main-floor turret post access halls is included in tactical encounter K10: Dining Room on page 132. This tactical encounter encompasses K11, one of the posts marked K12, and a section of hallway marked K13.

One of the second-floor turret post access halls is included in tactical encounter K25: Audience Hall on page 136 (as well as K25A: Hall of Madness on page 138). These tactical encounters include one of the posts marked K12, one of the archer's posts marked K22, and a section of hallway marked K13.

K14. HALL OF FAITH

This long, dusty hall leads into the dark heart of Castle Ravenloft. Statues line the hallway, their blank stone eyes seeming to watch you as you pass.

The statues are just what they seem—statues. The apparent movement of their eyes is nothing more than an optical illusion. No actual dangers wait in this dusty hall, but it certainly leads to all sorts of encounter areas that lay deeper in the castle.

K15. CHAPEL OF RAVENLOFT

Broken stained glass windows send tiny shards of colored light into the ruins of this chapel. Pews and benches lie about the floor in jumbled disarray, some shattered, all covered with centuries of dust. Beyond this debris, a round dais holds an ornate altar. A beautiful silver statue of a raven stands atop the altar, just beyond the grasp of a humanoid form sprawled over the top and front of the altar.

If Strahd chooses to attack the PCs in this room (or the Fortunes of Ravenloft dictate that he is found here), the tactical map provides details of the resulting encounter. Note that the balcony of K28 overlooks this room, 50 feet above the floor.

Tactical Encounter: K15: Chapel of Ravenloft on page 134.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: Depending on the results of Madam Eva's fortune reading (see page 56), this room might contain Strahd or the *Tome of Strahd*. In addition, the PCs might need to perform the bonding rituals for either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* in this room.

Treasure: The raven statue on the altar is the *Icon of Ravenloft*, a powerful magic item described in the Appendix (see page 214). The humanoid form before the *Icon* is the corpse of an evil cleric who ventured into the castle in hopes of seizing it. The corpse wears +1 full plate. A +1 unholy heavy mace is slung at its belt. A *periapt of Wisdom* +2 hangs around its neck.

Development: Not only is the chapel possibly the site where a bonding ritual must be performed, but a character wishing to adopt the knight of the raven prestige class (see page 200 in the Appendix) must keep an overnight vigil in the chapel. If the PCs spend a long time in the chapel, Strahd is almost certain to attack at some point during that stay—ideally, when the PCs are least prepared to face him.

K16. NORTH CHAPEL ALCOVES

This arched room stands between the vast chapel on one side and a rising staircase on the other. Two alcoves open into the little room, each holding a shadowy humanoid statue within its dark confines. The stone forms display mighty muscled arms and legs, but their carved faces are hidden in black shadows.

The statues are harmless. The stairway is K29, and the chapel is K15.

K17. SOUTH CHAPEL ALCOVES

This arched room stands between the vast chapel on one side, and a huge circular staircase on the other. Two alcoves open into the little room, each one holding a shadowy humanoid statue within its dark confines. The stone forms display mighty muscled arms and legs, but their faces are hidden in black shadows.

The statues are harmless. The staircase is K18, and the chapel is K15.



K18. HIGH TOWER STAIRCASE

The large gray flagstones of this spiraling staircase lead up and down around a 20-foot-wide stone core. Cobwebs fill the staircase, making it difficult to see more than a few feet in either direction.

The staircase starts in the catacombs at K84 and spirals upward around a hollow central shaft (K18a) to a point about 10 feet below the main floor at K17. Here, a solid masonry wall completely blocks the stairway, although a small chink in the wall allows gas (including creatures in gaseous form) to pass from one side of the wall to the other. Beyond the wall, the staircase continues up 300 feet to K59.

On the kitchen level, a small crack in the outer stairway wall connects the stairway to area K63, allowing gaseous creatures to pass through.

K18A. HIGH TOWER SHAFT

If the characters approach the shaft from the top (K59), read:

A dark stone shaft stretches down farther than you can see. A strong wind rushes up the shaft, carrying the odor of moldering graves to your nostrils.

If the characters peer up the shaft from the bottom (K84), read:

A dark stone shaft stretches up above you farther than you can see. The air around you rushes past and up, rustling the cobwebs that fill shaft.

This shaft runs with the stairway continuously from the catacombs (K84) to Hightower Peak (K59). A solid wall separates the shaft from the staircase (K18). The shaft is 390 feet tall, so anyone falling its length takes 20d6 points of damage.

K19. GRAND LANDING

Massive stairs rise from the grand entry to an enormous landing. Stone arches support a ceiling covered with frescoes, 20 feet overhead. The faded lines depict the mountain that supports this castle as it is attacked by armored forces on horseback. Two staircases continue up from this landing in the same direction, separated by a pair of alcoves. Each alcove contains a suit of armor covered with dark stains, posed as if in battle and holding a mace designed like a curved dragon head.

Both staircases lead up to the Audience Hall (K25). The massive stairs lead down to the grand entry (K8). If Strahd attacks the PCs in either K8 or K25, the construct guardians of the landing join the encounter.

Tactical Encounter: The grand landing is included in tactical encounters K7–K9: The Entry on page 128, K25: Audience Hall on page 136, and K25A: Hall of Madness on page 138.

K20. DAYHEART TOWER

A vast, hollow rises into the darkness. Broad steps spiral up the shaft's perimeter while a separate, smaller set of stairs descends into the floor. From somewhere above, a bluish, gooey substance slowly drips, spattering and staining the mosaic floor.

Those who ascend this tower arrive at area K60A, where they find the Dayheart and its defenders.

K20A. TOWER HALL STAIR

This stairway leads from the bottom of the Dayheart Tower (K20) down to the Kingsmen Quarters (K71).

K21. SOUTH TOWER STAIR

Fluttering torches in iron sconces light this stairway, though the light is dim and cold, and a chill wind rushes down the circling shaft.

These stairs start at the end of the Dungeon Hall (K73) and go up through the hallway on the kitchen level (K61), past the Guest's Hall on the main level (K9), the Steward's Office in the Court of the Count (K30), and past the Facing Guardians in the Rooms of Weeping (K35) before ending at a landing in the Spires of Ravenloft (K47).

K22. ARCHER'S POST

This small, square area was once a defensive position for the castle's archers. Through narrow arrow slits lining the walls, you can just make out the courtyard beyond.

This entry describes three locations: one on the main floor (opposite K11, which is identical except for the secret door leading to K10), and two on the floor above.

K23. SERVANTS' ENTRANCE

Dim light filters in through a dust-caked window alongside the door leading to the courtyard. A large, heavy table sits in the center of the room, coated with dust. Another door hangs limply on one hinge, and opposite it a staircase descends into total darkness. On either side of the staircase stands a skeleton in bright armor, holding a rusty halberd and sagging slightly.

The skeletons are wired together and hang from wooden pegs drilled into the walls, posing no threat to the player characters. The staircase leads down to the Servants' Hall on the kitchen level (K62).

K24. SERVANTS' QUARTERS

Broken furniture and torn cloth are strewn about this large, long room. Dirt-caked windows in the exterior walls allow no light into the room from outside. A rickety wooden staircase climbs steeply upward.

The stairs climb to the Servants' Upper Floor (K34).

COURT OF THE COUNT

The second story of the castle is as encompassing as the main floor, including the main keep (K25–32), the continuation of all three towers, and a balcony overlooking the chapel (K28). It includes Strahd's audience hall, a massive chamber that gives this floor its name.

K25. AUDIENCE HALL

Occasional flashes of lightning spill into this room in jagged shafts through the broken glass and iron frames of a large window in the wall opposite the entrance. Otherwise, this immense room stands in chilly, brooding darkness. Hundreds of cobwebs, thick with dust, hide the ceiling from view. At the far end of the hall, a huge throne stands atop a raised platform, its back turned to the room.

The stairs lead down to the Grand Landing (K19). In the days when King Barov and Queen Ravenovia ruled, there were two thrones in this hall. Strahd removed the queen's throne and had it burned after he became a vampire. Only the fact that the remaining throne is off-center provides a hint that a second throne is missing.

There is a secret door (Search DC 25) in the south wall, leading to the south Turret Post Access Hall on this level (K13).

If Strahd chooses to attack the PCs in this room, the tactical map provides details of the resulting encounter. If Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness, use tactical encounter K25A instead of this encounter.

If Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness and the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate that Strahd can always be found in this room, then Strahd is here with the shapeless spawn. Remove the gibbering mouther, and use Strahd's statistics from encounter K25. Use the notes on Strahd's tactics included in encounter K25A, however, in this case.

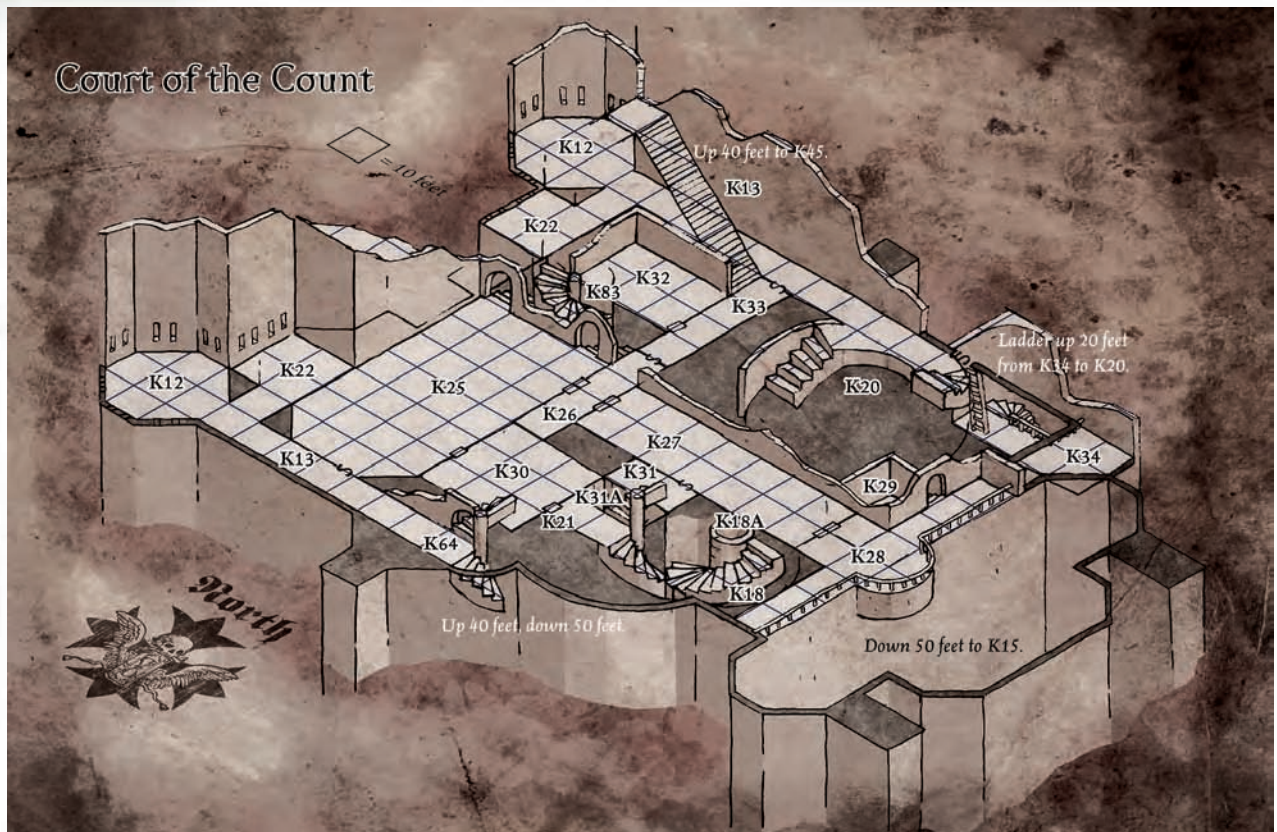
Tactical Encounter: K25: Audience Hall on page 136 or K25A: Hall of Madness on page 138.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: Depending on the results of Madam Eva's fortune reading (see page 56), this room might contain Strahd or the *Tome of Strahd*. In addition, the PCs might need to perform the bonding rituals for either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* in this room.

Development: If you are using the secondary goal of Descent into Madness and the shapeless spawn is defeated, Strahd slowly begins to return to sanity. He still behaves erratically and spouts nonsense when he attacks the PCs, but the next time the PCs enter the room designated in the Fortunes of Ravenloft as the room where Strahd can be found, he fights them rationally—and thanks them for their help in restoring his right mind (perhaps even as he otherwise attempts to destroy them).

K26. GUARD'S POST

This dark antechamber lies between two sets of massive double doors. Between the doors, two alcoves hold grinning skeletons facing each other across the darkness.



The skeletons are harmless, wired together and held up with spears stuck through them and into the walls behind them. A secret door (Search DC 25) in the back of the north alcove leads to K33.

K27. HALL OF GRACE

Shadows seem to dance across the high, vaulted ceiling in this wide hall. A low moan rises and falls, intoning sadness and despair.

The moaning is only the wind, and the shadows are a trick of light. No danger lingers here, though some might find the PCs if they remain in this location too long. Halfway down the hall on the south side a secret door (Search DC 25) leads to K31.

K28. CHAPEL BALCONY

This long balcony overlooks the vast, rubble-strewn castle chapel. Two large, ornate thrones stand in the middle of the balcony, facing the chapel's altar far below.

The thrones are empty. This balcony overlooks the chapel (K15), 50 feet below. If the PCs linger here for long, they might attract unwanted attention from below and trigger the encounter detailed on the tactical map.

Tactical Encounter: The balcony is included in tactical map K15: Chapel of Ravenloft on page 134.

K29. CREAKING LANDING

A staircase of old wood climbs shakily up a stonework shaft. With each step upon it, the wood strains underfoot, creaking and groaning.

The staircase climbs from the North Chapel Alcoves (K16) up to the Chapel Balcony (K28). Despite its protests and apparent readiness to collapse, the staircase is quite sturdy. It easily holds the weight of the player characters—even if they are somehow forced into a battle while in this location.

K30. STEWARD'S OFFICE

Dusty scrolls and tomes line the walls and lie scattered across the floor of this room. In the center of all this clutter stands a huge oak desk, its surface also littered with scrolls, tomes, and pieces of parchment.

If the PCs enter this room, the tactical map provides details of this encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K30: Steward's Office on page 140.

Treasure: Scattered about the room under the papers are 100 gp and 25 pp. One of the curled parchments atop the desk is a scroll of divine spells containing *restoration*, *break enchantment*, and *remove disease*. The other books and papers contain worthless financial records dating back hundreds of years.

K31. TRAPWORKS

The aroma of grease and well-oiled wood greets you as the secret door slides open. Intricate machinery fills the room beyond, with only small passages allowing access between the gears and pulleys. Behind this clockwork, a shaft rises from the darkness and continues upward past this room.

This machinery raises a platform from the hallway (K61) on the kitchen level up to an upper landing (K47). The platform moves up and down the shaft, K31a. From this level, it is 90 feet to the bottom, so a character falling here takes 9d6 points of damage.

A character who makes a DC 20 Disable Device check can activate the mechanism, triggering the trap in area K61 (see tactical encounter K61: Hallway on page 162). If the trap has been triggered, a successful check resets it, lowering the platform back to K61. When activated, all of the gears, ropes, and pulleys spring to life at once, though reasonably quietly.

K31A. TRAP SHAFT

This long shaft smells of well-oiled wood. Two large wooden screws face each other across the shaft.

The shaft is 170 feet from top to bottom. When the trap is active, the screws turn to move the platform from K61 up to K47.

K31B. TRAP ACCESS

This short, narrow corridor on the Rooms of Weeping level connects the trap shaft (K31a), by way of a secret door, to the Hall of Riches (K39). From here, a character falls 130 feet, taking 13d6 points of damage.

K32. MAIDS' HALL

Stained lace hangs neatly from eight canopied beds. In each bed except one, the figure of a young woman lays motionless, pale hands folded over her chest. The eighth bed is empty.

The seven women are dead, their corpses unnaturally preserved. Touching a corpse causes the skin to crumble to dust, leaving a blackened skeleton behind.

The room reveals no indication as to what, if anything, ever occupied the eighth bed.

K33. KING'S APARTMENT STAIR

This hall and staircase lead from the secret door in the Guard Post (K26), past the Maids' Hall (K32), and up to the Hall of Heroes (K45).

K34. SERVANTS' UPPER FLOOR

The floor sags in the middle. Dirt-caked windows allow no light in from outside. Broken bedframes litter the floor.

A secret door (Search DC 25) on the west end of the south wall reveals a ladder leading 20 feet up to another secret door into the Dayheart Tower stairway (K20). The secret door is obvious from the top of the ladder, but characters inside must make a successful DC 25 Search check to find it.

ROOMS OF WEEPING

The third floor of the castle, the top floor of the main keep, encompasses all three towers as they rise up beyond the roof of the keep. The belfry (K40) sits atop the chapel building.

K35. FACING GUARDIANS

A door of delicately engraved steel stands opposite the top of the stairs, at the far end of a dark hallway. Flanking the door are suits of armor facing each other across the hall from the shadowy depths of two alcoves.

If PCs enter this room, the tactical map provides details of the resulting encounter. Given the close quarters of this area and the incorporeal nature of the foes, PCs might choose to advance into area K36 in order to fight on more equal footing. However, that opens them up to a larger encounter encompassing areas K36, K37, K42, and K43.

Tactical Encounter: K35–44: Rooms of Weeping on page 142. This room and areas K36, K37, K42, K43, and K44 form a single encounter area.

K36. DINING HALL OF THE COUNT

Dust swirls in the air, mingled with the musty smell of death and decay. Before you, a long table of oak stretches beneath a blanket of dust. The rotting tablecloth lies in tatters beneath dusty plates and tarnished silverware. In the center of the table, a large, tiered cake leans heavily to one side, its frosting green with mold. Cobwebs drape like dusty lace down the sides of the cake. A tiny figure of a woman in white finery crowns the cake.

If PCs enter this room, the tactical map provides details of the resulting encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K35–44: Rooms of Weeping on page 142. This room and areas K35, K37, K42, K43, and K44 form a single encounter area.

K37. STUDY

A blazing hearth fire fills this room with rolling waves of red and amber light. The walls are lined with ancient books and tomes, their leather covers well oiled and preserved. The stone floor is mostly hidden beneath a luxurious rug of a deep-patterned weave. A large, low table sits in the center of the room, waxed and polished to a mirrored shine. Even the poker next to the fireplace is polished. Large, overstuffed divans and couches are arrayed around the room, with two luxurious chairs facing the hearth. A huge painting in a heavy, gilded frame hangs over the mantelpiece, illuminated by the dancing light of the fire—it depicts a woman who is the exact likeness of the Burgomaster's daughter, Ireena Kolyana.

The painting depicts Tatyana von Zarovich, the wife of Strahd's brother Sergei and the object of Strahd's undying obsession.

A secret door in the fireplace is opened by lifting the poker from its stand, though a character can also force the secret door open with a DC 20 Disable Device check or a DC 25 Strength check.

If characters pass through the fireplace without extinguishing the fire, they take 1d6 points of damage and must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid catching on fire. A character who catches on fire takes another 1d6 points of fire damage immediately, and must make another Reflex save each round or take an additional 1d6 points of fire damage. A successful Reflex save indicates the fire has gone out. Jumping into the river extinguishes the flames. Rolling on the ground or otherwise smothering the fire allows the character a new saving throw with a +4 bonus.

Characters who catch on fire must also make a DC 15 Reflex save for each flammable item they carry, with failure indicating the item takes the same damage as the character (DMG 303–304).

If Strahd chooses to attack the PCs in this area, the tactical map provides details of the attack.

Tactical Encounter: K35–44: Rooms of Weeping on page 142. This room and areas K35, K36, K42, K43, and K44 form a single encounter area.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: Depending on the results of Madam Eva's fortune reading (see page 56), this room might contain Strahd or the *Tome of Strahd*. In addition, the PCs might need to perform the bonding rituals for either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* in this room.

Development: If the characters spend enough time in here to perform a bonding ritual, Strahd is almost certain to attack at some point during the process—ideally, when the PCs are least prepared to face him.

K38. FALSE TREASURY

This smoky room behind the fireplace holds a closed chest, with coins scattered on the floor around it. Attached to the opposite wall are two torch sconces, though only one holds a torch. The other torch is clutched in the skeletal hand of a moldering corpse clad in full plate armor, lying against the wall.

There are 50 gp and 100 sp scattered on the floor around the unlocked chest. Opening the chest releases a cloud of ungol dust poison that fills the entire room (Fort DC 15, initial damage 1 Cha, secondary damage 1d6 Cha plus 1 Cha drain). One round later, the chest releases a second cloud of poison, forcing a second saving throw if the PCs are still in the room. Then, one minute later, the PCs must make two additional saving throws for the poison's secondary damage.

Ungol Dust Vapor Trap: CR 7; Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Development: If the PCs are all incapacitated by the poison, Strahd takes them away and either kills them or turns them into his vampire slaves.

A second door (Search DC 30) in the eastern wall leads to K39. The door can be opened by placing the torch from the dead man's hand back into the wall sconce, or by making a DC 25 Disable Device check or a DC 25 Strength check.

K39. HALL OF RICHES

This ancient hall is choked with spider webs that hide the walls and ceiling. A narrow, low path of clear space runs down the center of the hallway.

Strahd might attack the PCs in area K40, starting a battle that could spill back into this room. The tactical map provides details of this encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K39–41: Treasury on page 144. This room and areas K40 and K41 form a single encounter.

K40. BELFRY

Cobwebs fill the area, obscuring your sight and choking your nostrils with dust. The path from the outer hall continues, leading to the center of the room where a rope dangles from high above.

The rope is attached to a great bell 50 feet overhead. It takes some effort to get the bell swinging enough to ring; a character must pull on the rope for three consecutive rounds and make three successful DC 11 Strength checks. If this is done, the bell rings loudly, and continues ringing as the bell swings back and forth. Ringing the bell causes the cheliceras in the belfry to descend and attack, even if Strahd is not attacking. If the cheliceras descend or Strahd does choose to attack the PCs in this area, the tactical map provides details of the encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K39–41: Treasury on page 144. This room and areas K39 and K41 form a single encounter.

K41. TREASURY

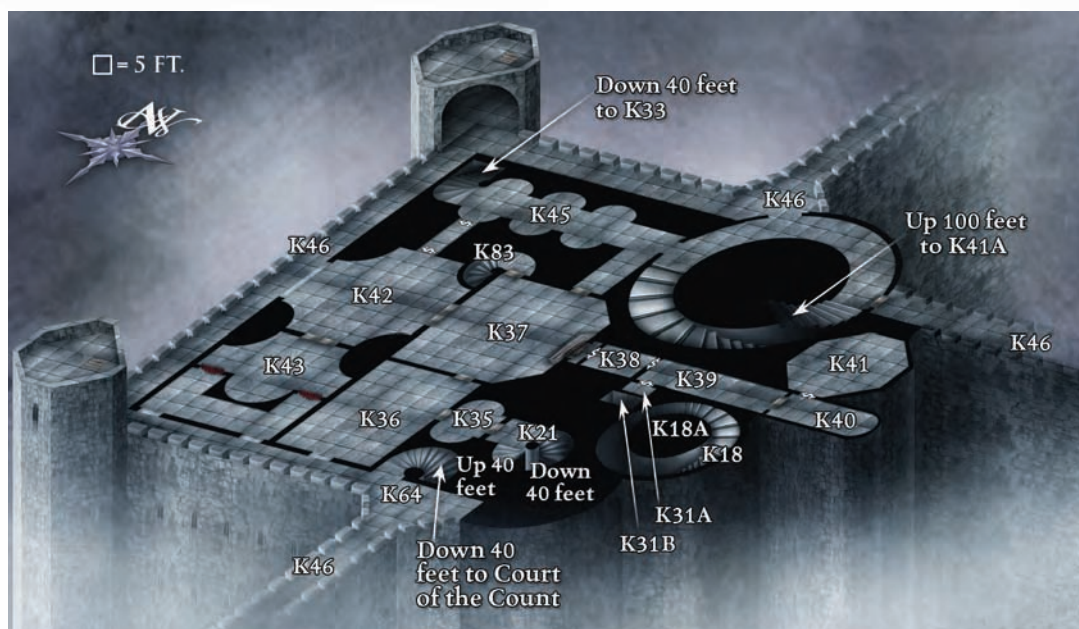
The plundered riches of a secret treasure hoard lie before you. A quick scan of the room reveals piles of gold and silver coins, paintings in ornate frames, statues, urns, weapons, musical instruments, and many objects partially buried among the coins and other items. Some sparkle with precious gems or metal, while others appear well crafted if somewhat mundane.

If Strahd chooses to attack the PCs in this area, the tactical map provides details of the encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K39–41: Treasury on page 144. This room and areas K39 and K40 form a single encounter.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: Depending on the results of Madam Eva's fortune reading (see page 56), this room might contain Strahd or the *Tome of Strahd*. In addition, the PCs might need to perform the bonding rituals for either the *Sunsword* or the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* in this room.

Treasure: Strahd's treasure is great and varied, heaped in piles on the floor of the room. Coinage accounts for much of its bulk: there are 5,000 gp, 4,000 sp, and 300 pp scattered on the floor. There is a +1 *ghost touch bastard sword*, and several large art objects (total value 6,000 gp). These art objects include a large silver urn (850 gp), a heavy (10 lb.) gold idol of some nameless squat demon-thing (700 gp), a decorative shield of steel inlaid with silver and lapis lazuli (300 gp), a golden circlet set with topaz (3,000 gp), a gold pendant set with a bloodstone on a heavy chain (150 gp), a fine lute with

**Development:**

Gertruda does not want to return to her mother, recognizing that Mary has stifled her and believing herself totally in love with the handsome Strahd. She refuses to believe any suggestion that Strahd is anything other than a perfect (and very much alive) gentleman, and quickly grows petulant with a PC who presses the point.

PCs who treat Gertruda gently

mother-of-pearl inlay (650 gp), and a fine wool tapestry depicting Strahd's conquest of these lands (350 gp).

Development: If the characters spend enough time in here to perform a bonding ritual, Strahd is almost certain to attack at some point during the process—ideally, when the PCs are least prepared to face him.

K42. BEDCHAMBER

Sweet smells waft from this delicately lit room. Windows on the far wall are covered with heavy red draperies that hang stiffly from the high ceiling. Their tassels of golden fiber glint in the light of three candelabras sitting atop small tables about the room. Tall white candles burn with bright, steady light. Against the wall to the right of the entrance is a large dresser. A large bed, canopied with silk curtains, stands in the center of the room. A young woman in a nightcoat lies amid the velvet and satin bedclothes. One of her dainty slippers has fallen to the floor at the foot of the bed. Carved into the headboard with great skill and care is a large “Z.”

The young woman on the bed is Gertruda, the 19-year-old daughter of Mad Mary (see area E10, page 30). Gertruda is oblivious to any danger to herself—especially from Strahd, whom she believes to be a charming and very romantic gentleman whose wealth surpasses anything she could have imagined. Sheltered by her mother all her life, Gertruda is innocent and believes only in a fairytale version of life. She is naïve to the point of being a danger to herself and others. However, her mind and body are intact—Strahd's attention has been elsewhere and he has not yet corrupted her body or soul.

If Strahd chooses to attack the PCs in this area, the tactical map provides details of the encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K35–44: Rooms of Weeping on page 142. This room and areas K35, K36, K37, K43, and K44 form a single encounter area.

can glean the following information from her. The words probably emerge in this order, depending on how the PCs treat her and what kinds of questions they ask.

“Mother treats me like a child! I won’t go back there!”

“Mother believes the whole world is like a nightmare, as if I’d be swallowed up by a monster if I dared to set foot outside the house. But here I am, and no monster has swallowed me! I’m happier than I’ve ever been!”

“The Count came to my window one night and spoke so sweetly to me—he’s so romantic. Of course I came with him! He’s given me freedom!”

“I have no idea where the Count is or what other rooms are nearby. Castle rooms, I’m sure, such as ball rooms and dining halls and arboretums and ... why are you asking me such things?”

“Well, no, I pretty much stay in this room. But I can eat whatever I want, and have you seen the clothes in that closet?”

“The food just appears at the door, usually while I’m sleeping. It’s always very good—I’m sure the Count has a whole cooking staff.”

“I don’t see him very much any more, actually. He comes to visit me, and tells me sweet things, but then he’s gone again, sometimes for days at a time.”

A successful DC 20 Diplomacy check is required to persuade Gertruda to leave the castle. PCs who are harsh with her or who emphasize Strahd's undead nature take a –5 penalty on this check, while kindness and sweet lies result in a +2 bonus.

Ad Hoc XP: If the PCs convince Gertruda to return to her mother, and if they escort her safely back to the village, they earn XP as if they had overcome a 5th-level encounter.

K43. BATH CHAMBER

A large, ornate iron tub stands in the center of this room. Red velvet curtain hang on either side of a mirror-lined alcove.

The curtains cover the arches leading to K44.

Tactical Encounter: K35–44: Rooms of Weeping on page 142. This room and areas K35, K36, K37, K42, and K44 form a single encounter area.

K44. CLOSET

Racks of clothing and dressers dominate this large room. An enormous variety of elegant dresses in every imaginable color hangs in here, though most seem very old-fashioned. Heavy red velvet curtains hang on the wall opposite the twin entrances.

These curtains hang over small, glass-paned windows, opaque with centuries of grime.

Tactical Encounter: K35–44: Rooms of Weeping on page 142. This room and areas K35, K36, K37, K42, and K43 form a single encounter area.

K45. HALL OF HEROES

Long, low moans drift through this long hall. The ceiling has fallen, leaving rubble strewn across the floor. Overhead, the beams of the castle's roof are exposed. Lightning flashes sporadically across the sky, casting shadows among the alcoves and statues that line the hall.

This encounter starts as a conversation with a single restless spirit, but it quickly escalates into a confrontation with less congenial spirits.

Tactical Encounter: K45: Hall of Heroes on page 146.

Development: Though dead, Lady Vey Rallen is still a knight of the raven, a member of a new prestige class detailed in the Appendix (see page 200). In addition to helping the PCs against the evil spirits here, she can give them information about her knightly order. A PC who can cast divine spells can adopt the prestige class if desired.

K46. COURTYARD OVERLOOK

This wide walkway, slick with rain, runs along three sides of the main keep.

This walkway runs around the front of the upper portion of the keep. To the north and south, a walkway runs along the top of a wall (over K2) to the outer wall of the castle. In the northwest and southwest corners of the keep, short towers rise above the walkways, with ladders leading up to the roofs of the towers. All of the windows leading from K46 into the keep are small openings paned with grimy glass. A Small character can squeeze through a broken window, while a Medium character needs to succeed on a DC 30 Escape Artist check to do so.

SPIRES OF RAVENLOFT

Above the castle's third floor, three towers stretch as high as 360 feet above the ground. Most of the rooms in this section are in the South Tower, although the Dayheart Tower rises to K60 and the High Tower peaks at K59.

K47. THE LANDING

When characters enter this landing, run the K47 Landing tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K47: The Landing on page 148.

Development: A fight on the landing definitely gets the attention of the trilloch in room K49. The trilloch does not emerge, but is ready for potential intruders.

The entire central 10-by-10-foot section of the room is a secret door (Search DC 35 to find; Disable Device DC 30 to open) that opens when victims of a trap in K61 are transported to this chamber, often asleep. See K61 and K31 for more information on this trap.

Treasure: If characters succeed on a Search check (or remove the portrait from the wall) they discover a small locked safe (Open Lock DC 23) on the wall. Within the narrow safe is a selection of expensive, antique woman's jewelry worth a total of 3,400 gp.

K48. OFFSTAIR

The stairs pause here, onto a 10-foot square landing. A single door in the west wall provides access to room K54. The coven of warlocks that normally reside in K56 rarely use this door, and thus keep it locked and trapped to put off intruders. If the trap goes off, Khyristrix on the parapet above (room K57) hears, and arrives a



Some still remember the glory days of Castle Ravenloft

few rounds later, invisibly and silently, to spy on the PCs. She makes no overt moves, but trails the PCs for a while, noting their behavior and weakness, which she later puts to use if the PCs come up to the parapet (K57). If noticed, she immediately teleports away, leaving no clue as to her whereabouts.

Stair: This dusty spiraling staircase descends 20 feet to the landing K47 and continues upward another 20 feet to end at K57.

Door: The strong door (hardness 5; 20 hp; burst DC 23) is securely locked (Open Lock DC 33). PCs who succeed on a DC 20 Listen check might hear an occasional purring noise, as a cat might make, from within the chamber.

Word of Chaos Trap: CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (*detect law*); automatic reset; spell effect (*word of chaos*, 13th-level cleric); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

K49. LOUNGE

Encounter Level 8

The ironbound door that opens from the landing (K47) is unlocked. If opened, the PCs see:

A low ceiling, supported by heavy beams, presses down on this room. The west wall curves with the outer shell of the tower and is fitted with three windows of leaded glass in steel latticework. Plush overstuffed chairs and couches sit invitingly near the bookcases the line the wall between the two doors.

This mundane library isn't as empty as it appears.

Creature: A parasite from the Negative Energy Plane called a trilloch infests this chamber. Those listening at the door might have heard its movements, but the trilloch is naturally invisible and not subject to the *invisibility purge* spell.

If PCs enter the chamber, the trilloch decides to "adopt" them. To this end, it begins to follow them about, invisibly and silently, hoping to feed off their negative emotions, and eventually their life, using its *control rage* and *death knell* abilities. It sometimes uses its abilities to the PCs benefit, but if any PC drops below 0 hit points, it doesn't hesitate to use its death knell ability to relieve that PC of his life force.

A *true seeing* spell or a similarly powerful divination is required to see a trilloch's true form. It appears as a bizarre cross between a fungus, a feathery ground-tethered, ocean-dwelling invertebrate, and a crustacean that measures some three feet long. The otherworldly creature has a wingspan that matches its overall size.

Development: The trilloch escaped from K57 where a devil named Khyristrix conducts many experiments in her Devil's Garden. These experiments delve into the nature of



undeath and the application of negative energy, and include tests, research, and probes where she regularly opens cracks in reality to the Negative Energy Plane. The trilloch emerged from one of these cracks and was then subjected to further testing by the devil Khyristrix.

TRILLOCH

CR 8

HP 60

CN Small outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; **Listen** +15, **Spot** +15

AC 19, **touch** 19, **flat-footed** 15

HD 8; **DR** 15/lawful; incorporeal, invisible

Immune magic

Fort +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10

Speed fly 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee —

Base Atk +8; **Grp** —

Special Actions control rage, death knell

Abilities Str —, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 11, Wis 18, Cha 18

SQ incorporeal traits, natural invisibility, outsider traits

Feats Ability Focus (control rage), Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (death knell)

Skills Concentration +14, Hide +19, Intimidate +15, Listen +15, Move Silently +15, Search +11, Spot +15, Survival +15 (+17 to track)

Control Rage (Sp) Inspire rage similar to *rage* spell (with DC 19 Will save allowed to negate effect) in living creatures within 180 feet at will. Each creature gains a +4 morale bonus to Strength and Constitution, a +2 morale bonus on Will saves, and a –4 penalty to AC. Subjects do not suffer fatigue when the rage ends. If a subject has the rage ability and its bonuses when raging are greater than those given above, it can use its other bonuses instead. An affected creature can end its rage by making a DC 19 Will save. The trilloch can end the rage for any number of creatures prematurely, without affecting other raging creatures. It can also end a rage caused by any other effect, such as a barbarian's rage ability, and in that case the barbarian would become fatigued. A trilloch always ends the rage for a creature that has gone beyond its normal hit points into those granted by the rage, likely dropping it to negative hit points or killing it. The effect

lasts for as long as the triloch concentrates on it, plus 1 round per Hit Die of the creature. Save DC Charisma based (this is a mind-affecting compulsion).

Death Knell (Sp) As a quickened action at will, a triloch can create an effect similar to *death knell* on all creatures within 180 feet. Any living creature in the area that has –1 or fewer hit points must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or die. The triloch gains no hit points or other apparent mechanical benefit from the *death knell* (but it does “feed” on the lost essence).

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A triloch is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, except for *detect magic* and *deathwatch*, which show its location. *Death ward* protects a creature from a triloch’s control rage and death knell abilities. *Holy word* and *banishment* return it to its home plane. It is treated as an undead creature for the purpose of being affected by *cure* spells and positive and negative levels.

Natural Invisibility (Su) This ability is inherent and not subject to *invisibility purge*.

K50. GUEST ROOM

If the player characters look into this chamber, they see the following:

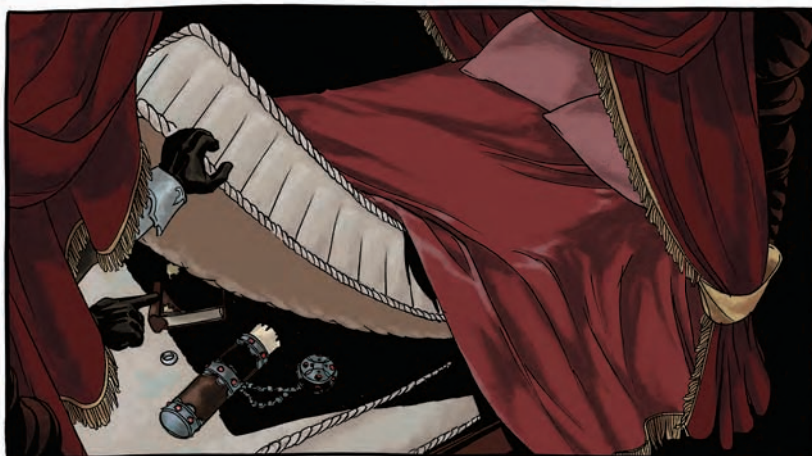
The king-sized canopy bed in this chamber is veiled in black with gold tassels. Two overstuffed chairs flank a small table, upon which sits a decorative lamp. A closed door inscribed with decorative floral carvings occupies the east wall.

Strahd once used this clean chamber for guests whom he didn’t want to slay out of hand. The room would make a good place for the PCs to hold up and rest—except for the fact that a warlock coven (in K55) regards this chamber as its private larder.

The door to room K49 can be secured from inside.

If PCs enter this room and they haven’t already dealt with the warlocks in room K55, refer to the K50 Guest Room tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K50: Guest Room on page 150.



Previous guests hid secrets between the mattresses

Development: If the PCs are ambushed in this chamber by the warlocks from K55 and defeat the threat, they might have an opportunity to press one or more of the defeated warlocks for information.

Afina and Cristofor, anyway, are more than happy to talk about their patron, Khyristrix. (Trina gives up nothing if caught and questioned.) The two warlocks reveal the following information during the course of questioning by the PCs:

“We forged a grim pact with Khyristrix! So what if we had to trade portions of our souls? In exchange, we gained sweet power!”

“It is our bond with Khyristrix that hardens our flesh and fills us with power. We needed that power to resist Strahd.”

“Khyristrix opposed Strahd . . . but now that we’ve moved into the castle, she’s come to some sort of accommodation with the vampire. Khyristrix has her Devil’s Garden up on the parapet, and Strahd never bothers her.”

“Strahd no longer bothers us, either. Power does that . . . it gives you security.”

“If you offer yourself to Khyristrix, perhaps she will take part of your soul, too. Imagine the power she will give you!”

Treasure: Characters who search the room might find a couple of interesting items hidden between the mattresses. In addition to the other treasure noted below, the old journal might be of interest to the PCs. On a successful DC 17 Search check, PCs discover an old journal (see sidebar), an open scroll penned with three spells (*wall of force*, *wall of fire*, and *wind wall*), and a thin silver ring.

OLD JOURNAL

The old journal found between the mattresses of the bed in K50 is written in Common. It appears to detail the trials of one Donovan Harp, who apparently stayed in this room about ten years ago.

A perusal of the journal indicates that Harp hailed from a distant land and traveled to the castle at the “Nobleman” Strahd’s request. Harp apparently represented certain property owners, and Strahd was looking to purchase a piece of land far from Barovia. After an unsettling meeting with Strahd, Harp retired to this room, where he spent three or four awful nights (the journal is confused on exactly how many), where he was assailed by awful dreams of predatory witches, bats, and vermin. Thankfully, none of the creatures that seemed to lurk in the greater

castle ever managed to get into the chamber. The room seemed to offer him physical safety, even at night, though it did nothing to shield his mind and sanity from nightmares and frightening sounds.

The journal ends with:

“A woman named Khyristrix appeared to me last night. She explained that if I came to the roof at the dark of the moon, she’d help me escape Strahd’s clutches. Something’s not right about her. How did she get into my locked chamber? No other creature dared to cross Strahd’s command that I be left alone as long as I stayed inside. But I have no choice. Tonight, I will leave my room, despite Strahd’s warning to stay locked within for my own safety, and ascend to the open parapet. I pray that my choice is right.”

The silver ring is magical and inscribed with an ank symbol. Inscribed along the interior of the band in elven is the ring's name: Moonfriend. See page 211 for Moonfriend's statistics.

K51. CLOSET

If the player characters look into this chamber, they see the following:

This large walk-in closet contains a few old shapeless black robes hung on iron bars set in the north and south wall.

The closet also contains a locked secret door in the ceiling (Search DC 29, Open Lock DC 30). If opened, an iron ladder is revealed, with an extendable piece that slides to the floor, allowing easy access to the next level into room K55.

This closet serves as a possible staging ground for a warlock ambush as described in the previous entry, and in the tactical encounter K50 Guest Room on page 150.

K52. SMOKESTACK

Characters might be tempted to gain entry to the castle through nonstandard openings, such as this smokestack. Read:

A spindly smokestack juts from the steeply sloping castle roof. The stack rises 30 feet from the roof peak, belching smoke from its iron-pronged capstone.

The smokestack connects into a chimney that drops 60 feet into the fireplace in K37, which usually holds a bonfire-sized blaze. The stack and chimney are 5 feet square, and climbable (Climb DC 15). Navigating the chimney while a fire burns below, however, deals 1d4 points of fire damage each round.

K53. ROOFTOP

The roof is a lonely place. If the PCs visit the rooftop, read:

The castle's sagging rooftop slopes precipitously toward the courtyard some 100 feet below. Occasionally, a tile gives way and slides off the edge of the roof into the fog shrouded void below.

The fog-slicked tiled roof is dangerous to navigate due to the deficient tiles and slope. Any movement at all is dangerous on the tiled slopes. Each round of movement requires a DC 15 Reflex save. If that movement is coupled with melee or ranged attacks, the DC of the save increases to 19. On a failed check, a tile gives way, sending the character sliding off the edge and into a 100-foot plunge to the courtyard (10d6 falling damage).



K54. FAMILIARS?

Khyristrix gifted each member of her warlock coven with a "familiar."

Torn and broken couches are arranged neatly about the room, despite the poor upkeep of each piece. Deep claw marks score the hardwood furniture; the once lush upholstery is in shreds.

PCs who do not make any effort to be quiet (or those who set off the loud *word of chaos* trap on the door described in K48) alert the three imps that reside in this chamber. At Khyristrix's command, the imps spend most of their time in the shape of emaciated white cats with glowing green eyes.

Also living in the chamber is an evil fey called a redcap. The redcap appears as a very short, tough-looking old man with leathery skin, iron boots, and a bright red hat. He wields a scythe too large for him. Acquired by Trina in the hills after a recent outing, she decided to try to tame it. She keeps it with the "cats" to see what happens. So far, the imps and the redcap have managed to not kill each other. However, both imps and redcap enjoy the occasional shocker lizard snack, which the warlocks sometimes throw into the room. (The warlocks use shocker lizards in their alchemy experiments conducted in the next room. They occasionally toss them into this room to see what the imps and redcap will do with the creatures.)

Tactical Encounter: K54 Familiars on page 152.

Development: An altercation in this room provides the warlocks in the next chamber with all the warning they need to prepare for intruders.

K55. WARLOCK ALCHEMY

This room serves as the primary location for an encounter with three warlocks, though only two of them (Afina and Cristofor) actually conduct alchemical experiments. The third warlock (Trina) prefers to stick with invocations.

A great black cauldron stands near the door, filled with a thick, cloying liquid. Arrayed around most of the rest of the chamber are long tables piled high



What devilish concoctions have been brewed here?

with glass jars, vials, and canisters filled with myriad substances. A podium on the eastern wall holds a great book. The southern wall follows the tower's curve, pierced by two leaded windows covered in steel latticework.

If the PCs have already dealt with the warlocks (they might have met them in room K50), then this room doesn't contain an overt threat.

However, if any warlocks remain, the PCs' interaction with the imps in K54 alerts them, and the warlocks are able to prepare an ambush for the PCs.

Tactical Encounter: K55 Warlock Alchemy on page 154.

Development: If the PCs deal with the warlocks (here or in another location), they are then free to search this location.

Secret Passage: A secret (Search DC 21) trap door in the northwest part of the chamber opens onto a narrow tunnel.

An iron ladder in the tunnel leads down into the closet of room K50.

Cauldron: One half of a silver key is visible at the bottom of this cauldron. The cauldron contains a thick, translucent liquid and isn't set over a fire. The liquid is actually a gelatinous cube! Any character who sticks a hand into the cauldron is considered grappled by the cube, and is immediately pulled into the vat. Roll initiative.

Gelatinous Cube (Cauldron-Shaped): hp 54; MM 201.

Tables: The tables are loaded down with an array of materials, most of them not particularly valuable (but see Treasure, below). Bottles include many magical components, including "Eye of Newt," "Hair of Bat," and "Snail Hearts," as well as esoteric substances with names likely unknown to the PCs.

Podium: A dark red book on the podium is titled, in *Infernal*, *Codex Advocare* (the *Book of Invocations*). This item is described on page 212.

AFINA'S JOURNAL

This journal, found in a small chest beneath one of the beds in K56, is written in Common. It appears to be the writings of someone named Afina Lucescu.

A perusal of the journal indicates that Afina began to dream strange dreams when she turned 15. A beautiful woman appeared to her and offered her vast powers if Afina agreed to pledge herself to her.

Afina agreed, and Khyristrix revealed her true nature as a devil.

Afina knows that Khyristrix has some sort of arrangement with Strahd. He provides her with some protection and a location from which to base herself, in return for her tending something in the nearby tower—something Afina refers to as the Dayheart.

Treasure: Besides the *Codex Advocare*, a careful search (DC 18) through all the jars and vials on each table brings to light several useful items, including: 1 vial of acid, 2 flasks of alchemist fire, 100 tindertwigs, 3 vials of antitoxin, 2 sun-rods, 1 tanglefoot bag, 3 thunderstones, 10 vials of ipecac (see description on page 209), and a glass jar with a single live garden larva sealed inside it (see page 157). One jar holds a dead shocker lizard, while another contains 18 shocker lizard eggs, half of which are viable (each worth about 10 gp).

The half of a silver key at the bottom of the cauldron is part of an item called the Portal Key. This half has the word "Portal" etched on it. The other half of the Portal Key lies forgotten in a rotting chest guarded by spiders in room K69. The Portal Key opens the door to crypt 12 in room K84. The Portal Key and the door it opens is something the devil Khyristrix has used to draw forth minions from a dark dimension. However, because of the risk associated with using the portal, she has commanded servants to hide the key. Khyristrix has posted guards around the portal in K84 to make sure no one meddles with it.

K56. WARLOCK BEDCHAMBER

When the warlocks aren't doing the bidding of Khyristrix or experimenting on alchemical creations, they stay here.

Three beds covered in black comforters line the west wall. Bureaus, small tables littered with combs, pins, and other personal items fill out this chamber's contents.

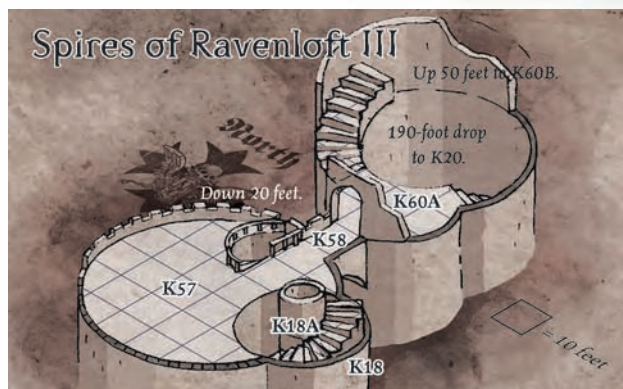
In the unlikely event that PCs come upon the warlocks unawares, adapt the K55 Warlock Alchemy tactical map on page 155 for use.

A search of the chamber uncovers a few valuable odds and ends (see *Treasure*, below) and Afina's Journal (see sidebar).

K57. DEVIL'S GARDEN

The top of this tower is not empty.

This parapet rises high above the castle—only two towers rear higher. Bluish sludge covers the parapet, secreted by nearly a dozen white, wet, rat-sized slugs. The slugs move slowly, migrating among pooled sludge and vaguely anthropoid fleshly bulbs rooted into the stone parapet. The parapet is ever so slightly canted, enough so that the excess sludge languidly drains along the northern catwalk into an entrance on the



neighboring tower. An acidic, vinegar-like odor dominates the air.

The devil Khyristrix tends an awful garden here of her own creation, with specimens culled from hellish realms from beyond the bounds of this world.

When PCs first discover the parapet, they have a fight on their hands.



An unholy garden where devils play

Tactical Encounter: K57 Devil's Garden on page 156.

Development: The devil Khyristrix (variant barbed devil) has struck an uneasy alliance with Strahd. In return for Strahd providing a safe base for her to grow her unique garden, Khyristrix tends the Dayheart (room K60A), channeling excess life force from her garden sufficient to keep Strahd and those he designates immune from the effects of full daylight.

Khyristrix has no interest in making deals with the PCs against Strahd—she'd rather have them as new specimens in her garden.

Devil's Garden: The garden is a fiendishly simple ecosystem refined by Khyristrix over many decades. In its current state, the garden consists only of two components: garden larva and devil's trees. No other plants or organisms live within the garden. In truth, garden larva are immature versions of devil's trees; however, they require a suitable catalyst to make the full transformation—they require a living humanoid creature.

When a garden larva successfully insinuates a living humanoid long enough to kill it, the corpse is transformed into a devil's tree.

Devil's Tree: A devil's tree is essentially a fleshy (instead of woody) plant that can root in most any medium, including stone, and which is nurtured by the unique effluvia of garden larva. A devil's tree bears a vague resemblance to the humanoid it once was, but no brain activity, personality, or any other ability of the seed creature remains. A devil's tree is a trophy in the garden, pleasing Khyristrix when she gazes upon it. The entire devil's tree grove serves another purpose, as well. The psychic linkage Khyristrix maintains with the Dayheart in room K60a is generated by the mindless fleshy trees, and is ultimately responsible for the Dayheart's power.

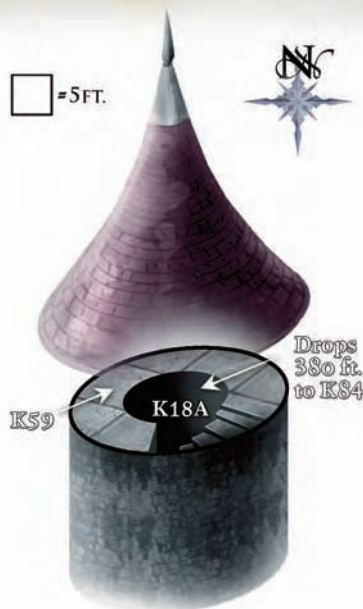
A devil's tree has AC 10, hardness 2, and 20 hit points. There are approximately 60 devil's trees in the garden atop the parapet. Each devil's tree contains 1d4 writhing pieces of "fruit" at any one time—garden larva nearly ripe and ready to drop.

Pooled Effluvia: Two low spots on the parapet hold shallow pools of the garden larva's bluish secretions. Slippery, this stuff isn't necessarily dangerous, and in fact is slightly nutritious. The pools also serve Khyristrix as places to lounge, sleep, meditate, and store items of interest.

Treasure: If Khyristrix is defeated, the hellheart locket (see page 213) can be liberated and smashed to aid in the destruction the Dayheart. The barbed devil also enjoyed the benefit of one dusty rose *ioun* stone. Those who spend 10 minutes painstakingly searching the pools discover the scattered sum of 3,000 gp.

K58. CATWALK

A slender stone bridge hangs in the swirling fog, connecting the top of a parapet with a neighboring, higher tower. The stone is slick with a thin rivulet



of blue sludge that flows from the parapet toward the tower. The remnants of rusted railings cling here and there to the sides of the catwalk.

The catwalk bridges the top of the parapet (K57) to the chamber of the Dayheart (K60a).

A fight on the sludge-slick catwalk requires participants to make a DC 15 Balance check each round or fall 100 feet (10d6 damage) to a roof of a lower part of the castle. See entry K53 for information on the slippery tile roof of the castle.

K59. HIGHTOWER PEAK

The spiraling staircase finally ends at a narrow walkway that encircles the top of the castle's highest tower. A

dark stone shaft stretches down farther than you can see from a 20-foot-diameter hole occupying most of the floor here. Cold air rushes up the shaft, carrying the odor of moldering graves. Wind whistles plaintively through small windows that pierce the tower walls. Aging beams support a steep roof, though one beam and part of the roof have collapsed, letting in a steady drizzle of rain.

The shaft (K18a) runs continuously with the stairway (K18) down to the catacombs (K84). A character falling the length of the shaft takes 20d6 points of damage from the 390-foot fall.

There are no bats among the beams supporting the roof, but every night bats swarm out of the shaft to feed in the surrounding lands and spy for Strahd.

K60A. DAYHEART LANDING

Characters find the Dayheart at the top of this tower, locked immovably in midair.

Tactical Encounter: K60A Dayheart Landing on page 158.

Ravenloft Fortunes: If an item is indicated here, it is locked inside the Dayheart (easily visible through the transparent crystal). Strahd appears here whether the fortunes indicate it or not to defend the Dayheart.



Development: This is one of the locations that Strahd puts in an appearance (in his monstrous form) to defend the Dayheart, though he prefers not to battle to the death here.

Despite the proximity of Khyristrix in the adjacent tower, the devil doesn't join into a conflict across the catwalk (K58) unless PCs actually enter her garden (K57). She is curious to see how Strahd deals with the PCs. At the DM's option, she might attack weakened PCs who have just driven Strahd away.

Even if PCs beat back Strahd and defeat the vampire and vampire spawn guardians, they have a hard time destroying the Dayheart without the hellheart locket that Khyristrix wears, as described under the Dayheart entry (page 212).

K60B. NORTHTOWER PEAK

Rafail the vampire and the spawn he controls have their coffins here. Even if Rafail and four spawn have already been dealt with, this room remains dangerous due to its potent traps and other guardians.

Tactical Encounter: K60B Northtower Peak on page 160.

Development: PCs could potentially end the threat of rejuvenating vampires by pushing all the coffins through the chute trap in the floor (described on the tactical map).

Treasure: The six coffins in this chamber contain a layer of damp grave soil, in which a few items of interest can be found with a DC 15 Search check.

Coffin 1: 10 emeralds each worth 100 gp.

Coffin 2: A sculpture carved of jade of a three-headed hound worth 700 gp.

Coffin 3: 2 potions of shield of faith +4.

Coffin 4: potion of haste.

Coffin 5: Empty (see vampire spawn statistics—it wears a ring of feather falling).

Coffin 6: Empty.

Rafail's Coffin: See Rafail's statistics—he carries a +1 bastard sword, a cloak of resistance +4, and a +1 chain shirt. Buried in the grave earth layering the bottom of this coffin is a bag of dust of dryness.



The Dayheart's sinister beat sustains the Master of the Castle with false life

Tactical Encounter: K61 Hallway on page 162.

Development: PCs can attempt to interact with the troll stalker. A successful DC 35 Diplomacy check (PCs get a +10 bonus to their check for using Auran) causes the creature to cease fighting and tell its story (in Auran) in response to PC questions:

"My name is Nicoramus. I was a hero. Now I am a slave."

"I am a living weapon. I was victorious in a war long forgotten."

"We were called truzlanan by those who bred us for a noble purpose. Now we are forgotten, and if remembered at all we are called spirit trolls, or troll stalkers."

"I answer to Lucian. As long as Lucian holds my oathstone, I must do as he commands."

"Lucian lairs northwest of here. Destroy my oathstone, and I'll complete a task for you."

The troll stalker won't reveal any additional information about Lucian; it doesn't actually know that the lion-headed creature is merely a body possessed by a shadow demon named Lucian.

The troll stalker can't leave the hallway where it's currently stationed; however, if PCs find and destroy the oathstone in room K72, it is freed from all compulsions. True to its word, Nicoramus will complete one task for the PCs. See the guidelines presented on page 261 of the *Player's Handbook* under the *lesser planar ally* spell for determining what sort of task the troll stalker is willing to undertake (in this case, treat the PCs as if they have provided a payment worth a 7 hour task by destroying the oathstone).

K62. SERVANT'S HALL

The low ceiling of this long hall sags under heavy beams. A fog clings to the floor in thick patches, obscuring everything less than 3 feet above the floor. A figure bearing a torch, mumbling and giggling, stands in the eastern end of the hall before a set of wrought iron bars.

This fog-shrouded hall is the haunt of a madman.

Creature: The figure standing giggling at the portcullis guarding the wine cellar (K63) is Cyrus Balcescu. Poor old Cyrus is crazy. He has served Strahd for uncounted years and is totally devoted to him. Cyrus tends to giggle to himself for no apparent reason. Cyrus is not aggressive. Indeed, he tries to speak with PCs if he spies them.

The first thing Cyrus tells PCs is:

"Why aren't you in your room in the South Tower? Master said that's where you were staying. You'd best retire there, or Cyrus will probably catch blame!"

Cyrus gives directions to room K49.

LARDERS OF ILL OMEN

Below the main floor of the castle, this sublevel is fundamentally a continuation of the keep underground. The South Tower stairs (K18) extends through this level and below.

K61. HALLWAY

This hallway hides a nasty trap and a lurking threat. Those who make it through the hallway can access either the stairwell K21 or K62, the Servant's Hall.

If asked what he does for Strahd, Cyrus responds:
"You know, odds and ends, cleaning and cooking, looking after things. In fact, I got something in the pot right now!"

Cyrus snaps his fingers briskly and retires to room K65, the Kitchen.

If PCs ask him, Cyrus accompanies them through the castle, acting as their guide (poorly). He also enjoys telling unfunny jokes at inappropriate times. One of his favorites, which he tells should any party member speak of a dead comrade, or if any party member comes close to dying or actually dies:

"That reminds me of the one about the corpse and the axe! See, there was this corpse, all dead and rotting, see? And this axe ... a red one ... it was sticking out of the corpse, see? It was sticking out so it sort of looked like the corpse had three arms, see? Ah ha! Ha hahahahahah!"

K63. WINE CELLAR

This wine cellar contains some rare vintages, as well as a few devious traps and guardians. Simply getting past the portcullis is a challenge in itself.

Tactical Encounter: K63 Wine Cellar on page 164.

Development: If the threats that guard the vintages are overcome, or at least avoided, PCs can search the cellar for vintages of ancient repute. For each 10 minutes and a successful DC 15 Search check, PCs find a rare (valuable) vintage amid a surplus of spoiled wine.

Carmitru Cellars "Cabernet Franc" aged 10 years; 200 gp
Austin Dimir Vintners "Pinot Noir" aged 7 years; 250 gp
Bumbescu Winery "Petit Verdot" aged 12 years; 300 gp
Dragomir "Clos de Dragomir" (Bordeaux) aged 3 years; 500 gp
Chateau Milisov "Chardonnay" aged 1 year; 100 gp
Des Voigne Cellars "Merlot" aged 3 years; 200 gp
Matecu Vintners "Pinot Noir" aged 8 years; 350 gp
Selymes Cellars "Vintage Merlot" aged 20 years; 3,000 gp
Selymes Cellars "Barovia Red Mountain" aged 5 years; 12,000 gp

The Vintage Merlot and Barovia Red Mountain radiate magic. A glass of the Vintage Merlot (4 glasses/bottle) is equivalent to a *potion of heroism*, while a glass of Barovia Red Mountain (4 glasses/bottle) is equivalent to a *potion of greater magic fang* +5.

K64. GUARDS' STAIR

The gray, dusty steps spiral into darkness.

This stairway begins at K68 and goes up past K13 to K46.

K65. KITCHEN

This steaming kitchen is ripe with a horrible odor of decay. A huge pot bubbles over a blazing fire in the center of the floor, its green, muddy contents rolling over and over.

If any PC looks into or otherwise interacts with the pot, refer to the tactical map. If Cyrus is with the PCs, the tactical map provides instructions on his actions.

Tactical Encounter: K65 Kitchen on page 166.

Development: A search through the kitchen cabinets and cupboards unearths a few items of value. A successful DC 15 Search check reveals a +1 *cleaver* (treat as a scimitar), 10 small jars filled with valuable and rare spices worth a total of 400 gp, and a *potion of fire breath*.

K66. BUTLER'S QUARTERS

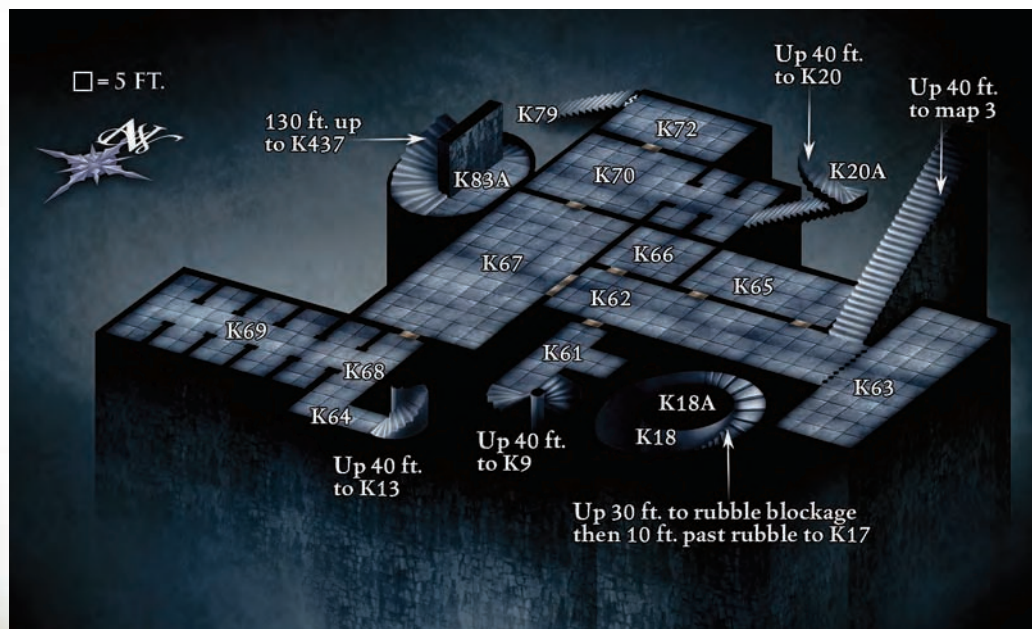
Cyrus spends his time here when not serving to Strahd's needs.

This cramped chamber overflows with junk. Amid the morass of tapestries, rugs, and piled clothes is a sagging bed. Piled on the bed are broken swords, crumpled shields, and dented helmets.

Cyrus (see K62) has been scavenging furnishings from empty rooms, as well as equipment from visitors to the castle that failed to escape. He's never managed to acquire anything of

any particular value; Strahd and Strahd's saner servants keep those to themselves.

If Cyrus is with the PCs when they enter this chamber, a DC 20 Spot check reveals how his eyes light up when he looks at the PCs' equipment. He says, "If you ever need to store anything, this is the room to do it in. A good collection always wants to grow!" In fact, he looks forward to adding the PCs' stuff to the room once Strahd gets around to dealing with them.



K67. GUARD'S HALL

Battles have been fought and lost in this large chamber.

Darkness, cold as winter sweat, fills this chamber. Large oak tables, scarred and beaten, lay scattered like toys about this room, their wood crushed and splintered. Dark stains cover the floor and walls.

Three years ago, a party of adventurers entered Strahd's domain and made it to this chamber before their fate caught up with them. Here, Strahd, Lucian, and several other servitors massed and finally took down the intruders. Their remains are interred in one of the catacombs of K84 (crypt 10).

If Cyrus is with the PCs when they enter this chamber, he says:

"Oh, now these fellows were tough ones! Came to kill the master of the castle! Strahd had to gather his forces to stomp them here. I think he keeps the skull of their leader as a trophy."

Cyrus elaborates some on this last bit:

"I am wishing I had kept the skull as a trophy, but Strahd swept away the remains before I could collect any souvenirs. I know where the bodies are interred: in the crypt with the inscription, 'Let these remind those who would contest the Master's will.' Somewhere in the Catacombs below. I'm too afraid to go down there."

K68. GUARD'S RUN

This is a simple corridor.

This arched corridor connects a heavy wooden door on the north with a passage to the south. Cool, moist air issues from an archway in the west wall.

K69. GUARD QUARTERS

The dead sleep here, restlessly.

Deathly silence reigns here. Dusty, thick cobwebs hang from the ceiling of this long passage, thickening toward the darkened west. Wide alcoves open off both sides of the passage. Rotting cots, disintegrating chests, and rags are visible within.

If PCs enter K69, the tactical map provides details of the resulting encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K69 Guard Quarters on page 168.

Development: A casual look through the quarters (once all the webs are burned out) brings to light several rotting chests that once contained the personal belongings of long-dead guards. One of the chests holds half a silver key, strangely untarnished, and with the word "Key" etched on it. This is one half of the Portal Key that opens the door to vault 12 in room K84. The other half of the key is in the bottom of the cauldron in room K55. If joined together, the Portal Key becomes functional. See the description of the Portal Key on page 215.

K70. KINGSMEN HALL

The large room contains evidence of past fights.

This room lies in chaos. Shattered furniture lies in heaps near the walls. Broken bones lie scattered amid crumpled and crushed plate armor. Shields



Are those cobwebs, or something far worse?

and swords jut from the walls as if driven there by some tremendous force. There is a door in the center of the north wall, and a door in the center of the south wall. A dark archway leads out through the east wall.

If PCs enter this room from K67 or K71, the guardians in K71 and Lucian in K72 respond to intruders.

See K71 on the next page and the associated tactical map (which also portrays room K70) for additional information.

K71. KINGSMEN QUARTERS

The alcoves to the north and south of this passage contain Lucian-placed (see K72) guardians.

A dark, low passage connects an ascending staircase to the east with a large chamber to the west. Sickly yellow lichen covers the ceiling. Two darker alcoves lie on either side of the passage, from which a demonic stink emanates.

If PCs have already fought Lucian in K72, then the bar-Igura guardians that nest here have already come to Lucian's call.

If PCs killed them there, they are no longer nesting here. Otherwise, refer to the tactical map for encounter details.

Tactical Encounter: K71 Kingsmen Quarters on page 170.

Development: A search of the bar-Igura nests uncovers approximately 400 gp, loose.

K72. OFFICE OF VENGEANCE

This is Lucian's office.

This shadowy room is in perfect order. An old cot stands to one side, its heavy blanket pulled taut and straight. Lances and swords are carefully hung on the spotless walls. A great desk stands against the south wall with inkwell, papers, and other items perfectly in place.

When PCs first encounter Lucian, they see a noble-looking knight with golden eyes and great white wings spread from his shoulders. If they catch Lucian unawares, they find him sitting at the desk, carefully scribing important-looking documents. This is Lucian (inhabiting a half-celestial by means of a demonic magic item called the *fang of inhabitation*).

Whether Lucian anticipates the PCs arrival or is caught off guard at his desk, he attempts to fool the PCs into believing he is a potential ally. (In truth, Lucian is a shadow demon inhabiting the body of a half-celestial. He's an agent of Strahd who stops at nothing to advance Strahd's overall plot, or failing that, to destroy the PCs).

To fool the PCs, Lucian tries to steer the discussion:

"I have just arrived here, looking for the evil that infests this place—have you heard of someone named Strahd?"

The half-celestial uses the distraction of the conversation to find out as much information as he can about the PCs. He makes up details about himself, or uses the information found in the half-celestial's mind to fill in believable facts, such as:

"I am Fandromar, a paladin of good. I travel the worlds, putting right wrongs, and aiding the good-hearted against the wicked."

"You seek someone called 'Lucian?' Yes, I've heard some of those I've encountered here speak that name. Apparently he is a powerful ally of Strahd. We should find him!"

When Lucian believes he has learned everything he can from the PCs, he attempts to steer them toward room K71, indicating:

"Something extraordinary lies up the stairs at the end of this hall; let me show you!"

If the PCs fall for the bait, the bar-Iguras attack.

If Lucian can't pull off his deception and the PCs attack him in his office, see the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K72 Office of Vengeance on page 172.

Development: If the half-celestial is defeated, the shadow demon Lucian jumps out of the body and into the *fang of inhabitation* (which is worn beneath the half-celestial's armor and is not visible to the PCs). From there, Lucian bides his time until the *fang* is found. Then he attempts to jump into the weakest creature he can sense (Cyrus, if Cyrus is still with the party). When the time seems ideal, Lucian attempts to slip away in his stolen form to locate Strahd. The next time

the PCs encounter Strahd, Lucian is with him (in his shadow demon form, or inside a captured NPC or PC, if possible).

If Lucian is somehow separated from the half-celestial Fandromar without killing Fandromar, the paladin is broken and mad from the years he has spent in thrall to an Abyssal demon. Fandromar loses any paladin abilities he once possessed and seeks to flee the castle as quickly as he can.

Treasure: A search through the desk reveals several valuable documents, including:

A document written in Abyssal which is an accounting of Lucian's agents and their locations: Nicoramus in the trapped hallway (K61), the bar-Igura's in the nearby alcoves (K71), and the necromancer in K77. The document also identifies Bildrath as a spy in the town of Barovia.

A document written in Common which purports to be an "Indulgence." According to the fancy script of the document, it is good for the pardon of punishment that the "Master of the Castle" might otherwise levy against an intruder. It is not absolution from any particular crime, nor is it binding. However, if presented to Strahd during any diplomatic interaction, it adds a +5 circumstance bonus to the holders' Diplomacy check.

A document purporting to be a "Lenience." This document purports to allow the carrier free access to Castle Ravenloft and is signed by Strahd himself. If the PCs display it to any sentient creature, they gain a +5 bonus on any Bluff checks they make regarding their presence in the castle. This doesn't work on Lucian or Strahd.

Also in the desk are 100 vellum sheets, ink, 24 envelopes, and a leather bag containing 213 pp.

In a locked (Open Lock DC 25) side door of the desk is a translucent stone set in a square 3-by-3-by-3-inch block of onyx. Inscribed below the translucent stone is the name Nicoramus in Abyssal. This is the *oathstone* described by the troll stalker in room K61.

Also in the locked drawer, a crumbling document written in a dead language (read language or similar to decipher) is stored. This document purports to transfer authority to possess the *oathstone* from Grand General Kalerhon to Lucian.

Finally, in addition to his other magical equipment, Lucian wears the *fang of inhabitation* around his neck. This fang-shaped ruby hangs on the end of an iron chain. The *fang* serves as a special focus for a *magic jar* spell, modifying the parameters of the spell (see page 212 for a description of this item). When the encounter begins, the *fang* has been used once—each *fang* can only be used two times to successfully possess another creature.

If Lucian Appears in His True Form: If the shadow demon emerges from the half-celestial and its *fang of inhabitation*, it attempts to secretly follow the PCs, and attack them the next time they rest, even if it means following them back to the village.

LUCIAN, SHADOW DEMON

CR 8

HP 45

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, incorporeal)

Init +11; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Listen +16, Spot +16

Languages Common, Abyssal

AC 22, touch 22, flat-footed 15

HD 10

Immune fire, cold, electricity, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, energy drain, death effects

Fort +9, **Ref** +16, **Will** +10

Weakness light powerlessness

Speed fly 40 ft. (8 squares, perfect)

Melee 2 claws +17 melee touch (1d6 vile)

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +17 (see flesh-ripping claws)

Special Actions darkness enhancement

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th):

1/week—*magic jar* (DC 20, 22 with *fang*)

1/day—*deeper darkness*, *damning darkness* (see page 210)

At will—*darkness*

Abilities Str —, Dex 24, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 20

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Bluff +18, Concentration +13, Hide +30, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +16, Move Silently +20, Spot +16

Vile Damage (Ex) Can only be healed by magic cast within the area of a *consecrate* or *hallow* spell. Only in a holy place, with holy magic, can the damage be repaired.

Flesh-Ripping Claws (Su) When claws touch flesh, they become corporeal and can claw, rake, and grapple opponents while ignoring armor. These attacks are made as touch attacks. Corporeal foes can only attempt to escape a grapple; they can't deal damage or pin the shadow demon in a grapple.

Improved Grab (Ex) If Lucian hits with both claws, it can start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

Rake (Ex) Use against a grappled opponent, dealing 2d6 points of vile damage per round. When pouncing, it can rake with each rear claw (+17 melee touch attack), each dealing 1d6 points of vile damage.

Pounce (Ex) Dive or leap upon a foe during the first round of combat and make a full attack (including a rake) even though it has moved.

Light Powerlessness (Ex) When subjected to bright light (such as sunlight), Lucian flees. Within such light, it takes a –4 penalty to AC, attack, damage, and save rolls, and skill and ability checks.

DUNGEON AND CATACOMBS

The lowest level of Castle Ravenloft, located 90 feet or more underground, contains both dungeons and catacombs. It includes the great crypts of Barov and Ravenovia, Sergei von Zarovich, and Count Strahd himself. The South Tower stair (K18) winds its way down to this level.

K73. DUNGEON HALL

The necromancer who holds court in K77 has trapped this waterlogged passage.

Black, still water fills the arched hallway. The water's surface is like mirrored glass, disturbed occasionally by falling condensation. Two arched doorways lead off either side of the hall to half submerged iron doors. A weak cry for help occasionally sounds from the south door.

The floor beneath the two feet of standing water in the hallway (four feet of standing water in the cell blocks) is trapped (to guard access to the Necromancer's tiny corner of Strahd's castle in K76). As shown on the associated tactical map, four 5-foot squares are trapped with teleport traps. If any creature walks across one of these squares, the trap activates, initiating the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K73 Dungeon Hall on page 174.

Development: Refer to K74 and K75 for additional details for the area covered by the K73 tactical map.

K76 to the west is where the Necromancer pits her best new undead against each other in survival of the fittest contests. If the Necromancer hears noises in this chamber, she prepares herself for visitors.

K74. NORTH CELLBLOCK

This waterlogged cellblock was converted to a lab before the flood.

The fungus-clad ceiling hangs 4 feet above black water. Brackish, smelly liquid constantly drips from the fungus into the water. The top of strange-looking equipment emerges from the water along the southwest portion of the chamber.

If one or more PCs enter this chamber without having first triggered the K73 Dungeon Hall tactical encounter, then their entry (if they do not successfully sneak to avoid the notice of the two boneclaws here) triggers that encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K73 Dungeon Hall on page 174.

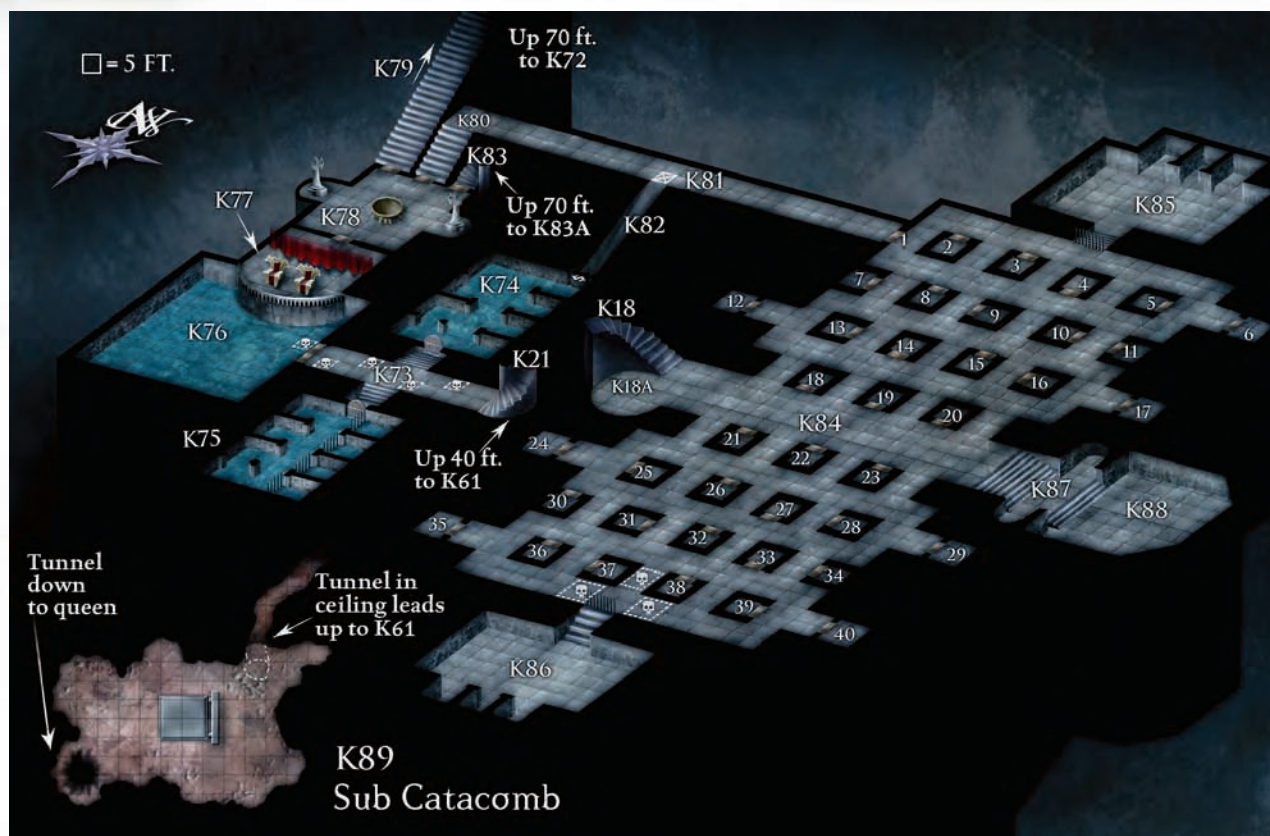
Under Four Feet of Water: The water-filled cellblock costs Medium or smaller creatures 4 squares of movement to enter (2 squares for Large creatures). Tumbling here is impossible.

Development: The Necromancer (K77) used this chamber as a necromantic lab before she upgraded her facilities (K78). However, remnants of past use remain, mostly below the water. Heavy, rotting wooden workbenches lie beneath the water, as well as steel cots complete with rotting straps. Tumbled, broken cabinets, shattered glass from a variety of strangely shaped lab equipment, the remnants of now-unknownable necromantic tomes, and various humanoid bones litter the area beneath the water. Among the detritus, some items of value remain.

The end-point of a trap (K81) and chute (K82) deposits victims in the northeastern section of the room. From this side, the secret door is difficult to find (Search DC 35) and difficult to open (Disable Device DC 35).

Treasure: Each successful DC 25 Search check (searching beneath brackish water is hard) in the area recovers one of the following items. Once an item is found, cross it off the list.

d6	Item
01	2 flasks of <i>embalming fire</i> (see page 209)
02	1 flask of <i>ghost-touch oil</i> (see page 209)
03	1 flask of <i>liquid night</i> (see page 209)
04	1 vial of <i>lichbane</i> (see page 209)
05	2 <i>potions of gaseous form</i>
06	1 <i>wand of false life</i>



K75. SOUTH CELLBLOCK

This waterlogged cellblock is still used for detaining prisoners.

Brackish, smelly water floods this chamber, providing only a few feet of clear air between the surface and a drippy ceiling thick with greenish-black growth. Intact cellblocks run along the south wall. From the far cell comes cries for help.

If one or more PCs enter this chamber without having first triggered the K73 Dungeon Hall tactical encounter, then their entry (if they do not successfully sneak to avoid the notice of the wraith here) triggers that encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K73 Dungeon Hall on page 174.

Under Four Feet of Water: The water-filled cellblock costs Medium or smaller creatures 4 squares of movement to enter (2 squares for Large creatures). Tumbling here is impossible.

Development: Cell 4 contains the villager Emil, whose calls for help can be heard even in the hallway. Emil appears to be a human male of average height and weight with black hair and dark brown eyes. If PCs converse with him, he asks to be rescued.

"Hey! Can you get me out of here? I'm so glad to see you! I can't believe I've survived this long. I figured if I didn't drown, the undead would get me!"

"I was exploring around here when something got me. The next thing I knew, I was floating in here. I think my skin is about ready to wrinkle away!"

"If you let me go, I can help you. I'm pretty handy with a bow. Back in Barovia, it was Emil they used to ask to bring down the mad wolves that got too close to town."

Emil doesn't speak falsely, but he lies by omission. He did once hunt wolves outside Barovia. After he survived a particularly close call, he came down with lycanthropy. After that, he became an agent of Strahd. Lately, Strahd's become mistrustful about the Necromancer's command over undead, and sent Emil down here to spy on her (since Emil isn't undead). But Emil was caught and stashed here until the Necromancer decides what to do with him. She will probably let him go, as she doesn't want to prove to Strahd that she serves anything other than the Master of the Castle's will, but she hasn't gotten around to doing that just yet.

If the PCs release Emil and let him come with them, he fights on the side of the PCs (in his human form) as long as they fight the Necromancer or any of her undead in rooms K73 through K78. After that, he slinks away at the next opportunity to report to Strahd about what's been going on. Emil defends himself (in his werewolf hybrid form) if the PCs attack him.

EMIL, WEREWOLF HUMAN FORM

CR 8

HP 62

Male human fighter 6

CE Medium humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +7; Senses low-light vision, scent; Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12

HD 6

Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Ranged longbow +11/+6 (1d8)

Base Atk +7; Grp +7

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot

Special Actions alternate form

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12

SQ wolf empathy, +2 natural armor

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track^B, Weapon Focus^B, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Bluff +4, Hide +7, Listen +5, Spot +5

Alternate Form (Su) A werewolf can assume a bipedal hybrid form or the form of a wolf.

Wolf Empathy (Ex) Communicate with wolves and dire wolves; +4 racial bonus on Charisma-based checks against wolves and dire wolves.

EMIL, WEREWOLF HYBRID FORM

CR 8

HP 78

Male human fighter 6

CE Medium humanoid
(shapechanger)

Init +9; Senses low-light vision,
scent; Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 12;

HD 6; DR 5/silver

Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws +9 (1d4+1) and
bite +5 (1d6+1)

Ranged longbow +13/+8 (1d8)

Base Atk +7; Grp +7

Atk Options curse of lycanthropy;
Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot,
Rapid Shot

Special Actions alternate form

Abilities Str 12, Dex 20, Con 18,
Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12

SQ wolf empathy, +2 natural
armor

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron
Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise
Shot, Rapid Shot, Track^B,
Weapon Focus^B, Weapon
Focus (longbow)

Skills Bluff +4, Hide +9, Listen
+5, Spot +5

Alternate Form (Su) A werewolf
can assume a bipedal hybrid
form or the form of a wolf.

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Any
humanoid or giant hit by a
werewolf's bite attack in animal
or hybrid form must succeed on a
DC 15 Fortitude save or contract
lycanthropy.

Wolf Empathy (Ex) Communicate with
wolves and dire wolves; +4 racial
bonus on Charisma-based checks
against wolves and dire wolves.

K76. TORTURE ROOM

The Necromancer uses this room as a testing ground. The iron bound double door between K73 and this chamber is locked.

Dark shapes rise from the still water that fills this high-ceilinged chamber—the dark shapes of racks, iron maidens, stocks, and other instruments of pain. A few contain skeletons frozen in silent screams. Two thrones on a balcony to the north overlook the chamber, and someone sits upon each throne.

The read-aloud assumes that PCs enter the chamber by way of K73. If PCs arrive from K77 by way of K88, they have already met the Necromancer. However, the Strahd zombies, the rot reaver, and the spectre (named Stefania) remain in this chamber and attack anyone who enters it from either direction. If PCs enter the chamber, see the associated tactical map for encounter details.

Tactical Encounter: K76 Torture Room on page 176.

Development: Whenever the Necromancer creates a new undead, she runs it through its paces in this old torture room. Undead that can stand up to rot reavers must be resilient and tough—the Strahd zombies represent, to her, the minimum strength creature she's prepared to create.

The Strahd zombies are so named because it was from Strahd that she learned the secret of creating a zombie so much more powerful than a standard shambling corpse. She dutifully creates more Strahd zombies as requested by the Master of the Castle, though she has lately come to believe Strahd is losing his mind. To that end, she has become more secretive in her creations, and unwilling to let anyone—even agents of Strahd—into her sanctum (K78).

K77. OBSERVATION BALCONY

This balcony overlooks the torture room.

Two large thrones on this balcony overlook a flooded chamber filled with rusted torture equipment. A red velvet curtain runs floor to ceiling, hiding the rear portion of the chamber from view.



*More than just torture
equipment is drowned here*

If the PCs come to this balcony from K76, they've seen the Necromancer dart back behind the curtain and have (possibly) dealt with the Strahd zombies, rot reavers, and spectre named Stefania. If the PCs enter the chamber from K78, the threats waiting below the balcony in K76 remain to be dealt with, even if the Necromancer has already been dispatched.

Tactical Encounter: K76 Torture Room on page 176.

Development: Sometimes the Necromancer trades with free-willed creatures she hasn't created (such as Strahd and his agents). Thus, she keeps a stash of platinum nearby to pay for services rendered.

Treasure: A satchel containing 600 pp is hidden (Search DC 30) in a secret compartment below the cushion of the western throne.

K78. NECROMANCER'S SANCTUM

All the doors to K78 are iron and lock when closed. Each requires an Open Lock check (DC 35) to open, and has a hardness of 10 and 60 hit points. To smash open a door requires a DC 28 Strength check. The Necromancer has a key to each door.

A great vat squats in the center of the chamber, filled with roiling pale mucus. From their alcoves to either side, bloated giants stand pulsing and heaving. Two walls of the chamber are lined with tome-stuffed shelves, and a stained desk is shoved into the southwest corner. Behind the vat, a slender figure in pale leather armor and hood yells in consternation.

If PCs open his chamber from the balcony (K77), they probably witnessed the Necromancer dart back behind the curtain. They have possibly already dealt with the Strahd zombies and rot reavers of K76.

If the PCs open this chamber and find the Necromancer present, she yells out, "Strahd can send all the spies he wants—I'll kill them all and raise them as my pets!"

The PCs have an opportunity to attempt to negotiate with the Necromancer if they wish. If they prefer a fight, proceed to the tactical encounter. Otherwise, see Development, below. The PCs might decide to try a diplomatic approach after combat starts—refer back to Development if that happens.

Tactical Encounter: K78 Necromancer's Sanctum on page 178.

Development: If the PCs announce to the Necromancer they are not agents of Strahd, she gives them an opportunity to convince her of their claim. If PCs can succeed on a DC 25 Diplomacy check, the Necromancer talks to them. PCs can gain a +5 bonus on their Diplomacy checks if they can provide evidence of their enmity against Strahd; for instance, showing the Necromancer a holy sword or other regalia of good in use by the PCs.

If the Necromancer talks to the PCs, they learn the following over the course of the strained conversation:

"I am Thredra Aranax. I've long served Strahd. Who wouldn't bow down to such a black-hearted power? But lately ... Strahd has not been himself."

"I question tying myself to someone who's grip on sanity slowly crumbles."

"His growing insanity manifests itself in many ways. Most obviously, he started sending his servants secretly against me, disguising them as villagers. He's forgotten all I've done for him, and what I could accomplish against him, should I decide to act."

"Strahd has magnified his strengths and hidden his weaknesses. The Dayheart keeps him and his servants safe from the sun. His lieutenants, such the shadow demon Lucian that inhabits the paladin, and Khyristrix who tends the Devil's Garden that feeds the Dayheart, are his strengths. Killing them would weaken Strahd."

The Necromancer's Bargain: If PCs want more than simply being allowed to leave unharmed, the Necromancer offers them a dark bargain:

"I can give you specific aid, if you first do something for me. I will loan you this ring, a ring of parting prevented, which will protect you from Strahd's life-draining touch. Second, I will tell you where to find a blessed saint's relic in the catacombs."

"Here's what I require in return for my aid—bring me the tongue of a living man or woman from the village of Barovia. The man or woman must be alive when you render their tongue unto me. My use for it has certain necromantic requirements that cannot be set aside. What say you?"

The Necromancer won't sway from her position—she wants a tongue from a living humanoid (it doesn't necessarily have to be from a villager). If the PCs won't accede, she tells them to leave until they change their minds.

If the PCs agree to the request, she immediately slips the ring off her finger and passes it to the PCs, saying:

"Your acceptance of this ring is your unbreakable pledge to bring me what I requested within two weeks. If not, one of you forfeits a tongue—you'll wake and find it gone."

The Necromancer doesn't necessarily know how to accomplish this last threat, but she wholeheartedly believes that she can figure it out with her resources.

"In addition to the ring, I promised to give you directions to a relic. Do you know where the catacombs are? Go through the middle door (pointing to the northern door leading from her sanctum), ascend the stairs, and follow the tunnel. At the end awaits the catacombs. Once you reach the catacombs, proceed directly east past four crypts to a crypt set into the east wall. The name once inscribed there is clawed away. Inside, you'll find Saint Markovia's Thighbone. A relic of some power that is useful against Strahd."

Treasure: In addition to the items worn by the Necromancer, there are several valuable books on the shelves. However, discounting those books described below, the entire library, with its treatises on necromancy, undeath, anatomy, and related topics, is worth about 5,000 gp, if it could be transported out in its entirety. The library contains some two thousand books and scrolls.

The Necromancer's Spellbook: Prepared spells (see page 178) plus 0—all except abjuration and illusion spells; 1st—identify, magic weapon, shield; 2nd—Melf's acid arrow, see invisibility; 3rd—slow, stinking cloud; 4th—animate dead.

Another shelf contains a tattered tome entitled *Liber Blaspheme*. The tome is incomplete. One fragment of the tome found its way to the church in Barovia (area E7), and is partly responsible for the zombie infection that swept the village. Other fragments are completely unaccounted for. This tome fragment is described on page 214.

K79. WESTERN STAIR

When the PCs reach the landing on this stair, read:

The landing of ancient stone is worn from centuries of use, but now dust cakes the floor and cobwebs choke the passage.

The stairs rise from K78 at a 45-degree angle for a distance of 40 feet, whereupon they deposit travelers on this 10-foot square landing. The stairs continue east and up at the same angle for 30 additional feet, ending at a door (secret on the other side) that leads to K72.

K80. CENTER STAIR

This rough stone stair ascends between two masonry walls. Swirling mist languidly flows down the stairs, cool, damp, and smelling of the grave.

The stairs rise from K78 at a 45-degree angle for 20 feet, ending at a 10-foot square landing. The landing leads to a tunnel that runs east (K81).

K81. TUNNEL

Fog flows like a river from the east, covering the floor of this long, low tunnel. The tunnel's damp walls are rough and scored.

Dwarves and those who succeed on a DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check can tell that the tunnel doesn't resemble the standard architecture of the rest of the castle. In fact, the tunnel seems relatively new, and appears to bore through the very pillar-rock of Ravenloft.

The eastern end of the tunnel opens into K84, the Catacombs. The door between the tunnel and great catacombs is a heavy crypt door not designed to easily open. A DC 20 Strength check is required to push it open (or to close it).

A trap ensnares the unwary 25 feet east of the top of the stairs. The swirling fog makes it much harder to find than usual. Those who fall into it find themselves sliding down a long marble chute (K82).

Fog-Shrouded Pit Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; DC 25 Reflex save avoids; victims fall into K82 chute; multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 17.

K82. MARBLE SLIDE

A smooth shaft of polished black marble offers no purchase, no hope of stopping, as you slide through the darkness.

The chute plunges diagonally from the trap door in K81 through a secret door into what was once a cell in the northeastern section of K74.

Those who succumb to the trap slide down the polished chute without any chance of stopping themselves and emerge with considerable velocity in K74. The fall deals 6d6 damage (DC 18 Reflex save for half damage).

The secret door in K74 clicks back into place (Search DC 35 to find and Disable Device DC 35 to open). If it is found and opened, climbing the polished marble is difficult and requires a DC 25 Climb check.

K83. SPIRAL STAIR

A rough-hewn staircase spirals up from the depths.

From K78, the spiral stair ascends to K83A, and then continues up to K37.

K83A. SPIRAL STAIR LANDING

This long, straight, rough-hewn corridor breaks off from the vertically spiraling stair.

The 40-foot-long corridor connects two spiral stairways. The north stairway leads down to K78 (by way of K83). The southern stairway leads to K37 (by way of K83).

K84. CATACOMBS

Buried deep beneath the keep of Ravenloft, an arched ceiling here sags over squat crypts, forming a maze of catacombs. A thick fog clings to the floor and cobwebs hang limp in the musty air. The black ceiling appears to move.

The catacombs fill an area roughly 110 feet east to west by 180 feet north to south. They are made up of 10-foot-wide arched walkways running between 10-foot-square crypts. The crypt walls and the arches over the walkways support the ceiling, which is 15 feet high throughout this area.

Thousands of bats nest in this area, sleeping here during the day and flying up through K18a to exit at Hightower Peak (K59) at night. If the PCs cast an area spell that encompasses the ceiling while fighting any of the denizens of the crypts, they trigger a swarm of bats. The bats fly around the encounter area, making combat difficult for everyone.

BAT SWARM

CR 2

HP 13

N Diminutive animal (swarm)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; **Listen** +11, **Spot** +11

Aura distraction (Fort DC 11 or nauseated 1 round)

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12

HD 2

Immune weapon damage, critical hits, flanking, trip, grapple, bull rush, targeted effects

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

Weakness +50% damage from area effects, wind vulnerability

Speed 5 ft. (1 square), fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee swarm always hits (1d6 and wounding 1 hp/rd)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +2; **Grp** —

Abilities Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 4

Feats Alertness, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Listen +11, Spot +11

Swarm Attack (Ex) A bat swarm deals automatic damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move. This attack is not subject to a miss chance for concealment.

Distraction (Ex) Any living creature vulnerable to a bat swarm's damage that begins its turn with the swarm in its space is nauseated for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 11 Fortitude save. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills

that require patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check.

Wind Vulnerability (Ex) For the purpose of determining the effects of wind on a bat swarm, treat the swarm as a creature of the same size as its constituent creatures (see Winds, DMG 95). This means that a bat swarm (Diminutive creatures) can be blown back 1d6×10 feet by a strong wind and blown away by a severe wind, such as that created by a *gust of wind* spell. Wind effects deal 1d6 points of nonlethal damage to a swarm per spell level (or Hit Dice of the originating creature, in the case of effects such as an air elemental's whirlwind). A swarm rendered unconscious by means of nonlethal damage becomes disorganized and dispersed, and does not re-form until its hit points exceed its nonlethal damage.

One other creature lurks in the catacombs, stalking prey through the walkways—a darkweaver. This spider-like aberration from the Plane of Shadow follows the PCs through the crypts, staying out of sight (Hide +21). The PCs might get a vague sense that something large and dark is following them. After the PCs fight with another creature in the catacombs, the darkweaver activates its shadow strands, forcing them closer so it can feed on their strength.

CRYPT 1: STELIANA ALBUSEL

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Steliana Albusel; She now walks a path of pain and torment; A gift to all who look upon her still

This heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) connects to a tunnel (K81), not a crypt.

Research: No one named Steliana Albusel ever walked the streets of Barovia to the best of anyone's recollection. (Knowledge [local] DC 15 or Gather Information DC 15)

DARKWEAVER

CR 10

HP 49

NE Medium aberration (extraplanar)

Init +4; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +10

Aura shadow strands (60 ft., concealment, DC 10+ Str or Escape Artist check to move away from darkweaver; see below)

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal

AC 26, touch 18, flat-footed 22

HD 9; **Fast healing** 3; **DR** 5/magic

Immune flanking

Resist cold 10; **SR** 16

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9

Weakness sunlight vulnerability

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 20 ft., shadow jump

Melee 4 tentacle rakes each +10 (1d4+3) and bite +5 (1d6+3 plus 2d4 Str)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tentacle rakes)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Improved Grab, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th):

3/day—*confusion* (DC 17), *darkness*, *suggestion* (DC 16), *tongues*, *web* (DC 15)

1/day—*shadow walk*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 17

SQ shadowstuff armor, tentacles

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Climb +18, Concentration +7, Hide +21, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Search +9, Spot +10

Shadow Strands (Su) At will, a darkweaver can create an aura of weblike, semisolid shadow that emanates from it in a 60-foot spread. It can see normally through the shadow strands, but other creatures have difficulty doing so. A creature 10 feet away from another in the strands has concealment (20% miss chance), while a creature 20 feet away has total concealment (50% miss chance, and the creature cannot use sight to locate the target). Even darkvision, blindsense, and blindsight are thwarted by the shadow strands, but true seeing allows a creature to see through them.

A creature in the area of the strands can freely move toward the darkweaver, but moving away requires a Strength or Escape Artist check. The DC for the check is 10 plus 5 for each 5 feet of movement the creature tries to move. A creature adjacent to the darkweaver can move freely as long as it remains adjacent to the darkweaver. Freedom of movement effects bypass this effect.

A darkweaver can move freely, and the area of shadow strands moves with it. Other creatures in the area are not affected by the darkweaver's movement, but might find their movement constrained in a different direction on their next turn.

Creatures within the strands can automatically discern the direction in which the darkweaver lies. Similarly, the darkweaver knows the precise location of every creature within its shadow strands (except those warded with freedom of movement) as if it had tremorsense to a range of 60 feet.

Sunlight Vulnerability When exposed to sunlight or to light equivalent to a *daylight* spell, a darkweaver takes a –2 penalty on all attacks, saves, checks, and damage rolls, and its fast healing ability is negated. However, because of the concealment granted by the creature's shadow strands, only a *daylight* spell whose source is adjacent to the darkweaver can inflict this penalty.

Shadow Jump (Su) A darkweaver can travel between shadows as if by means of a *dimension door*, as long as the teleportation begins and ends in an area with at least some shadow. It can shadow jump up to a total of 320 feet per day, in 10-foot increments. A darkweaver in its shadow strands has enough shadow to jump from unless a light source as bright as a *daylight* spell is brought within 5 feet of it.

Improved Grab (Ex) If a darkweaver hits a Small opponent with a tentacle rake, it can start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it gets a hold, it automatically hits with its bite, and each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals bite damage.

Shadowstuff Armor (Su) A darkweaver's armor of shadowstuff grants it a +4 deflection bonus to AC and a +10 bonus on Hide checks (included in the statistics above).

Tentacles An opponent can make sunder attacks against a darkweaver's tentacles as if they were weapons. The tentacles have 20 hit points, but severing one deals no damage to the darkweaver. The darkweaver usually withdraws from combat if it loses two tentacles. Severed tentacles regrow within a day.

CRYPT 2: AURICA DANCESCU

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Aurica Dancescu; Court Ceiling Painter; Beloved of Dragomir

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow containing a 3-foot-by-5-foot rectangular slab of marble, 3 feet high, on which a rag-draped skeleton reclines.

Research: Aurica was an illegitimate daughter of the Zarovich line who found a place in the castle thanks to her great artistic talent. (Knowledge [local] DC 12 or Gather Information DC 12)

CRYPT 3: LADY IOLANDA YONESCU

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

*Lady Iolanda Yonescu;
Merchant Queen
Extraordinaire;
Purveyor of Hope*

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow containing a 3-foot-by-5-foot rectangular slab of marble, 3 feet high, on which a rag-draped skeleton reclines.

Research: Iolanda Yonescu was the only daughter of a simple cobbler. Wanting more, she left Barovia at a young age. Over a twenty-year period, she built a veritable trade empire. She returned to Barovia, found a place in the court, and died here happy before Strahd's rise to power. (Knowledge [local] DC 15 or Gather Information DC 15)

Treasure: One of the skeleton's hands, gripped to its chest, tightly holds a tarnished, antique silver anklet (worth 1,000 gp).

CRYPT 4: PRINCE AUREL

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Prince Aurel Plesu; His quest for the sky never ceased

If the PCs open this heavy stone door (Strength DC 20), the tactical encounter is triggered.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 4: Prince Aurel on page 180.

Research: Prince Aurel Plesu was mad. He hunted the woods around Barovia, always hoping to bag a flying horse he swore he had seen on the horizon. He had a trusty hound that accompanied him everywhere. He finally plummeted to his death while unwisely wandering near a deep chasm. His hound loyally followed after him. (Knowledge [local] DC 17 or Gather Information DC 17)

Treasure: A secret compartment in the stone bier (Search DC 24) holds a *potion of fly* and a *ring of feather fall*.

CRYPT 5: DUCHESS DOROTA DOBRE

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Duchess Dorota Dobre; Loved Forever; By Her Grieving Family

If the PCs open this heavy stone door (Strength DC 20) or the door to Crypt 6, the tactical encounter for Crypt 6 is triggered.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 6: Saint Markovia on page 182.

Research: Duchess Dorota Dobre was a minor noble of little importance, remembered by history only for her flaming red hair and fiery personality. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Development: The remains of poor Dorota were shoveled out of here and replaced with a boneclaw and two Strahd zombies by the Necromancer, who is interested in making sure that the thighbone of the saint in the adjacent crypt remains guarded against casual tomb raiding. The boneclaw and Strahd zombies emerge if this crypt is opened, or if Crypt 6 is disturbed.

Treasure: A secret compartment in the stone bier (Search DC 24) holds a scroll of *daylight*.

CRYPT 6: SAINT MARKOVIA

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door has been scratched so as to be almost unreadable. A successful DC 20 Search check allows a character to read the damaged inscription:

Saint Markovia; Great Was Her Might; Undone By a Jealous Hand

If the PCs attempt to open Crypt 5 or Crypt 6, the tactical encounter is triggered.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 6: Saint Markovia on page 182.

Research: Markovia was a local priest with a reputation that no evil could ever touch her. She went missing all the same. (Knowledge [local] DC 15 or Gather Information DC 15)

Additional Knowledge and Gather Information checks related to Markovia are described with her artifact on page 216.

Treasure: The skeleton and regalia of this corpse has almost completely disintegrated away; all that remains is one thighbone. This is the artifact *Saint Markovia's Thighbone* described on page 216.



A crypt inscription

CRYPT 7: ENDOROVICH

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door is not visible because the stone door lies on the floor, obscured by fog. This leaves the crypt gaping open. Bending close and swirling away the fog covering the fallen door reveals what is inscribed:

**Endorovich the Terrible; What the Blood of Slaves
Could Not; A Woman's Scorn Achieved**

If the PCs bend low to read the epitaph or move to enter this crypt, the tactical encounter begins.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 7: Endorovich on page 184.

Research: One story tells of a noble called Endorovich, who loved a woman in the Zarovich court, but she loved another. As she and her lover dined, Endorovich put poison in the man's wine glass. The glasses were mixed and the woman accidentally drank the deadly mixture. The lover was hanged for the deed and buried in the cemetery behind the church in Barovia. Endorovich was driven mad with guilt and killed many women in his lifetime. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Treasure: In a secondary crypt accessible through a secret door (Search DC 28), rotting leather bags lay beneath rags of white linen. The bags hold a total of 340 pp.

CRYPT 8: MARIUS

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

**Marius; A Life Well-Lived; Long Suffering,
He Found Peace**

If the PCs open this heavy stone door (Strength DC 20) or the door to Crypt 7, the tactical encounter for Crypt 7 is triggered.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 7: Endorovich on page 184.

Research: Marius was known for his wealth of knowledge on the geography of far-away places, gained mostly through correspondence with merchant contacts in other cities. Marius died of a long-running fever that never broke. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Development: Two ghouls consumed Marius's remains and now claim the crypt as their own. They emerge if this door is opened, or if Crypt 7 is disturbed.

CRYPT 9: ADRIAN SELYMES

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

**Adrian Selymes; King of Vintners; Interred with
Great Mourning**

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow containing a 3-foot-by-5-foot rectangular slab of marble, 3 feet high, on which a rag-draped skeleton reclines.

Research: Adrian Selymes was the lord vintner to the Zarovich kings for a hundred years. His long life was attributed to the nearly supernatural wines he was capable of producing in his secret winery. Adrian learned his techniques by studying similar supernatural vintages the world over. No one knew wine as well as Adrian. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Treasure: One of the skeleton's hands, gripped to its chest, tightly holds the neck of a bottle of wine: Selymes Cellars

"Barovia Red Mountain" aged 5 years, worth 12,000 gp. A glass (4 glasses/bottle) is equivalent to a *potion of greater magic fang* +5.

CRYPT 10: VENGEANCE CRYPT

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

**Let these remind those who would contest the
Master's will.**

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow containing the remains of several humanoids. Read:

The stone walls of this cramped hollow hold the dried corpses of at least four humanoids that were apparently tortured to death. Cruel iron bands hold bodies to three of the walls, while body hangs from the ceiling. A burnished skull sits atop a rectangular slab of marble, 3-feet high.

Here are the remains of adventurers who fought and failed in room K67. The bodies of a dwarf, two humans, and an elf are attached to the walls and ceiling with iron bands. The elf's head lies alone on the bier. Scrutiny of the remains shows missing and crushed fingers, burned eye sockets, and other horrific signs of torture.

The name Dysania is crudely burned into the elf skull. Dysania was the leader of the adventurers. Strahd bore the elf particular enmity for wounds she inflicted upon him. He made her final hours excruciating.

Treasure: A DC 20 Search check of the bodies reveals that one yet wears a *ring of the righteous* (new item described on page 212).

The skull retains some measure of the violence committed upon it, and thus detects as magical. See the new item *stifled skull* on page 216.

CRYPT 11: TASHA PETROVNA

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

**Tasha Petrovna; Light Unto the West; Friend and
Companion**

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a square hollow containing a rectangular slab of marble. Skeletal remains lie atop the slab.

Research: Tasha Petrovna, also referred to around court as the "Healer of Kings," served the Zarovich rulers long ago and was famed for her beauty and wit. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

CRYPT 12: KING TOMESCU

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

King Tomescu; He Traveled Far

This heavy stone door is locked (Strength DC 30 to open, Open Lock DC 40 to unlock). It connects to a portal, not a crypt. The silver key (half at the bottom of the cauldron in K55, the other half in a chest in K69) unlocks the door.

If the door is opened, the tactical encounter occurs.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 12: King Tomescu on page 186.

Research: No one named King Tomescu ever ruled in Castle Ravenloft to the best of anyone's recollection. (Knowledge [local] DC 15 or Gather Information DC 15)

Portal to Anywhere:

Fused to the west wall of this crypt is a stone ring, 10 feet in diameter, which frames a visible dimensional distortion. Stepping through the frame transports individuals to distant locations—but not without risk.

The *portal to anywhere* is an in-dungeon feature that cannot be removed without damaging the ring or permanently dispelling the effect. The portal detects as strong conjuration, CL 17th.

Portal Use: When a traveler passes through the ring, he can transfer himself from the crypt to any other spot he has personally visited. He might arrive at exactly the spot desired (see below). However, the

passage between the crypt and the new location is not instantaneous; it takes at least one hour, and often longer, to complete the trip. Furthermore, while the traveler slides outside the regular geometry of space, awful creatures that inhabit the between space take an unhealthy interest in him. Consult the table below. Damage taken indicates unaccountable claw marks, scratches, and bites visible when the traveler arrives at his destination, though he retains no memory of having received the wounds.

d%	Transit Time	Damage
01–12	Never*	Dead*
13–26	72 hours	16d6 points
27–39	48 hours	8d6 points
40–53	24 hours	4d6 points
54–66	12 hours	2d6 points
67–80	5 hours	1d6 points
81–100	1 hour	None

*Later scrutiny of the area (Search DC 25) where the traveler was to have appeared reveals fragments of bone, the last rotted remains of the caster, who has apparently been dead for centuries.

Special: As a special use of this portal, a traveler can choose to push beyond the regular limits imposed by common sense.

Instead of merely choosing places he has personally visited, the traveler can attempt to travel anywhere he has heard described or seen in maps or paintings. Modify the d% roll used to determine transit time by –25.

Return Trip: Any portal traveler can choose to instantly return to the crypt so long as he spent no more than an hour in the location to which he traveled, hasn't moved more than 100 feet from the specific point where he appeared, and hasn't used the return trip option in at least seven days. Otherwise, if a traveler stays more than an hour, has moved 101 feet or more from where he appeared, or has successfully used the return trip option seven or fewer days prior, he is stuck in the new location.

Treasure: In addition to the portal, the mirror in the secret room where the erinyes seductively

poses is framed in fused fingerbones. One of the fingerbones is loose, and is a highly potent artifact: *Saint Bogdan's Fingerbone*, described on page 216. PCs can easily remove the loose fingerbone once it is found among the others (DC 22 Search check, or a *detect magic* spell).

CRYPT 13: KING IGNATIE KAZAKU

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

King Ignatie Kazaku; Kazaku the Bright; King, Leader, and Inventor

This heavy stone door is locked (Strength DC 30 to open, Open Lock DC 40 to unlock) and trapped (see below). If opened, a completely empty hollow is revealed—empty save for a strange clockwork device that is stained with rust.

Research: More interested in invention than in his duties as a sovereign, Kazaku spent long hours in his workshop (the location of which remains a secret to this day). Most people assumed Kazaku had a demonic advisor chained in his secret workshop, for whenever he returned from a month-long invention binge, he'd have a strange yet elegant device clutched under his arm, a device that provided some minor



A monstrosity steps through the portal...

utility without (apparently) resorting to magic. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Prismatic Spray Trap: CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); automatic reset; spell effect (*prismatic spray* affects all creatures in 10-foot-by-10-foot square east of crypt 13, 13th-level wizard, DC 20 Reflex, Fortitude, or Will save, depending on effect); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Treasure: The strange device sitting on the bier is a clockwork music player. Despite its rusted, pitted exterior, if the metallic flange is wound a few times and released, a haunting tune plays as a testament to the maker and the masterwork materials used to craft it. In the right market, it is worth 500 gold pieces.

CRYPT 14: SHUHUL ISHAI-BAL

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Shuhul Ishai-Bal; Advisor to Endorovich; Friend from the East; Here Lies His Family in Honor

Opening the heavy stone door (Strength DC 20) reveals a shaft that plunges 40 feet into darkness. If PCs descend into the shaft, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 14: Shuhul Ishai-Bal on page 188.

Research: The noble Endorovich kept a family of servants from a far eastern land, but little was known of them or their true heritage. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Development: The fiendish trap near K86 has caught the occasional wanderer in this room. On some occasions, if Strahd is watching a party particularly closely, he might loiter in this room in the hope that a lone PC suddenly transpositions into one of the coffins. If this occurs, Strahd dominates the PC and sends him on his way to rejoin the PCs. The dominated PC helps Strahd move closer to whichever plan he pursues (as revealed in the *Fortunes of Ravenloft*).

Treasure: Each successful DC 20 Search check of the refuse filling the bottom of each stone coffin reveals one of the following items. Once an item is found, cross it off the list. Once all the items on the list are discovered, no additional treasure is found in the chamber.

d10	Item
1	156 gp
2	<i>Elixir of sneaking</i>
3	25 pp
4	Silver necklace with diamond (350 gp)
5	<i>Elixir of vision</i>
6	<i>Wand of hold person</i> (25 charges)
7	Scroll of <i>inflict critical wounds</i>
8	Scroll of <i>spell immunity</i>
9	Scroll of <i>destruction</i>
10	<i>Wand of stoneskin</i> (10 charges)

CRYPT 15: CLAUDIU

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Claudiu; None Shall Ever Forget; His Courage and Sacrifice

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow, a rectangular marble slab, and a rag-draped skeleton.

Research: Many people named Claudiu have lived and died over the centuries in the lands of Barovia. Apparently, everyone has forgotten this particular Claudiu. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Treasure: The rag-draped skeleton clutches a small gold medallion (30 gp value) in one bony hand.

CRYPT 16: ELICA FLOREA

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Elica Florea; Loyal Servant and Gardner

If the PCs open this heavy stone door (Strength DC 20) or the door to Crypt 20, the tactical encounter for Crypt 20 is triggered.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 20: Sasha Ivlskova, page 190.

Research: Elica Florea, a servant in the castle, was renowned for the garden she kept in the southeastern courtyard. No one could grow flowers quite so fragrant. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Development: While Sasha still enjoyed Strahd's undivided attention, she gained servants for herself, a few of which "sleep" here.

Treasure: A DC 25 Search check uncovers a secret compartment in the bier that holds a *wand of command plants* (5 charges).

CRYPT 17: COUNT SERGIU SOLOMOVICI

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Count Sergiu Solomovici: Never Afraid To Attempt; What Others Deemed Impossible

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow, a rectangular marble slab, and a rag-draped skeleton.

Research: One story has it that Count Solomovici, also called "Admiral" Solomovici, was keenly interested in ships and sailing crafts of all sorts. Many believe that Solomovici built a great ship that sank in the much-too-small Tser Pool. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Treasure: A DC 25 Search check uncovers a secret compartment in the bier that holds a brass key, a miniature oil lamp (provides half the light radius of a regular lamp), a wondrous clockwork pocket watch (300 gp value), and a map of some unnamed body of water that includes the landmarks, "Skull Point," "Petrified Finger," and "Eyes of Man."

CRYPT 18: IREENA KOLYANA

This crypt gapes open, its stone door fallen to the floor. If a PC bends down to examine what is inscribed on the door, newly engraved letters can barely be seen through the perpetual ground mist:

Ireena Kolyana: Wife

The crypt is empty, the bier clean and polished.

Development: This grave has been prepared by Strahd to unnerve friends of Ireena, or Ireena herself if she accompanies the PCs.

If Ireena is with the PCs, she reacts poorly, throwing a minor tantrum. She cries out and kicks at the slab on the

ground. She enters the tomb, kicking at the bier and cursing Strahd:

"Strahd! I DARE you to appear before us here and now! If you're a man at all, you'll cease these games and face us NOW!"

Strahd does not respond to this provocation. For him, the psychological game is more important.

Treasure: Lying upon the bier is a golden, jewel-studded comb (500 gp value) with several stands of dark hair lovingly and neatly woven through it. This is Ireena's hair. If asked, Ireena can't recall when Strahd could have gotten her hair.



An unsettling inscription . . .

CRYPT 19: DHAVIT UTHURLAN

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Dhavit The Builder; Thou Standeth Amidst A Monument To His Life

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow and a bare rectangular slab of marble.

Research: The Zaroviches employed a grand architect for the design and construction of Castle Ravenloft. Dhavit stayed on after the castle was complete. It is commonly acknowledged that few castles, if any, have ever exceeded the excellence of the floor plan and execution of Castle Ravenloft. He is missed to this day. (Knowledge [local] DC 15 or Gather Information DC 15)

Treasure: A DC 25 Search check uncovers a secret switch. If flipped, a catch retracts, allowing the bier to swing wide, revealing a steep narrow stair leading down and eventually leveling off into a tunnel. This tunnel can be used to exit the castle.

CRYPT 20: SASHA IVLISKOVA

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Sasha Ivlskova: Wife

If the PCs prepare to open the heavy stone door (Strength DC 20) or open the door to Crypt 16, the tactical encounter is triggered.

Tactical Encounter: Crypt 20: Sasha Ivlskova on page 190.

SASHA'S JOURNAL

"He tells me what a good wife I'd be. If only . . . If only his heart was not pledged to another. My own heart, already still, turned black that day. He has brought me here, into this silent grave. My passion has blossomed to hate. I'd destroy him if I could, yet his power over me is uncontestable. He lets me suffer this way when he could simply command me to love him. How I hate him.

Research: Sasha Ivlskova was Burgomaster of Barovia some 40 years ago. She seems unique in history—at a time when Strahd's depredations were growing worse every year, Sasha somehow dealt with the Master of the Castle, causing his raids and evil cleansings to cease. One day, Sasha disappeared. For a period of at least four years, all was quiet. A new Burgomaster was appointed and people began to hope for the best. But Strahd reappeared, as deranged and

terrible as ever, and his depredations have not ceased since. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Development: For a while, Sasha enjoyed Strahd's undivided attention. But for the last few years, she's languished here, commanded to stay within the crypt unless disturbed or Strahd calls for her.

Treasure: An easily discoverable compartment in the bier holds a variety of items: rouge (10 gp), three vials of quality perfume (100 gp each), a locket that bears the name "Strahd," and a journal.

The journal is completely blank except for the very last page where Sasha wrote her innermost thoughts. See the sidebar for the journal entry.

CRYPT 21: PATRINA VELIKOVNA

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Patrina Velikovna; Bride

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow, a rectangular marble slab, and a rag-draped skeleton.

Research: Patrina was a villager in Barovia who was stoned to death for practicing witchcraft. (Knowledge [local] DC 15 or Gather Information DC 15)

CRYPT 22: SIR ULRICH BUCARAVICH

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Sir Ulrich Bucaravich

This heavy stone door (DC 20 Strength check to open) opens to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow containing a rectangular marble slab and a rag-draped skeleton.

"If you are reading this, I am destroyed. You can destroy Strahd if you are strong. Find the Hellheart Locket—the devil on the high open parapet wears it. Use it to destroy the Dayheart, that blasphemy, in the adjoining tower. Perhaps you'll also find the *Sunsword*, Strahd's bane. Unprotected by the Dayheart, his flesh is vulnerable to the light I forswore for him, in vain."

Research: Sir Ulrich was a knight of the raven, slain by werewolves. (Knowledge [local] DC 18, Knowledge [nobility and royalty] DC 18, or Gather Information DC 18)

CRYPT 23: UNMARKED CRYPT

There is no epitaph inscribed on this heavy stone door. Opening the door (Strength DC 20) reveals a 10-foot-square hollow containing a rectangular slab of marble and a rag-draped skeleton.

CRYPT 24: IANCU DUDNIC

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Iancu Dudnic; Dog Sled Champion; Unjustly Slain

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow containing a rectangular slab of marble and a rag-draped skeleton.

Research: Iancu was a champion dog sled racer. His reign was cut short by the spouse of one of the competitors he beaten too many times. He was found frozen beneath his sled, terror etched on his face. (Knowledge [local] DC 20 or Gather Information DC 20)

Development: The west wall of the crypt is shot through with cracks (Spot DC 25 to notice anything out of the ordinary). Scrutiny reveals the wall is weak, and some sort of hollow exists behind it, though no secret door opens onto the hollow. A DC 18 Strength check is enough to collapse the wall, revealing a roughly hewn 5-foot-diameter vertical tunnel.

The tunnel winds up 70 feet to a secret room off K61, and leads down 40 feet to K89, a subcatacomb. The 5-foot-diameter tunnel is essentially vertical, but is so roughly burrowed through the stone that a DC 10 Climb check is sufficient to ascend or descend.

Treasure: The rag-draped skeleton clutches a dog collar with a jeweled name tag that reads “Hektor” (30 gp value) in one bony hand.

CRYPT 25: STEPHAN GREGOROVICH

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Stephan Gregorovich; First Counselor to Baron von Zarovich

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow containing a rectangular slab of marble and a rag-draped skeleton.

Research: Stephan Gregorovich was a respected adviser to Strahd during the vampire lord’s wars of conquest. (Knowledge [local] DC 25 or Gather Information DC 25)

CRYPT 26: KHUDEN DORANAL

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Khuden Doranal; Ascetic Monk of the Ecaterines

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow containing a bare rectangular slab of marble. A careful examination (Search DC 25) reveals a very faint outline in the shape of a human body, as though a form once rested here.

Research: Khuden Doranal was a renowned monk of the Ecaterine Monastery, known for his rigorous asceticism. It is said that his spirit was so pure that he needed neither food

nor drink, and that he was bodily taken up to the Seven Heavens after his death. (Knowledge [local] DC 20, Knowledge [religion] DC 20, or Gather Information DC 20)

CRYPT 27: UNMARKED CRYPT

There is no epitaph inscribed on this heavy stone door. Opening the door (Strength DC 20) reveals a 10-foot-square hollow containing a rectangular slab of marble and a rag-draped skeleton.

CRYPT 28: ARDAN KHARKOV

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Ardan Kharkov; Chef to the Count

This heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) opens to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow that contains a rectangular slab of marble on which a rag-draped skeleton reclines.

Research: Ardan Kharkov was a respected chef and baker, who made the wedding cake for Sergei and Tatyana von Zarovich. (Knowledge [local] DC 25 or Gather Information DC 25)

CRYPT 29: IVAN PIETROVSKA

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Ivan Pietroviska; Beloved of Anna Philippia

This heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) opens to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow that contains a rectangular slab of marble on which a rag-draped skeleton reclines.

Research: The name of Ivan Pietroviska is unknown to history, but Anna Philippia is well known as a bard who stayed for a time at the court of Barov and Ravenovia. (Knowledge [local] DC 18 or Gather Information DC 18)

CRYPT 30: PREFECT CYRIL REMYLICH

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Prefect Cyril Remylich; Beloved of Barov and Ravenovia; High Priest of the Order of the Raven

This heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) opens to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow that contains a rectangular slab of marble and a skeleton draped in white clerical vestments that show no signs of decay. The skeleton’s head rests on a small chest.

Research: Cyril Remylich was the spiritual leader of the knights of the raven, and the leader of the church under Barov and Ravenovia. (Knowledge [local] DC 25, Knowledge [religion] DC 25, or Gather Information DC 25)

Treasure: The uncorrupted white vestments are *prefect’s vestments*, a new magic item detailed in the Appendix (page 215). In the chest under the skeleton’s head are a strand of *prayer beads*, 10 +1 *silvered arrows*, and a scroll of *raise dead*.

CRYPT 31: THORGEN THE GRASPING

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Thorgen the Grasping; Gold Is His Only Legacy

This heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) opens to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow that contains a rectangular slab of marble and a rag-draped skeleton. The skeleton clutches a small chest in its bony arms.

Research: Thorgen the Grasping is long forgotten. No check will reveal anything about who he was and what his role in history might have been.

Trap: The chest in the skeleton's arms is coated with nith-arit poison (contact, Fort DC 13, initial damage 0, secondary damage 3d6 Con). The chest contains 1 gp.

CRYPT 32: UNMARKED CRYPT

There is no epitaph inscribed on this heavy stone door. Opening the door (Strength DC 20) reveals a 10-foot-square hollow with two alcoves in the back wall. A character stepping into the eastern alcove is immediately teleported into the eastern alcove in K86, the Crypt of Strahd. Similarly, a character who steps into the western alcove in K86 appears in the western alcove in this crypt. These portals allow characters to bypass the bizarre transposition trap that wards the entrance to Strahd's crypt.

CRYPT 33: EMPTY CRYPT

There is no epitaph inscribed on this heavy stone door. Opening the door (Strength DC 20) reveals an empty crypt that has never been used.

CRYPT 34: KING DOSTRON

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door is written in the Infernal language and reads:

King Dostron; Hellborn and Hellbound

This heavy stone door (Strength DC 20) opens to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow that contains a rectangular slab of marble covered with a scattering of ashes.

Research: King Dostron was a very ancient ruler of this land, long before the arrival of Strahd. He claimed descent from a duke of Hell, and his deeds did justice to this ancestry. (Knowledge [history] DC 22 or bardic knowledge DC 22)

CRYPT 35: EMPTY CRYPT

There is no epitaph inscribed on this heavy stone door. Opening the door (Strength DC 20) reveals an empty crypt that has never been used.

CRYPT 36: DEFACED CRYPT

The epitaph inscribed on this door has been chipped away and is now unreadable. Opening the heavy stone door (Strength DC 20) reveals an empty hollow.

CRYPT 37: JANNES

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Jannes

This heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) opens to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow that contains a rectangular slab of marble and a skeleton wrapped in fragments of an embroidered robe.

Research: Jannes was the name of a powerful illusionist, though he was not known to have any connection to this region. (Knowledge [arcana] DC 25 or bardic knowledge DC 25)

Treasure: Tucked beneath the skeleton and its robes is a wand of fireball. On its finger is a gold signet ring worth 150 gp.

CRYPT 38: DEFACED CRYPT

The epitaph inscribed on this door has been chipped away and is now unreadable. Opening the heavy stone door (Strength DC 20) reveals a hollow that contains the skeletons of three large dogs.

CRYPT 39: UNMARKED CRYPT

There is no epitaph inscribed on this heavy stone door. Opening the door (Strength DC 20) reveals a 10-foot-square hollow that contains a rectangular slab of marble and a rag-draped skeleton.

CRYPT 40: SATERIS TAUL

The epitaph inscribed on this stone door reads:

Sateris Taul; Last of Her Line

This heavy stone door opens (Strength DC 20) to reveal a 10-foot-square hollow that contains a rectangular slab of marble and a skeleton wrapped in fragments of an embroidered robe.

Research: Sateris Taul was a mystic of the Barovia region, supposedly the last of a great line of seers and fortune-tellers. She enjoyed the same reputation that Madam Eva now claims. (Knowledge [local] DC 19 or Gather Information DC 19)

K85: TOMB OF SERGEI VON ZAROVICH

A grand tomb is visible through iron bars (unless the fortunes of Ravenloft indicate Strahd is here, in which case see below).

Iron bars block a grand marble stair down to a great, silent tomb, restful in its almost palpable serenity. A white marble slab in the center of the camber bears an intricately inlaid coffin. On the far wall, three statues of pearly marble stand in wide alcoves.

The portcullis that blocks access to the stairs down to K85 consists of bars of untarnished iron. Lifting the gate or bending the bars requires a DC 28 Strength check. The bars restrict the movement of any Small or larger creature. No locks are apparent on the gate, but a DC 30 Disable Device check also opens it.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: This is a potential location for an encounter with Strahd, as prophesied by Madam Eva. If so, the tomb is a tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K85: Tomb of Sergei Von Zarovich on page 192.

Development: As described in the *Tome of Strahd*, Sergei is Strahd's long dead brother. Strahd killed him in a fit of mad jealousy that involved a pact with undeath that ultimately turned Strahd into the vampiric monster he is today. Sergei doesn't rest peacefully, but if Strahd is destroyed, his spirit is finally laid to rest.

Treasure: If the Fortunes of Ravenloft decree an item is found here, it lies across Sergei's chest in his coffin. In addition, the dried, mummified body in the coffin wears a shining set of +2 spell resistance (13) full plate armor.

K86: TOMB OF STRAHD

Invisible portals hang between Crypts 37 and 38, between Crypt 37 and the wall south of it, and between Crypt 38 and the wall south of it. These portals form a protective ring around the entrance to K86. The portals exchange a living body passing through them for the undead body of a wight from Crypt 14. Since the transfer is practically instantaneous, and since only living and undead matter travel through the selectively tuned portal, the transposed character's armor, clothing, and other equipment becomes suddenly occupied by a wight. The transposed character ends up in the wight's clothes in Crypt 14, stuck inside a coffin. For that character, the tactical encounter Crypt 14: Shuhul Ishai-Balon on page 188 is triggered.

To the victim's companions, it might seem that their comrade has suddenly turned into a wight. The wight turns and attacks.

Transposition Trap: CR 10; magical (Strong conjuration; CL 15th); location trigger (see above); automatic reset; DC 20 Will save avoids; transposes (by teleportation) living flesh with undead flesh in Crypt 14 (see above); multiple targets (anyone that enters the trapped areas); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC n/a.

When the PCs see the grand tomb through the iron bars, read:

Iron bars block a marble stair down to a great, murky tomb in which light seems to be repelled, and from which wafts the smell of freshly turned earth. Settled into the dirt on the floor lies a shining black coffin of waxed wood with brilliant brass fittings. On the far wall three alcoves wait. Only the center one contains a statue.



*The lone coffin, the loose earth on which it rests . . .
nothing here bespeaks a happy ending*

The portcullis that blocks access to the stairs down to K86 consists of bars of untarnished iron. Lifting the gate or bending the bars requires a DC 28 Strength check. The bars restrict the movement of any Small or larger creature. No locks are apparent on the portcullis, but a DC 30 Disable Device check also opens the gate.

Fortunes of Ravenloft: This is a potential location for an encounter with Strahd, as prophesied by Madam Eva. If so, the tomb is a tactical encounter. If Strahd is not here, the guardian of the tomb in the central alcove described in the tactical encounter does not lumber into action.

Tactical Encounter: K86: Tomb of Strahd on page 194.

Development: Since this location is Strahd's actual tomb, if the PCs defeat him, his body reforms within the coffin and is particularly vulnerable. That's when the characters can finally achieve the ultimate goal of destroying Strahd.

Treasure: If the Fortunes of Ravenloft decree an item is found here, it lies buried in the earth at the foot of the coffin (Search DC 23). In addition, amid the loose earth that is scattered across the floor of Strahd's coffin is a petrified heart—a *gory heart talisman* of the red dragon (new item described on page 213).

K87: GUARDIANS

Stairs from the catacomb level lead down to a landing. Read:

Ten feet down a 20-foot-wide grand stair waits a landing. A curtain of blue light bisects the landing. It is suspended between two 30-foot-tall statues holding spears. Dimly visible beyond the curtain are more descending steps.

All creatures who pass through the curtain who are not lawful good are teleported back to the top of the stairs west of the curtain—this is a portal-like effect, and thus not subject to saves or spell resistance. Lawful good creatures, or creatures who can *dimension door* or otherwise bypass the curtain, can

descend down into the safety of K88. It is impossible to see more than a few feet down the stairs beyond the curtain from the west side of K87.

The bronze statues are too large for any but a Tiny or smaller creature (or a gaseous creature) to slip around. PCs who attempt to destroy a bronze statue to bring down the curtain only need destroy one. Each bronze statue has hardness 9 and 500 hit points must be dealt to bring down the magical curtain.

K88: TOMB OF BAROV AND RAVENOVIA

Stairs from the catacomb level continue past the guarded landing into a tomb. Read:

The 20-foot-wide grand stair opens onto a tomb resting in hushed silence. Great stained-glass windows filter dim light across the two ornate stone coffins here. Furrows score the marble floor of the tomb's center, as if some great beast has repeatedly clawed at the stone.

This is the tomb of Strahd's mother and father, Barov and Ravenovia, who Strahd called to rule the valley after he conquered it (described in the *Tome of Strahd*).

Fortunes of Ravenloft: This is a potential location for an encounter with Strahd, as prophesied by Madam Eva. If so, the tomb is a tactical encounter. Replace the read-aloud text provided above with that given in the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: K88: Tomb of Barov and Ravenovia on page 196.

Development: After Strahd killed Sergei and the castle guards "killed" him, he rose as a vampire and took power. Strahd killed his own parents, but later regretted it, as he has regretted so much in all the years since. Sometimes, the regret drives him to return to this most sacred tomb and fly into fits of despairing rage.

Treasure: If the Fortunes of Ravenloft decree an item is found here, it lies on top of Ravenia's coffin (the northern coffin). In addition, Ravenia's body is swaddled in *Saint Ecaterina's Burial Shroud* (new item described on page 215), and Barov wears a green ring, the *band of spell enhancement* (new item described on page 211).



Some evils predate even Strahd

K89: SUBCATACOMB

The tunnel accessible from the secret room off K61 or the weak wall in Crypt 24 of K84, winds down to K89, a subcatacomb. The 5 foot-diameter tunnel is essentially vertical, but is so roughly burrowed through the stone that a DC 10 Climb check is sufficient to ascend or descend.

The tunnel, burrowed by giant ants, opens into the ceiling of K89, 30 feet above the boulder-jumbled ground. Those who look into the large subcatacomb see:

Two 10-foot-tall standing stones, capped by equally large blocks, stand in the center of this ancient cavern. The megalith stands at the head of a slab of dark stone on which primitive glyphs are inscribed. Standing opposite the megalith across the stone table is a primitively carved humanoid statue with no face. Giant ants mill here and there about the chamber.

The chamber is a long forgotten primitive temple where proto-humans worshiped progenitor deities in ages lost to history. No sentient creature in Ravenloft knows of its existence, though Nicoramus in K61 certainly suspects that some sort of deeper chamber waits below, based on the fact that ants have burrowed into its lair recently.

If the PCs enter the chamber and touch the floor, the tactical encounter is triggered.

Tactical Encounter: K89: Subcatacombs on page 198.

Development: The proto-humans that worshiped in this secret natural cavern were a bloody people who loved a bloody god, a god whose name has been lost to the ages. Sacrifices occurred on the table before the crudely carved idol (the rogue eidolon) for centuries, slowly empowering it.

Treasure: If detected for, the slab of pictogram-scribed stone detects as magical. In fact, it is a magical location described on page 220 called the *Slab of Sacrifice*.

Tactical Encounters

The following pages provide detailed information for combat encounters in Castle Ravenloft. A creature's position on a tactical map is indicated by a circled letter symbol, which is associated with the creature in the encounter's descriptive text. Information about the features of a room or an area is provided in a sidebar format along with the tactical map for the encounter.

THE ENTRY

Encounter Level 9

Use this tactical encounter with the room descriptions on page 93 and 94.

When the PCs enter K7, have them make DC 20 Spot checks to determine whether they can tell that the two stone dragons (marked as **SD** on the map) flanking the archway are alive.

If no PC succeeds on this check, then the stone dragons attack as the last PC passes between them. This provides the stone dragons with a surprise round in which to act before the normal rounds of combat begin. If any PCs do notice that the stone dragons are living creatures, then those PCs and the dragons get to act in the surprise round.

The four gargoyles (**G**) located in K8 spring into action at the beginning of the first normal round of combat.

ENCOUNTER DEVELOPMENTS

If the stone dragons' ruse is discovered while the PCs are still in the Entry (K7), the creatures pull back into the Great Entry (K8) so they have more room to maneuver. They are also aware of the gargoyles in K8 and hope to enlist their help in battle against the PCs.

The stone dragons make ample use of their breath weapons. They try to catch as many PCs as possible in the small cones of their breath weapons without also scorching each other.

The gargoyles initially use Flyby Attack, swooping across the Great Entry and making single claw attacks before perching back on the gallery to end their turn. If the PCs mount effective attacks against them despite this tactic, they swoop down and stay within reach in order to make full attacks.

Dread Guards: These two constructs (marked as **D** on the map) wait within alcoves in area K19. They appear as suits of armor covered with dark stains, posed as if in battle and holding maces designed to resemble curved dragon heads. Only Strahd knows the command word required to activate them, so they only join the battle if Strahd is present and orders them to attack. (See tactical encounter K7-9A: Strahd in the Entry.)

Stone Dragons

These stone dragons are relatives of gargoyles. They are serpentine in shape, longer than true dragons, with shorter legs and more slender bodies. They appear to hold torches wrapped in their tongues within their gaping mouths, but these are actually organs that enable them to breathe cones of fire.

STONE DRAGONS (2)

CR 4

HP 60 each

CE Medium magical beast (earth)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +4

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

HD 6

DR 10/magic

Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 40 ft. (poor)

Melee 2 claws each +6 (1d6+6)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Power Attack (3 points included)

Special Actions breath weapon (15-foot cone, DC 17 Reflex, 4d8 fire damage)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 7

SQ freeze

Feats Alertness, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Hide +8 (+16 against stone), Listen +4, Spot +4

Freeze (Ex) A stone dragon can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice it is really alive.

GARGOYLES (4)

CR 4

HP 34 each

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +4, Spot +4

Languages Common, Terran

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

HD 4

DR 10/magic

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d4+2) and

bite +4 (1d6+1) and

gore +4 (1d6+1)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +6

Atk Options Flyby Attack

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7

SQ freeze

Feats Flyby Attack, Multiattack

Skills Hide +7 (+15 against stone), Listen +4, Spot +4

Flyby Attack When flying, a gargoyle can take a move action (including a dive) and another standard action at any point during the move (instead of before or after the move). A gargoyle cannot take a second move action during a round when it makes a flyby attack.

Freeze (Ex) A gargoyle can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice it is really alive.

Multiattack A gargoyle is adept at using all its natural weapons at once. A gargoyle's secondary attacks with natural weapons take only a -2 penalty (instead of -5; already calculated into the attack statistics above).

STRAHD IN THE ENTRY

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

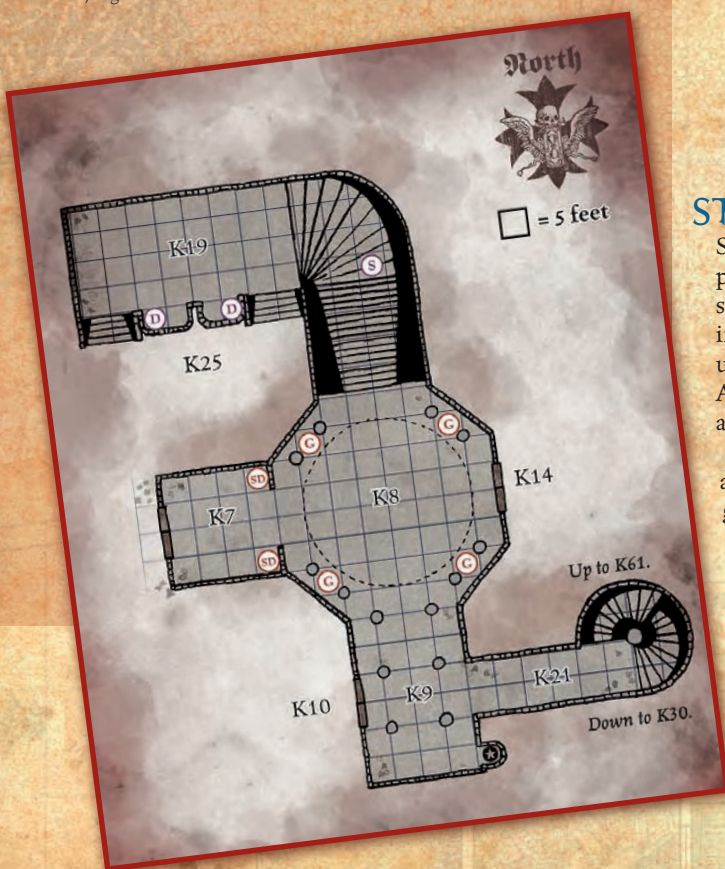
Stairs: The grand staircase ascending from area K8 rises 30 feet to K19. These stairs don't affect movement, but characters who attack a foe on a lower stair gain a +1 bonus on melee attacks for being on higher ground. The "S" on the stairs is Strahd; refer to the details in "Strahd in the Entry" if Strahd is present for this encounter.

Gallery: A 5-foot-wide balcony surrounds the Great Entry (K8), 20 feet above the floor. The gargoyles begin the encounter perched at the edge of this balcony, and can fly up here to gain cover against ranged attacks.

Pillars: Eight slender pillars, draped with cobwebs, support the gallery. A creature standing in the same square as a pillar gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. Against attacks from above, creatures in the same square as a pillar have normal cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Creatures underneath the gallery have total cover against attacks from above.

Four more pillars run down the hallway to the south (K9). They extend all the way to the ceiling, but otherwise have the same characteristics as the pillars in K8.

Spiral Stairs: These stairs lead down to K61 and beyond, and up to K30 and onward. They also appear on tactical maps K30: Steward's Office, K35–44: Rooms of Weeping, K47: Landing, K61: Hallway, and K73: Dungeon Hall. Characters fighting on spiral stairs gain cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves) against foes below them on the stairs.



Encounter Level 15

Add these details to this encounter if you determine that Strahd attacks the PCs in the Entry at any point during the adventure. The gallery and grand staircase provide an opportunity for him to fly around in his "werebat" form, which (in his experience) terrorizes his victims nicely. He attacks here if he has good reason to want to terrorize the PCs, or if he wants to prevent them from leaving the castle.

Statistics for Strahd and the dread guards are presented on the following two pages.

While the PCs are in the Great Entry, Strahd enters from K25 in his human form. He quietly speaks the command word to activate the dread guards as he passes, allowing characters in the Great Entry to make a DC 21 Listen check to hear his approach. He then steps down the stairs and into view, calling out to the PCs as described in the read-aloud text below.

When Strahd appears to the PCs, read this text:

A human dressed in noble's finery steps into view at the top of the stairs, some 30 feet above you. He smiles. "Have you not heard that those who enter Castle Ravenloft rarely leave?"

With those words, Strahd's physical form begins to shift grotesquely. His arms turn into membranous wings and his face stretches into a bestial horror, his gaping mouth sporting enormous fangs.

Read this text when Strahd initiates a grapple:

The enormous bat creature tries to perch on your body—its feet scrabble for purchase on your chest, while the great wings wrap around you and the bestial jaws gape toward your throat.

STRAHD'S TACTICS

Strahd fights with the goal of striking as much terror as possible into his foes. On his first turn, he takes to the air, swoops down the staircase and bites the nearest PC, remaining airborne. He hovers around that PC, biting each turn, until he has weakened his foe with several negative levels. At that point, he moves in to start a grapple, provoking an attack of opportunity.

If Strahd gets into a grapple he can't win, unable to secure a pin (and drain blood) and unable to escape, he assumes gaseous form and flies toward the ceiling. In the gallery, he solidifies into human form and uses spells to continue the fight, beginning with his most powerful spells. (He uses *cloudkill* with impunity, knowing that both he and the dread guards are immune to its effects.)

For their part, the dread guards move slowly down the stairs and try to engage PCs other than Strahd's target. If Strahd retreats up the stairs, the dread guards use their earth's pull ability to hinder pursuit.

COUNT STRAHD VON ZAROVICH**CR 15**

(See page 6 for Strahd's full statistics)

HP 65

Male vampire (human) necromancer 10

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Infernal**AC** 27, touch 15, flat-footed 24; **Dodge****HD** 10; **Fast healing** 5; **DR** 10/silver and magic**Immune** mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to ability scores, fatigue, exhaustion**Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, positive energy 10, sonic 10; turn resistance +4; *ring of counterspells* (*dispel magic*), *nondetection***Fort** +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13**Weakness** sunlight, running water, wooden stake**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), spider climb 20 ft.**Melee** slam +9 (1d6+4 plus energy drain 2 levels)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +9**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes**Special Actions** alternate form, blood drain (1d4 Con per round), children of the night, dominate (30 ft., Will DC 18), gaseous form**Combat Gear** *bead of force* (explodes on impact, dealing 5d6 points of force damage within a 10-foot radius; DC 16 Reflex negates), *lesser silent metamagic rod* (allows Strahd to cast up to three 3rd-level spells or lower per day without verbal components as if using Silent Spell feat), *ring of counterspells* (*dispel magic*)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th; prohibited schools abjuration and illusion):

5th—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *fell draining lightning bolt* (DC 18; creatures that take damage also gain 1 negative level), *mind fog* (DC 20), *waves of fatigue*

4th—*dimension door*, *enervation* (+8 ranged touch), *fear* (DC 19), *enervated scorching ray* (+8 ranged touch, +50% damage to living creatures, half damage to unliving), *screaming*

3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 18), *fireball* (DC 18), *haste*, *fell draining magic missile* (creatures that take damage also gain 1 negative level), *ray of exhaustion* (+8 ranged touch, DC 18)

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *false life*, *fog cloud*, *scorching ray* (+8 ranged touch), *see invisibility*, *spectral hand*

1st—*chill touch* (+9 melee touch, DC 16), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor* (2), *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+8 ranged touch), *true strike*

0—*detect magic* (2), *ghost sound* (DC 15), *message*, *touch of fatigue* (+9 melee touch, DC 15)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16**SQ** create spawn; forest, mountain, and swamp signs**Feats** Alertness^B, Combat Casting (or Touch of Taint), Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Enervate Spell^B, Fell Drain^{†B}, Improved Energy Drain[†], Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Positive Energy Resistance[†], Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Drain[†].**Skills** Bluff +17, Concentration +16 (+20 casting defensively), Diplomacy +7, Hide +13, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +13, Move Silently +17, Search +13, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +20, Spot +13**Possessions** combat gear plus *ring of protection* +2, *cloak of resistance* +3**Fast Healing (Ex)** If reduced to 0 hp, Strahd assumes gaseous form and heads toward his crypt (K86).

Additional damage while in this form has no effect.

Sunlight Vulnerability As long as the Dayheart remains intact, Strahd suffers no ill effects from sunlight. Once the Dayheart is destroyed, if Strahd is exposed to direct sunlight, he can take only a single move or standard action in the first round. The next round, he is destroyed.**Wooden Stake Vulnerability** If Strahd is helpless, a foe can take a full-round action (as a coup de grace) to drive a wooden stake through Strahd's heart.**Energy Drain (Su)** Living creatures hit by Strahd's slam attack gain two negative levels, losing 10 hit points and taking a –2 penalty on skill checks, ability checks, saving throws, and effective level. At the same time, Strahd gains 10 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on skill checks, ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for 1 hour.If the victim is a spellcaster, he loses access to two spells as if he had cast his two highest-level, currently available spells. If the victim loses a prepared spell, Strahd gains the ability to cast that spell once (as if he had prepared it). The spell remains in Strahd's mind for up to 1 hour, and he can keep 3 stolen spells at a time. (See *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 293.)**Alternate Form (Su)** As a vampire, Strahd can assume the shape of a bat, dire bat, batlike humanoid, wolf, dire wolf, or feral humanoid as a standard action.**Blood Drain (Ex)** Strahd can suck blood from a living victim with his fangs by making a successful grapple check. If he pins the foe, he drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, Strahd gains 5 temporary hit points.**Dominate (Su)** Strahd can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack with a range of 30 feet, except that Strahd must use a standard action and choose a single target—those merely looking at him are unaffected. Strahd's target must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or fall instantly under Strahd's influence as if by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th).**Gaseous Form (Su)** As a standard action, Strahd can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (CL 5th), but he can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability. His Armor Class in gaseous form is 15 (19 with mage armor active), touch 15, flat-footed 12.**Forest Sign (Su)** Strahd's connection to the forests of Barovia provides a constant nondetection effect on himself and his gear. If Strahd's connection is severed, the benefit is lost; reduce his CR by 1.**Mountain Sign (Su)** Strahd's connection to the mountains of Barovia surrounds him in a field of force that grants a +6 armor bonus to AC. This force armor protects him from incorporeal attacks and applies when Strahd is in gaseous form. If Strahd's connection to the mountain is severed, his Armor Class is reduced to 21 and his CR is reduced by 1.**Swamp Sign (Su)** Due to his connection to the swamps of Barovia, Strahd has resistance to acid 10, fire 10, and sonic 10. If his connection to the swamp is severed, Strahd loses these resistances and his CR is reduced by 1.

COUNT STRAHD (WEREBAT FORM)

CR 12

(See page 6 for Strahd's full statistics)

HP 65

Male vampire (human) necromancer 10

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft., blindsense 20 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +17

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 20; Dodge

HD 10; Fast healing 5; DR 10/silver and magic

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, positive energy 10, sonic 10; turn resistance +4; nondetection

Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +10

Weakness sunlight, running water, wooden stake

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 40 ft. (good), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d6+4 plus energy drain 2 levels)

Base Atk +5; Grp +8

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Special Actions alternate form, blood drain (1d4 Con per round), children of the night, gaseous form

Abilities Str 16, Dex 20, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16

SQ create spawn, forest, mountain, and swamp signs

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting (or Touch of Taint), Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Enervate Spell^{†B}, Fell Drain^{†B}, Improved Energy Drain[†], Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Positive Energy Resistance[†], Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Drain[†].

Skills Bluff +17, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +7, Hide +14, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +17, Move Silently +18, Search +13, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +20, Spot +17

Alternate Form (Su) In his werebat form, Strahd cannot cast spells that have verbal components. He loses his dominate ability, but he can still use his blood drain ability in this form.

Forest Sign (Su) Strahd's connection to the forests of Barovia provides a constant nondetection effect on himself and his gear. If Strahd's connection is severed, the benefit is lost; reduce his CR by 1.

Mountain Sign (Su) Strahd's connection to the mountains of Barovia surrounds him in a field of force that grants a +6 armor bonus to AC. This force armor protects him from incorporeal attacks and applies when Strahd is in gaseous form. If Strahd's connection to the mountain is severed, his Armor Class is reduced to 21 and his CR is reduced by 1.

Swamp Sign (Su) Due to his connection to the swamps of Barovia, Strahd has resistance to acid 10, fire 10, and sonic 10. If his connection to the swamp is severed, Strahd loses these resistances and his CR is reduced by 1.

ADVANCED DREAD GUARDS (2)

CR 7

HP 75 each

N Medium construct

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +1, Spot +14

Languages understands Common

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

HD 10

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue and exhaustion, any effect that requires a Fort save unless it affects objects or is harmless, death from massive damage

Resist cold 10, fire 10

Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) (can't run)

Melee +1 heavy mace +13 (1d8+6)

Base Atk +7; Grp +12

Atk Options earth's pull (+1 heavy mace +9, damage 1d8+6 and reduce speed to 5 ft. for 1 round), Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave

Special Actions Improved Bull Rush (+9)

Abilities Str 21, Dex 15, Con —, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 4

Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Skills Spot +14

Possessions combat gear plus +1 heavy mace, masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy steel shield

Earth's Pull (Su) A dread guard can choose to take a –4 penalty on its attack roll to supernaturally root its target to the earth. If this attack hits, the target's speed is reduced to 5 feet for 1 round.



DINING ROOM

Encounter Level 15

Use this tactical encounter with the room description on page 94.

Assuming the PCs enter the dining room from the guests' hall (K9) and that they did not encounter Strahd in the Entry, Strahd (marked as **S** on the map) sits at the table with his back to the door but acts as though he is expecting them. If the PCs enter through the secret door from area K11, Strahd is on his feet, pacing behind the table, and acts considerably more surprised. In this case, modify the read-aloud text as needed.

When the PCs enter the room, read:

A wind whistles through this vast room. Crystal sings in the darkness as great chandeliers swing, dancing and sparkling in the light you carry. Motes of light dance in glass and china on a great dining table. At one end of the table, his back to you, sits an elegant gentleman in the fine clothing of a nobleman. As you enter, he turns to face you, revealing a gaunt but aristocratic face with prominent cheekbones and a high forehead. His piercing eyes take you in, then he slowly smiles. "Welcome to Castle Ravenloft," he says.

STRAHD'S CONVERSATION

Strahd is more interested in talking to the PCs than in fighting them in this encounter. He tries to learn how much they have accomplished in preparing to fight him. He knows (from his spies) more or less what they have done, but is not sure of how much they might have figured out and pieced together along the way.

For his part, Strahd is boastful, proud, and unrepentant. He invites the PCs to eat and drink with him, knowing that the wine will dull their wits (see below). Like any arrogant villain, he has few qualms about sharing at least the broad outlines of his plan with the PCs, with certain exceptions:

- Strahd does not discuss Irenea, except to say (his mouth a grim line), "She will be mine."
- If Strahd's secondary goal is Brook No Rival or Untamed Allies and the PCs have already dealt with the witches or werewolves, Strahd thanks them for helping him. If they have not yet dealt with his unruly subjects, he tries to avoid giving the impression that the PCs are pawns in his plans.
- If Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness, his conversation is disjointed, bordering on incoherent. He parrots the PCs' words back to them in random order, interspersed with exclamations about worms, darkness, and Irenea.

STRAHD ZOMBIE

CR 2

HP 40

NE Medium undead (humanoid)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, can't run)

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ hard to kill, plodding

Feats Toughness

Skills —

Hard to Kill (Ex) Whenever a Strahd zombie has taken enough damage to drop it, roll a d20. On any roll of 11 or higher, the zombie ignores the damage that would have dropped it.

Plodding (Ex) Zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

- If Strahd's secondary goal is Strahd's Dynasty, Strahd does not tell the PCs that he plans to turn them into vampires, but does reveal that he has found a way to walk in the sunlight once more. He does not reveal that the Dayheart is the source of this new power.
- Similarly, if Strahd's secondary goal is Undead Legions, he says nothing to the PCs about his plan for them to carry the zombie infection to the outside world. Instead, two infectious Strahd zombies appear behind the PCs after a few rounds of conversation, and the encounter turns quickly to combat.

Strahd's Statistics: Use the statistics for Strahd in human form on page 6 when running this encounter.

FOOD AND DRINK

The crystal goblets on the table are filled with dark red wine that is laced with vampiric blood. A character who drinks even a sip from these goblets takes a –4 penalty on Will saves against a vampire's domination ability and a –2 penalty on Fortitude saves to remove a negative level for 1 week.

There is meat on the plates as well. If Strahd's secondary goal is Undead Legions, eating the meat exposes a character to the zombie infection.

Zombie Infection: Ingested disease, Fortitude DC 13, incubation period instant, damage sickened/—.

An afflicted creature that is reduced to -1 hit points or lower (or dies) rises as an infected zombie in $1d4+1$ rounds unless properly treated (see the sidebar on page 29). If Strahd has a different secondary goal, the meat is safe to eat and extremely delicious.

STRAHD'S TACTICS

Strahd uses this encounter to welcome the PCs to the castle. He wants to learn what he can about what the PCs know and what they have figured out concerning his plans and goals. If they have gotten his plans and goals figured out correctly, he knows that they might be worthy opponents. If they have

figured wrong, he recognizes them as insignificant intruders that he will delight in destroying.

Strahd is not particularly interested in fighting the PCs here. He carries on a conversation with them until they attack him or he grows bored. When either of those events occurs, Strahd tries to dominate one PC (trying several in succession if the PCs make their Will saves), then assumes gaseous form and seeps through the cracks around the secret door on the west wall. Once through the secret door, he reverts to human form to get away, using his intimate knowledge of the castle to outmaneuver any efforts to follow him the PCs might attempt.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Secret Door: The secret door connects area K10 to area K11. A DC 20 Search check is needed to find the secret door. The door is not particularly well hidden, and can be detected by the cracks separating it from the surrounding wall. Strahd can use these cracks to escape the room in gaseous form if he needs to employ that tactic. If a PC has seen Strahd escape through these cracks, that character gains a $+4$ circumstance bonus on Search checks to find the door.

Dining Table: Three elegant dining tables, set with fine plates and crystal, dominate the room (K10). A character can jump or climb onto a table to gain a $+1$ bonus for higher ground on melee attacks against opponents on the floor. A DC 10 Jump check is required to leap onto a table, or a DC 2 Climb check as a move action to move from the floor to a table. The surface of the table counts as difficult terrain (each square costs 2 squares of movement) because of the plates, bowls, glasses, and fine linen spread over its surface.

Chandelier: A chandelier hangs over each table. A Medium character standing on a table can reach up and grab a chandelier, swinging on it in order to jump elsewhere. Swinging on the chandelier allows a character to count a standing jump as a running jump, and grants a $+2$ circumstance bonus to the resulting Jump check. A character can overrun or bull rush as part of a jump.

The chandelier hanging over the southern table isn't as secure as the other two. If a Medium character grabs this chandelier, he or she pulls it from the ceiling. The chandelier crashes and deals $2d6$ points of damage to the character underneath it. A DC 20 Reflex save reduces the damage by half.

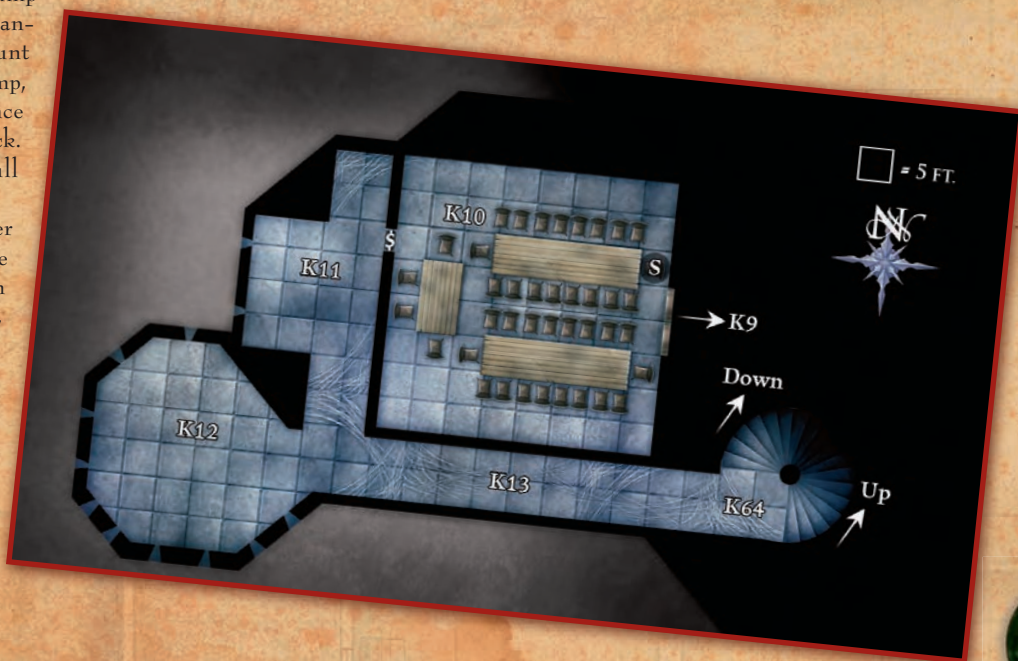
Chairs: The chairs obstruct movement around the tables.

Entering a square that contains a chair costs 2 squares of movement.

Arrow Slits: These slits (in areas K11 and K12) are $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall and 4 inches wide. A character standing behind one has nearly perfect cover against a creature on the other side, gaining a $+8$ bonus to Armor Class, a $+4$ bonus on Reflex saves, and the benefits of the improved evasion class feature against attacks originating from the other side. Strahd can use the arrow slits while in gaseous form to escape to another part of the castle.

Cobwebs: Thick, dusty cobwebs fill the passage (K11, K13, and K64 on the map) and obscure vision beyond 5 feet in this area, similar to the *obscuring mist* spell. A creature 5 feet away from an attacker has concealment (20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker cannot use sight to locate the target).

As with the *obscuring mist* spell, wind and fire can clear the cobwebs. A moderate wind ($11+$ mph) disperses the cobwebs in 4 rounds. A strong wind ($21+$ mph), such as from a *gust of wind* spell, disperses the cobwebs in 1 round. A fire spell clears away the cobwebs in the fire's area; targeted fire spells do not help in clearing the webs.



CHAPEL OF RAVENLOFT

Encounter Level 15

Use this tactical encounter with the room description on page 95.

When the PCs first enter the chapel, they face no immediate danger. They can explore the room, examine the *Icon of Ravenloft*, and search the body on the altar. Depending on circumstances, they might even begin a long vigil to awaken the powers of the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* or the *Sunsword*, or to qualify for the knight of the raven prestige class.

ENCOUNTER DEVELOPMENTS

Depending on the results of the Fortunes of Ravenloft, Strahd might encounter the PCs in this area. If the Fortunes of Ravenloft call for this encounter, Strahd attacks the first time the PCs enter the chapel, as they explore the area.

If the PCs are performing a ritual or holding a vigil, Strahd enters the area during this process and attacks when the PCs least expect it.

Strahd (S on the map) begins the encounter in his werebat form, perched on the balcony (K28) above the chapel floor. He enters K28 in gaseous form, completely silently. Because he is 50 feet above the ground, he is cloaked in darkness or (at best) shadowy illumination from whatever light source the PCs are using (see page 90), though darkvision can reach up to his position. Characters who have a chance to see him must still make a successful Spot check against his Hide check (+14), as he crouches for cover on the balcony.

If none of the PCs detects Strahd on the balcony, he acts alone in the surprise round, swooping down from the balcony and stopping adjacent to a PC he considers a significant threat. (If the characters are performing a ritual or holding a vigil in the chapel, he moves next to the character who is leading that process). If one or more PCs notice Strahd before he attacks, those PCs can roll initiative and take a single action in the surprise round as well. If all of the PCs spot him on the balcony, there is no surprise round; Strahd attacks at the end of his move on his first turn.

STRAHD'S TACTICS

The ancient chapel brings out the worst in Strahd. If the Fortunes of Ravenloft demand his presence here, he is strangely compelled to be in a place he despises, and he fights furiously in one of his bestial forms—either as a dire wolf or as a werebat. If he attacks the PCs while they are keeping a vigil here, he is keenly aware of a danger to himself and his reign over Barovia, and he fights just as furiously.

COUNT STRAHD (DIRE WOLF FORM)

CR 15

(See page 6 for Strahd's full statistics)

HP 65

Male vampire (human) necromancer 10

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 18; **Dodge**

HD 10; **Fast healing** 5; **DR** 10/silver and magic

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to ability scores, fatigue, exhaustion

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, positive energy 10, sonic 10; turn resistance +4; nondetection

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10

Weakness sunlight, running water, wooden stake

Speed 50 ft. (8 squares), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d8+10 plus trip, energy drain 2 levels)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Special Actions alternate form, children of the night, gaseous form

Abilities Str 25, Dex 15, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting (or Touch of Taint),

Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Enervate Spell^{†B}, Fell

Drain^{†B}, Improved Energy Drain[†], Improved Initiative^B,

Lightning Reflexes^B, Positive Energy Resistance[†], Scribe

Scroll^B, Spell Drain[†].

Skills Bluff +17, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +7, Disguise

+3 (+13 to disguise as dire wolf), Hide +8, Intimidate

+11, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18,

Listen +13, Move Silently +16, Search +13, Sense Motive

+17, Spellcraft +20, Spot +13

Alternate Form In his dire wolf form, Strahd cannot cast spells, and he loses access to his dominate and blood drain abilities.

The first four actions Strahd takes are:

1. Fly down from the balcony to melee a chosen PC in werebat form (move action; surprise round or first full round);
2. Make a bite attack against the chosen PC (standard action, first full round);
3. Move away from the PC, provoking an attack of opportunity (move action, first or second full round);
4. Change into dire wolf form (standard action, second full round).

Strahd continues fighting in dire wolf form, demonstrating little interest in sophisticated tactics—only in bloodthirsty savagery. He tends to attack whichever character dealt the most damage to him in the previous round, but if he knows he has severely weakened one of his foes,

he focuses his attacks on that character to the exclusion of other opponents.

Strahd's Statistics: Use the tactical statistics for Strahd in werebat form found on page 131 when running this encounter. His dire wolf form is described on the facing page.

Ending This Encounter

If Strahd is reduced to 32 hit points or fewer during this battle, he changes back to his werebat form and alternates between making swooping charge attacks while slowly retreating to the balcony, letting his fast healing ability restore his health while his wings keep him out of the PCs' reach. Strahd fights until he is reduced to 0 hit points, completely retreating only when he has no alternative.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Massive Pillars: The three remaining great pillars in the chapel take up an entire square each and provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves) to anyone standing behind them.

Shattered Pillar: The pillar in the southwest portion of the room has been shattered, creating an area of dense rubble that hampers movement across five squares. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter these rubble-strewn squares. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2 while characters are standing in or moving through these squares.

Stairs: These creaky wooden stairs are very steep, rising 25 feet (5 squares) to a landing (K29) and another 25 feet (5 more squares) to the balcony (K28). It costs 2 squares of movement to move up the steps 1 square. Characters running or charging down these stairs must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check upon entering the first steep stairs square. Characters who fail stumble and must end their movement 1d2 squares down the steps. Characters who fail by 5 or more take 1d6 points of damage and fall prone in the square where they end their movement. Steep stairs increase the DC of Tumble checks by 5. The stairs are also very creaky, increasing the DC of Move Silently checks by 5.

High Tower Staircase: These stairs (K18) circle upward 300 feet to K59, and down 10 feet to a solid masonry wall that blocks the stairway (except for a small crack that allows Strahd in gaseous form to pass through). These stairs do not impede movement.

Dais: Two steps lift this portion of the chapel two feet above the rest of the chapel floor. The stairs do not affect movement. A character standing on the dais gains a +1 bonus on melee attacks against creatures not on the dais due to higher ground. In addition, a good creature gains a holy blessing, granting a +2 bonus on attacks made while standing on the dais. All such attacks are considered good aligned and magic for purposes of bypassing damage reduction.

Altar: This great stone block rests atop the dais. A repeating pattern of ravens is carved around the top edge of the stone block. Sitting on top of the altar is a statue of a silver raven—the *Icon of Ravenloft*. See page 214 for details on this powerful magic item.



Any character touching the altar or grabbing the raven statue triggers a *holy smite* effect (20-foot-radius burst) centered on the center front of the altar. The effect deals 5d8 points of damage to evil creatures within the area (10d6 to evil outsiders), and causes them to become blinded for 1 round. A successful DC 16 Will save reduces damage to half and negates the blinded effect.

The spell deals only half damage to creatures that are neither evil nor good, and such creatures are not blinded.

The altar provides cover to a character standing behind it.

Corpse: The body draped over the altar is all that remains of an evil cleric who attempted to seize the *Icon of Ravenloft* and fell to the *holy smite* effect. See page 214 for details about the *Icon of Ravenloft*.

The desiccated corpse wears +1 *full plate*, has a +1 *unholy heavy mace* at its belt, and a *periapt of Wisdom* +2 around its neck.

Statues: Two statues flank the altar, while two others stand in each alcove (K16 and K17). Each statue takes up an entire square, and each statue provides cover to anyone standing behind it.

Balcony: This balcony is 50 feet above the floor of the chapel. The entire length of the balcony is open to the chapel, not just the semicircular portion that protrudes over the door (see the dotted area on the map).

A character standing within 10 feet of the western wall on the chapel floor has cover against attacks from above.

Thrones: Two large, ornate thrones stand in the middle of the balcony. The thrones provide cover to a character standing on or behind a throne.

AUDIENCE HALL

Encounter Level 15

Use this tactical encounter with the room description on page 97.

Strahd starts out on the throne when the PCs enter area K25 (Strahd is the S on the map). The two dread guards (D) are on the landing (K19).

If the PCs enter by the stairs from K19, the back of the throne completely hides Strahd from view.

If the PCs enter through the doors from K26 or K30, they have a chance to see him from the side (Spot DC 24).

Strahd's first action in this encounter is to speak the command word that activates the dread guards. If he is undetected, he does this as his action during the surprise round, but otherwise he does it as his first normal turn.

If Strahd has already activated the dread guards and the PCs defeated them, he does not have this resource to call upon.

FIRST VIEW

Read this text when Strahd first comes into view and if the PCs have not previously seen his feral form:

Strahd stands before you now, though it is hard to believe this is the same man you have seen before. His gaunt face is stretched grotesquely, with a mouthful of sharp teeth protruding forward from his oversized mouth. His hands are warped into claws, each finger almost as long as his forearm and tipped with a dagger point. His posture is hunched, his legs seeming almost wolflike, coiled and ready to spring. A long, thin tongue darts to wet his lips, as if savoring the anticipation of the taste of blood.

TACTICS

Strahd remains in feral form for the entire encounter. On his first turn, without rising from the throne, he first speaks to the PCs, saying, "You seek an audience with the lord of this Castle?" He then shouts the command word that activates the dread guards in K19 ("Kharavashtra!"). The dread guards start up the stairs as Strahd listens to anything the PCs have to say. As soon as a PC comes within 15 feet of the throne, though, Strahd leaps up and moves to attack the nearest character.

COUNT STRAHD (FERAL FORM)

(See page 6 for Strahd's full statistics)

HP 65

Male vampire (human) necromancer 10

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Infernal

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 20; Dodge

HD 10; Fast healing 5; DR 10/silver and magic

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability and energy drain, damage to ability scores, fatigue, exhaustion

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, positive energy 10, sonic 10; turn resist +4; nondetection

Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +10

Weakness sunlight, running water, wooden stake

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws each +10 (1d4+5, energy drain two levels) and

bite +5 (1d6+2 plus energy drain two levels)

Base Atk +5; Grp +10

Special Actions alternate form, children of the night, gaseous form

Abilities Str 20, Dex 20, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16

SQ create spawn; forest, mountain, and swamp signs

Fast Healing (Ex) If reduced to 0 hp, Strahd assumes gaseous form and heads toward his crypt (K86). Additional damage while in this form has no effect.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures gain two negative levels, losing 10 hit points and taking a –2 penalty on skill and

CR 15

ability checks, saves, and effective level. Strahd gains 10 temporary hp and a +2 bonus on skill and ability checks, attack rolls, and saves for 1 hour.

Blood Drain (Ex) If Strahd pins a foe, he drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such success, Strahd gains 5 temporary hp.

Dominate (Su) Strahd can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his or her eyes. Strahd's target must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or fall instantly under Strahd's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th).

Gaseous Form (Su) As a standard action, Strahd can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (CL 5th). He can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability. His AC in gaseous form is 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12.

Forest Sign (Su) Strahd's connection to the forests of Barovia provides a constant nondetection effect on himself and his gear. If Strahd's connection is severed, the benefit is lost; reduce his CR by 1.

Mountain Sign (Su) Strahd's connection to the mountains of Barovia surrounds him in a field of force that grants a +6 armor bonus to AC. This force armor protects him from incorporeal attacks and applies when Strahd is in gaseous form. If Strahd's connection to the mountain is severed, his Armor Class is reduced to 21 and his CR is reduced by 1.

Swamp Sign (Su) Due to his connection to the swamps of Barovia, Strahd has resistance to acid 10, fire 10, and sonic 10. If his connection to the swamp is severed, Strahd loses these resistances and his CR is reduced by 1.

ADVANCED DREAD GUARDS (2)

CR 7

HP 75 each

N Medium construct

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +14

Languages understands Common

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

HD 10

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue and exhaustion, any effect that requires a Fort save unless it affects objects or is harmless, death from massive damage

Resist cold 10, fire 10

Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) (can't run)

Melee +1 heavy mace +13 (1d8+6)

Base Atk +7; Grp +12

Atk Options earth's pull (+1 heavy mace +9, damage 1d8+6 and reduce speed to 5 ft. for 1 round), Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave

Special Actions Improved Bull Rush (+9)

Abilities Str 21, Dex 15, Con —, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 4

Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Skills Spot +14

Possessions combat gear plus +1 heavy mace, masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy steel shield

Earth's Pull (Su) A dread guard can choose to take a –4 penalty on its attack roll to supernaturally root the target to the earth. If this attack hits, the target's speed is reduced to 5 feet for 1 round.

Strahd uses his full attack routine every round he can, hoping to score an energy drain each round. He seems to delight in the pain his bite and claws inflict, and he grows stronger from the energy he drains.

The dread guards move slowly up the stairs and try to engage PCs other than Strahd's chosen target, using their earth's pull ability to keep those PCs from aiding Strahd's victim.

Using This Encounter

There are three possible uses for this encounter.

1. If the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate that Strahd can always be found in this room, or if you want to have an encounter with Strahd in this chamber, use the details presented on this encounter spread.

2. If Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness, then use Encounter K25A (starting on page 138). The PCs get to meet the shapeless form and two gibbering mouthers.

3. If Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness and if the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate that Strahd can always be found in this room, then use Encounter K25A (starting on page 138). In this case, a crazed Strahd accompanies the shapeless form; do not use the gibbering mouthers.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Secret Door: The secret door connects area K25 to area K13. A DC 25 Search check is needed to find the secret door. Even though the door is well hidden, there are tiny cracks around it that Strahd can use to escape the room in gaseous form. If a PC has seen Strahd escape through these cracks, that character gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Search checks to find and open the door.

Window: A large window in the west wall consists of many small panes of thick, opaque glass. Several of the panes have been broken, letting in the cold night air. A chill wind blows through the room, swirling a scattering of dead leaves from the outside.

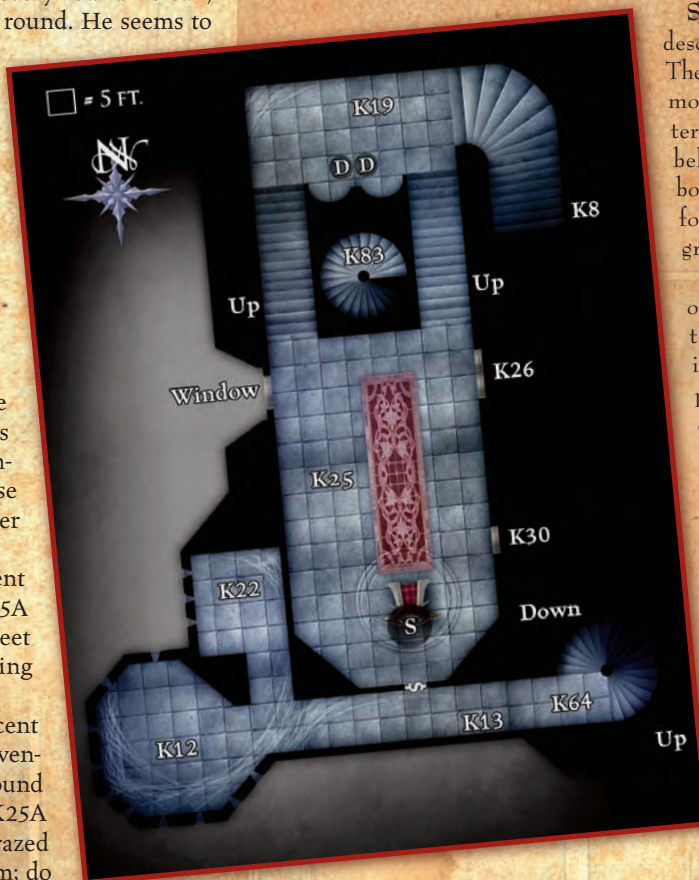
Arrow Slits: These slits (in areas K12 and K22) are 2-1/2 feet tall and 4 inches wide. A character standing behind one has nearly perfect cover against a creature on the other side, gaining a +8 bonus to Armor Class, a +4 bonus on Reflex saves, and the benefits of the improved evasion class feature against attacks originating from the other side. Strahd can use the arrow slits while in gaseous form to escape to another part of the castle.

Cobwebs: Thick, dusty cobwebs fill the passage (K12, K13, and K22 on the map) and obscure vision beyond 5 feet in this area, similar to the *obscuring mist* spell. A creature 5 feet away from an attacker has concealment (20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker cannot use sight to locate the target).

As with the *obscuring mist* spell, wind and fire can clear the cobwebs. A moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the cobwebs in 4 rounds. A strong wind (21+ mph), such as from a *gust of wind* spell, disperses the cobwebs in 1 round. A fire spell clears away the cobwebs in the fire's area; targeted fire spells do not help in clearing the webs.

Stairs: Twin staircases descend 20 feet to K19. These stairs don't affect movement, but characters who attack a foe below them gain a +1 bonus on melee attacks for being on higher ground.

Throne: A huge, ornate throne, its back to the stairs, stands in the middle of a platform. The back of the throne provides cover to a character standing on or behind the throne.



HALL OF MADNESS

Encounter Level 10

Use this tactical encounter with the room description on page 97.

Use this encounter only if Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness. The shapeless spawn is the physical embodiment of the madness that has consumed Strahd, a new master that utterly controls the vampire. Defeating the shapeless spawn restores Strahd to sanity.

The shapeless spawn (SS on the map) is draped over the throne when the PCs enter the room, and two gibbering mouthers (G) stand in the room between the throne and the stairs.

This encounter starts with the read aloud, followed immediately by initiative checks. On the gibbering mouthers turn in the order, the mouthers begin to gibber, forcing all PCs in the room or on the stairs to K19 to make Will saves (see below).

If the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate that Strahd can be found in this room, he begins the encounter crouched

on the floor near the throne (S). Use his feral form statistics from page 136, but note the tactics below for his erratic behavior in the presence of the incarnation of his madness.

USING THIS ENCOUNTER

There are three possible uses for this encounter.

1. If the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate that Strahd can always be found in this room, or if you want to have an encounter with Strahd in this chamber, use the details presented on the previous encounter spread (page 136).

2. If Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness, then use this encounter. The PCs get to meet the shapeless form and two gibbering mouthers.

3. If Strahd's secondary goal is Descent into Madness and if the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate that Strahd can always be found in this room, then use this encounter. In this case, a crazed Strahd accompanies the shapeless form; do not use the gibbering mouthers.

SHAPELESS SPAWN

CR 9

HP 133

CE Large aberration

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Listen +13, Spot +13

Languages Common, Undercommon

AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 21

HD 14

Immune confusion

Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +13

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares)

Melee tentacle +15 (1d6+7, touch of idiocy) and
tentacle +15 (1d6+7, touch of madness, DC 16) and
tentacle +15 (4d6+7/19–20, impalement)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +10; Grp +20

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved
Sunder, Power Attack

Special Actions ululation (DC 20)

Abilities Str 24, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 16, Wis 3, Cha 19

SQ madness, tentacles

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical
(impaling tentacle), Improved Sunder, Power Attack

Skills Hide +14, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Listen +13, Move
Silently +18, Spot +13

Touch of Idiocy (Su) A successful melee attack from the first tentacle imposes a –1d6 penalty on the target's Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, as the *touch of idiocy* spell. No score can be reduced below 1. The effect lasts for 140 minutes.

Touch of Madness (Su) A successful melee attack from the second tentacle forces the target to make a DC 16 Will save or be dazed for 10 rounds. A dazed character can take no actions.

Impalement (Ex) The third tentacle is sharply pointed and covered in vicious barbs. If this attack hits, the tentacle

buries itself in the target. Each round thereafter that a creature remains impaled, it automatically takes 4d6+7 points of damage and incurs a cumulative –1 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks.

A creature impaled by a severed tentacle takes 1d6 points of damage per round until the tentacle is removed. Removing the tentacle requires a full-round action that deals 2d8 points of damage; if the character removing the tentacle makes a DC 20 Heal check, this damage is reduced to 1d4 points.

Ululation (Su) Once per day, the creature can begin a horrible wailing as a move action. Any creature within 30 feet that hears this sound must make a DC 20 Will save or become confused for as long as the sound continues (a successful save renders target immune for 24 hours). Any creature (except for aberrations) that begins its turn within 10 feet of a shapeless spawn must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round.

The ululation lasts for as long as the shapeless spawn spends a move action in a round to maintain it. Once it stops, the effect cannot be used for 24 hours.

Madness (Ex) A shapeless spawn uses its Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of its Wisdom modifier. Anyone targeting the creature with thought detection, mind control, or telepathic abilities makes direct contact with its tortured mind and has its depravity score increased by 1d3 points (if you are using the taint rules from *Heroes of Horror*) or 1d2 points of Wisdom damage (if you aren't using the taint rules).

Tentacles An opponent can make sunder attacks against a shapeless spawn's tentacles as if they were weapons. The tentacles have 10 hit points, and severing one deals 5 points of damage to the creature. The creature withdraws from combat if it loses two tentacles. Severed tentacles grow back in 1d6+1 days.

GIBBERING MOUTHER**CR 5**

HP 42

N Medium aberration

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +4, Spot +9**Aura** gibbering (60-ft. spread, DC 13 Will save or confused for 1d2 rounds)**Languages** Common, Gibberish**AC** 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18**HD 4; DR** 5/bludgeoning**Immune** critical hits, flanking**Fort** +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5**Speed** 10 ft. (2 squares), swim 20 ft.**Melee** 6 bites each +4 (1 point of damage each)**Ranged** spittle +4 touch (1d4 acid plus blindness)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +3**Special Actions** ground manipulation, swallow whole, blood drain**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 13, Con 22, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 13**Feats** Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Listen +4, Spot +9, Swim +8

Gibbering (Su) All creatures (other than mouters and the shapeless spawn) within a 60-foot spread must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or be confused for 1d2 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting compulsion effect. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected for 24 hours.

Spittle (Ex) As a free action, a gibbering mouter can spit at one opponent within 30 feet. This is a ranged touch attack that deals 1d4 points of acid damage and forces the target to make a DC 18 Fort save or be blinded for 1d4 rounds.

Improved Grab (Ex) If a mouter hits a Medium foe with a bite attack, it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Swallow Whole (Ex) A mouter can attempt to swallow a grappled opponent of Medium size or smaller by making a successful grapple check. Once the victim is inside, the mouter can use its blood drain ability. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by dealing 5 points of damage to the mouter (AC 19). Its body can hold 1 Medium, 2 Small, or 8 Tiny creatures.

Blood Drain (Ex) A swallowed opponent takes 1d4 points of Constitution damage each round. This ability does not affect elementals, plants, or creatures that lack a Constitution score.

Ground Manipulation (Su) At will, as a standard action on two consecutive rounds, a gibbering mouter can soften the stone in all adjacent squares. Anyone other than the mouter must use a move action to avoid becoming mired in the soft stone (treat as being pinned).

ing heart glows bright red, and two saclike organs glow a paler red beside it. Despite its similarity to amorphous creatures like the gibbering mouters that accompany it, the shapeless spawn is susceptible to critical hits and sneak attacks.

DEVELOPMENT

The shapeless spawn enjoys its relationship with Strahd and has no wish to see that relationship severed. The creature sees the player characters as a threat to its goals. Whether Strahd is in the room or not, the shapeless form decides that the threat the PCs present to its goals must be eliminated.

STRAHD'S TACTICS

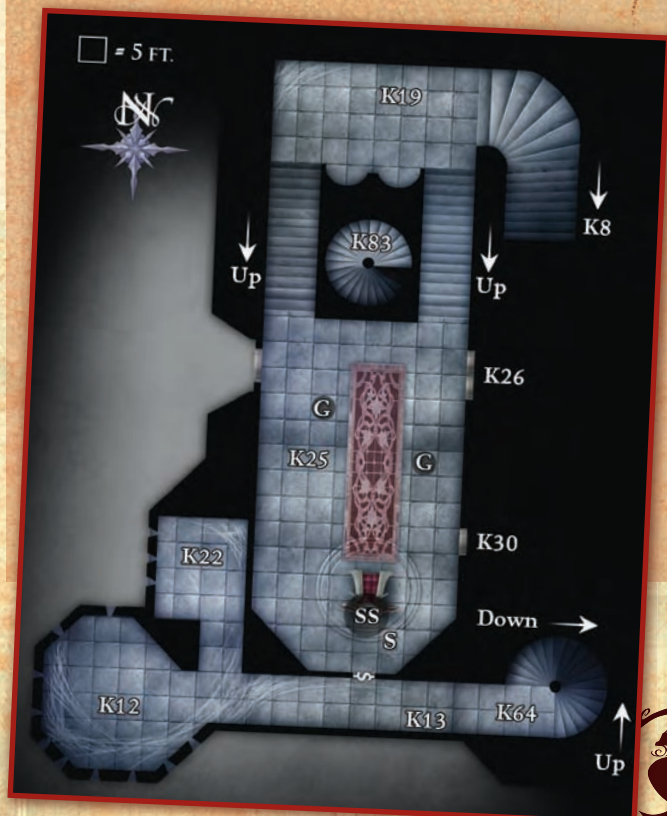
If Strahd is present with the shapeless spawn, his behavior is completely erratic. He acts as if confused; roll every round to determine his actions unless he was attacked on the previous round. If Strahd is attacked, he attacks the creature that most recently attacked him in the following round. He cannot attack the shapeless spawn, regardless of the result of the dice roll. Strahd remains in his feral form for the entire encounter. His behavior does not change until he is reduced to 0 hit points, at which point he assumes gaseous form and retreats to his crypt.

d% Strahd's Behavior

01–10	Attack creature nearest the shapeless spawn
11–20	Act normally
21–50	Babble incoherently
51–70	Cower as far as possible from shapeless spawn
71–100	Attack nearest creature (not shapeless spawn)

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details of the tactical map are described in the previous version of this encounter (pages 136–137).

**FIRST VIEW**

When the PCs enter the room, read:

Something on the throne makes a part of your mind want to turn away and run. Whatever it is, it is large—larger than the throne, seeming almost draped over the massive chair and hanging over the arms and front. Even as you look, some kind of tentacle or eyestalk rises above the dark, writhing mass and twists as if peering around.

SHAPELESS SPAWN

The shapeless spawn is a great heap of flesh with only vaguely discernible features. Three large tentacles protrude from its body, but it constantly extends and withdraws an array of smaller appendages, each one bearing an eye, a mouth, or a less identifiable organ. Beneath its black, membranous skin, a puls-

STEWARD'S OFFICE

Encounter Level 10

Use this tactical encounter with the room description on page 98.

The player characters enter this area either from the Audience Hall (K25) or the South Tower Stairs (K21). Strahd's steward, a madman named Lief Lipsiege (L on the map), sits on a stool at a desk covered with scrolls. He is surrounded by three undead spellcasters called deathlocks (D). None of them are hiding, but neither are they immediately and obviously hostile. Read the text below when the PCs open one of the doors, then allow them to decide if they want to try to talk to Lief or simply plunge into combat. If combat is chosen, the PCs might get a surprise round, depending on how they approach the situation.

FIRST VIEW

When the PCs open one of the doors to this room, read:

A figure crouches atop a tall stool beside a large desk, scratching a quill across a long parchment. He wears a chain shirt but does not appear to be armed. Three gaunt figures stand impassively around the man at the desk, draped in embroidered cloaks. The man looks up absently as the door opens, and then starts in surprise as he sees you. He begins rummaging around on the desk in front of him. As he does, his tongue darts out of the corner of his mouth—long, maggot-white, and slightly forked.

After rummaging around his desk for an instant, Lief produces a greatsword and begins swinging it wildly around his head. There is an obvious maniacal gleam in his wide, unblinking eyes.

THE MONSTERS

The undead creatures are deathlocks, the animated corpses of spellcasters. Skeletally thin and draped in cloaks fringed with magical sigils, deathlocks' cadaverous eyes sizzle with cursed power. A deathlock prefers to use its spell-like abilities from a distance, and often uses its *inflict minor wounds* ability to heal itself.

ENCOUNTER TACTICS

In combat, Lief fights like a raging barbarian, hitting as hard and fast as he can. The deathlocks use *cause fear* once each, then try to hang back out of melee combat and use their *magic missiles*. They resort to using their bite attacks only when absolutely no other option remains.

If a deathlock is ever adjacent to an unconscious PC, it uses *death knell* on that target.

LIEF LIPSIEGE

CR 8

HP 92

Male tainted raver (human) aristocrat 3/fighter 6

CE Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 14

HD 9; **Fast healing** 3

Immune confusion

Fort +12, **Ref** +5, **Will** +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 *greatsword* +11/+6 (2d6+15/17–20)

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack (3 points included)

Combat Gear *potion of shield of faith* +5 (increases AC to 20 for 18 minutes)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 4, Cha 14

SQ perpetual rage, madness

Feats Cleave, Dash, Deformity (tongue)*, Improved Critical (greatsword), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Willing Deformity*

* Feat described in *Heroes of Horror*. Willing Deformity gives a +3 bonus on Intimidate checks, while Lief's forked and mutilated tongue grants him blindsense.

Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +6, Forgery +11, Gather Information +9, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (history) +8, Listen +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +6

Possessions combat gear plus +2 *chain shirt*, +1 *greatsword*, *cloak of resistance* +1

Perpetual Rage (Ex) A tainted raver is constantly in a state of insane fury similar to a barbarian's rage. In this state, the raver gains a +4 bonus on its Strength and Constitution scores, a +2 bonus on Will saves, and a –2 penalty to Armor Class (included in the statistics above). An effect that counters rage, such as the *calm emotions* spell, temporarily suppresses this ability and negates these bonuses and penalties.

Unlike a barbarian's rage, a tainted raver's perpetual fury does not prevent it from taking actions that require reasoned thought or concentration. A tainted raver can cast spells, use skills, activate magic items, and even act calmly and rationally.

Madness (Ex) A tainted raver is irretrievably mad. It uses its Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of its Wisdom modifier and has immunity to *confusion* and insanity effects. Anyone targeting a tainted raver with a thought detection, mind control, or telepathic ability makes direct contact with its tortured mind and has its depravity score increased by 1d3 points from that contact. (Ignore this effect if you are not using the taint rules).

A tainted raver cannot be restored to sanity by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell. If restored to sanity, a tainted raver loses this template and all the modifiers it applies.

DEATHLOCKS (3)

CR 3

HP 19 each

NE Medium Undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages Common, Abyssal, Infernal

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11

HD 3

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist +2 turn resistance

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +1 (1d4)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +1

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):

2/day—*death knell* (DC 14)

3/day—*cause fear* (DC 13), *magic missile*, *summon monster I*

at will—*detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (DC 13), *read magic*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 15, Con —, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative

Skills Concentration +6 (+10 casting defensively),

Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +7,

Spellcraft +8, Spot +7



TALKING TO LIEF

Lief is possessed by a murderous insane rage, but it is possible to talk to him. If the PCs try to parley, he listens to them for about a minute (long enough for them to make a Diplomacy or Bluff check, for example) before he grows completely agitated and attacks.

To resist Intimidate: 1d20+11. Lief uses his Charisma modifier instead of his Wisdom modifier for this check.

Starting Attitude: Hostile.

Modifiers: Apply the following modifiers to any Diplomacy check made to influence Lief's attitude, based on the PCs' manner and specific things they mention in their interaction with him. All of these bonuses stack with each other.

- PCs try to talk about accounting or finances (–1);
- PCs are fawning or flattering (–2);
- PCs are authoritative and demanding (+1);
- PCs imply that Lief is a captive (–1);
- PCs make any reference to the deathlocks (–1)
- The PCs offer Lief an alcoholic beverage (+2)

If Hostile: Lief attacks immediately.

If Unfriendly (DC 20): Lief puts his sword back on the desk and picks up his quill, watching the PCs suspiciously until they leave the room. He lets the PCs go without molesting them, but offers them no help or information.

If Indifferent (DC 25): Lief puts his sword back on the desk and picks up his quill, returning to work. He answers the most basic questions ("Which way to the exit?") but nothing of importance or substance.

If Friendly (DC 35): Lief puts his sword down and chats amiably with the PCs for a few minutes, as the smoldering glares of the deathlocks wash over him. His conversation is disjointed and sometimes nonsensical, but he can provide answers to many questions about the castle.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details of the tactical map are described below.

Desk: Lief's tall desk obstructs one square and grants cover to a creature behind it.

Table: This large, low table is heaped with rolls of parchment and heavy tomes. A Medium character can step onto it (or a Small character can jump onto it with a DC 10 Jump check), but it counts as difficult terrain (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter).

Shelves: Tall bookshelves line the walls. They do not hamper movement, and they are bolted to the wall so they cannot be tipped over.

Doors: The door in the west wall leads to the Audience Hall (K25). The door in the east wall leads to the South Tower Stairs (K21).

Treasure: Scattered about the room under the papers are 100 gp and 25 pp. One of the curled parchments atop the desk is a scroll of divine spells containing *restoration*, *break enchantment*, and *remove disease*. The other books and papers contain worthless financial records dating back hundreds of years.

ROOMS OF WEEPING

Encounter Level 8 to 15

Use this tactical encounter with the room descriptions on pages 99–102.

This complicated encounter covers a large area of this floor of the castle, particularly if Strahd is involved.

The most likely way for the PCs to approach these rooms is from the stairway (K21) into the alcove at K35. There, two cursed spirits (C) lurk within shadow-draped statues. Rather than fight the cursed spirits in the close quarters of the alcove, the PCs might move into the dining hall (K36). A crypt chanter (CC) sings its deadly tune in the dining hall.

If Strahd chooses to attack the PCs in this area, or if the Fortunes of Ravenloft demand it, he starts in the study (K37) and is indicated by an S on the map.

Finally, Gertruda Bogoescu (G), an innocent villager, lies in the bedchamber (K42).

Strahd's Statistics: If Strahd takes part in this encounter, use the statistics for Strahd in human form on page 130.

THE MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Cursed Spirit: A cursed spirit is an incorporeal undead creature that appears as a tormented, somewhat manic, ghostly humanoid. Its lower body trails off into a ghostly cloud. Its hollow eyes convey malicious intelligence.

Crypt Chanter: A crypt chanter is an incorporeal spirit known and named for the haunting music it constantly sings. It appears as a waving, incorporeal figure as eerie and beautiful as its music—a ghostly woman dressed in the finery of a court musician. She softly strums a ghostly lute as she sings a melody that might once have celebrated a joyous occasion. On her undead lips, however, it has become a heart-wrenching expression of eternal grief.

Gertruda Bogoescu: Gertruda, a villager, is innocent and naïve. She believes that Strahd is nothing more than a charming and handsome nobleman. If there are no closed doors between her and the crypt chanter, she follows the music and risks a speedy death from listening to the ghostly tune.

CRYPT CHANTER

CR 7

HP 45

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14

Aura draining melody (60 ft., Will DC 18, daze)

Languages Common, Abyssal

AC 19, touch 19, flat-footed 15

HD 7

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist incorporeal

Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

Weakness daylight powerlessness

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect) (6 squares)

Melee incorporeal touch +6 (1d8)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** —

Atk Options Blind-Fight

Abilities Str —, Dex 18, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 20

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative

Skills Hide +14, Intimidate +13, Listen +14, Perform (sing) +14, Search +12, Spot +14

Draining Melody (Su) A crypt chanter constantly sings, creating a magically charged allure that surrounds it. All creatures within 60 feet must make a successful DC 18 Will save or stand dazed (unable to act) for as long as the music continues. This is a sonic, mind-affecting compulsion effect.

A crypt chanter's song has no words, just a melody that conveys an enormous amount of grief and despair.

Beginning on the round after becoming dazed, creatures that failed the first saving throw must make a second successful save to avoid being affected as if by the *enthrall* spell (PH 227).

Enthralled victims begin to gain 1d2 negative levels per round while the song continues, as long as they remain within range. If a creature gains a number of negative levels at least equal to its Hit Dice, it dies and becomes a spawn. When a crypt chanter bestows negative levels on a victim, it gains 5 temporary hit points for each negative level bestowed.

Creatures that successfully save upon hearing a crypt chanter's music cannot be affected by that chanter's music again unless it ceases singing for 1 full round (releasing those it previously held in thrall) and begins a new song.

Daylight Powerlessness (Ex) A crypt chanter is utterly powerless in natural sunlight and flees from it to seek refuge in any dark, shadowy location. A *daylight* spell does not provoke the same response and does not affect a crypt chanter in this way.

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid slain by a crypt chanter through its draining melody ability becomes a crypt chanter 1d4 rounds later. Chanter spawn follow the commands of the crypt chanter that created them and remain enslaved to that chanter until the originator chanter is destroyed. Chanter spawn possess none of the abilities they had in life.

CURSED SPIRITS (2)

CR 3

HP 22 each

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5

Aura curse (adjacent creatures take –2 on all saves)

Languages Common

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11

HD 3

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist incorporeal

Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +2

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect) (6 squares)

Melee incorporeal touch +3 (1d8+1)

Base Atk +1; Grp —

Abilities Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 13

Feats Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Intimidate +7, Listen +5, Spot +5

GERTRUDA BOGOESCU

CR 1/2

HP 3

Female human commoner 1

N Medium humanoid

Init +1; Senses Listen –1, Spot –1

Languages Common

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

HD 1

Fort +0, Ref +1, Will –1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee unarmed strike –1 (1d3–1 nonlethal)

Base Atk +0; Grp –1

Abilities Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 12

Feats Animal Affinity, Skill Focus (Craft)

Skills Craft (weaving) +7, Handle Animal +7, Knowledge (local) +2, Ride +3

Special Effect

Read when Strahd casts the *fell-draining lightning bolt* spell at the PCs:

A great bolt of lightning arcs from Strahd's fingertips, engulfing you in deadly energy. Even as the electricity runs through your bones, a purplish-black energy courses along with it, licking at your soul.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details of the tactical map are described below.

Statues (K35): Two statues stand in this alcove. They each take up an entire square and provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves) to anyone behind them. The faces of these statues have been obliterated. When the PCs pass the statues, the cursed spirits hiding in them emerge to attack.

Dining Table (K36): An elegant dining table, set with dusty plates and stained silverware, dominates the Count's dining hall. A character can jump or climb onto a table to gain a +1 bonus for higher ground on melee attacks against opponents on the floor. A DC 10 Jump check is required to leap onto a table, or a DC 2 Climb check as a move action to move from the floor to a table. The surface of the table counts as difficult terrain (each square costs 2 squares of movement) because of the plates, bowls, glasses, and fine linen spread over its surface.

Chairs (K36): The chairs obstruct movement around the tables. Entering a square that contains a chair costs 2 squares of movement. (Note that most chairs tucked under the table and so are considered to be in the same space as the table. Only the chairs at the ends of the table are in their own squares.)

Shelves (K37): Tall bookshelves line the west and south walls of the study. They do not hamper movement, and they are bolted to the wall so they cannot be tipped over.

Sofa (K37): This long sofa is rotting away, and its springs are utterly ruined. A character who tries to jump onto it falls through the bottom, ending movement in that square. Another move action is required to pull free from the sofa, ending in any adjacent square.

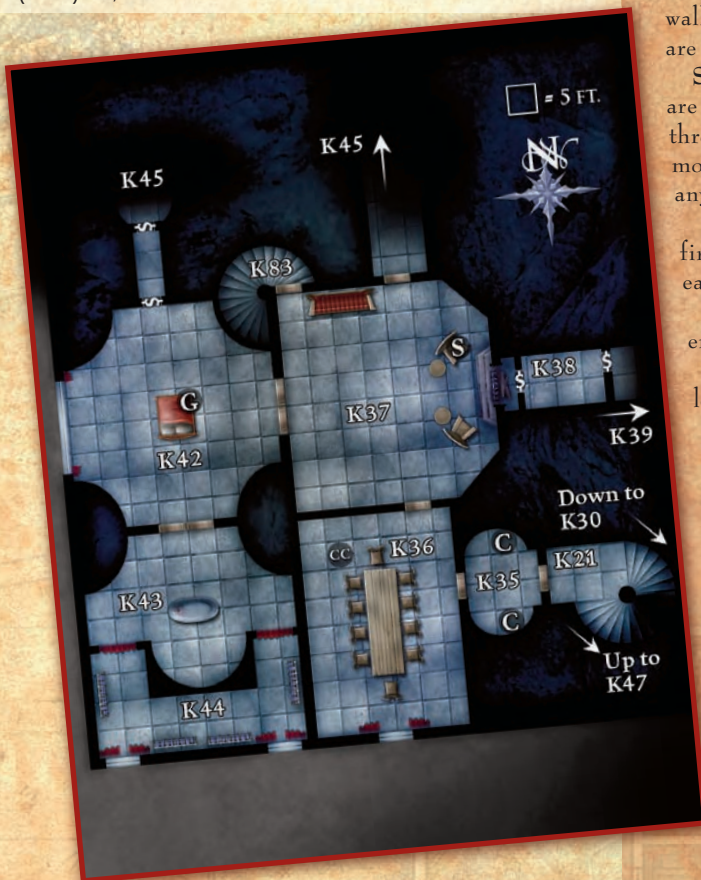
Chairs (K37): Two well-upholstered chairs face the blazing fire in the fireplace. A small, three-legged table stands beside each chair.

Fireplace (K37): A fire rages in the fireplace. See the entry on page 100 for details on catching on fire.

Secret Door (K37): A secret door behind the fireplace leads to the False Treasury (K38).

Bed (K42): Gertruda's bed can serve as higher ground, giving a character who stands on it a +1 bonus on melee attacks against creatures on the floor. In addition, the translucent silk curtains grant a character on the bed concealment, though they also grant concealment to opponents on the other side.

Secret Door (K42): DC 25 Search check to find. The PCs must move the bureau out of the way (with a DC 15 Strength check) to open the secret door. It leads into a narrow passageway ending in another secret door (obvious from inside the passage) behind one of the statues in the Hall of Heroes (K45).



TREASURY

Encounter Level 6 or 15

Use this tactical encounter with the room descriptions on page 100.

How this encounter plays out depends on what the PCs did before getting here.

If the PCs ring the bell in the belfry (K40), the two chelicerases (marked as C on the map) descend from above to attack them. (See also the “special effect” on the next page).

If the Fortunes of Ravenloft reading indicates that Strahd can be found in the treasury (K41), then the encounter begins when the PCs open the secret door into the treasury (S1) and find him there, in his feral form. Strahd then summons the chelicera to his aid.

If the PCs do not ring the bell and the Fortunes of Ravenloft reading did not indicate Strahd's presence in the treasury, there is an encounter here only if Strahd decides to attack. In this case, he first orders the chelicerases to attack. He then emerges in his “werebat” form from out of the bell rafters one round later to join the fray (starting in the square marked S2 on the map).

If the PCs come to the treasury to perform a bonding ritual, regardless of any other potential encounters, Strahd attacks them at some point during the process. He makes this attack when they are totally engaged and least expecting it, appearing out of the shadows in his feral form to rattle them and then disrupt the ritual.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Strahd's Statistics: If Strahd takes part in this encounter, use the tactical statistics for Strahd in feral form found on page 136 and Strahd in werebat form found on page 131.

Chelicerases: These monstrous arachnids resemble human-sized but spindly black spiders. Two thin arms extend from their bodies, each ending in a sharp claw. Strange pairs of thick antennae sit atop their heads like tuning forks. Unlike most chelicerases (described in *Monster Manual III*), these creatures are web spinners—possibly the result of cross-breeding with monstrous spiders.

TACTICS

If Strahd decides to encounter the PCs in the belfry (K40), he orders the chelicerases to attack first. On Strahd's turn in the second round, he follows them out of the shadowy rafters in his werebat form, flying to the nearest PC and making a bite attack. He hovers around that PC, biting each turn, until he has weakened his foe with several negative levels. At that point, he moves in to start a grapple, provok-

CHELICERASES (2)

CR 6

HP 66 each

N Medium vermin

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +9, Spot +1

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15

HD 12

Immune sonic, mind-affecting

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws each +13 (1d6+2) and bite +8 (1d8+1)

Ranged web +13 touch (entangle)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +17

Atk Options improved grab

Special Actions blood drain

Abilities Str 14, Dex 19, Con 12, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 12

SQ mimicry

Feats Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Climb +10, Hide +12, Listen +9

Web (Ex) A web-spinning chelicera can throw a web at a single target up to 50 feet away. If it hits with a ranged touch attack, the target is entangled (half speed, can't run or charge, –2 on attack rolls, –4 to Dex score, Concentration DC 15 + spell level to cast spell).

Improved Grab (Ex) If a chelicera hits with a claw attack, it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Blood Drain (Ex) A chelicera can suck the blood from a living creature by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round that it makes a successful grapple check. This ability does not affect elementals, plants, or creatures that lack a Constitution score.

Mimicry (Ex) A chelicera can repeat any noise it hears as a free action. This ability works much like a *ghost sound* spell (Will DC 17 to disbelieve), except that the sound is centered on the chelicera itself.

ing an attack of opportunity. He remains in his werebat form for as long as possible, not wanting to reveal that the bat is actually Strahd. (Even if the PCs might guess that the bat is the vampire lord of the castle, Strahd wants to keep them guessing and off their guard.)

If Strahd finds himself in a grapple he can't win, unable to secure a pin (and drain blood), he assumes gaseous form and solidifies on his next turn in feral form. He hopes that his revelation as the lord of the castle will prompt the PCs to make rash actions, and that his feral form will fill them with fear and dread. Once in feral form, he resumes clawing and biting.

In any other version of this encounter, the PCs must face Strahd in his feral form. He attacks with wild rage while in this form, trying to cause as much damage as possible. He flees if the battle turns against him.

If the PCs find Strahd in the treasury (K41), he greets them in his feral form. On his first turn, he utters a strange howling wail to summon aid. The chelicerases climb down into the belfry, appearing in the positions marked on the map at the start of the next round. Strahd fights fiercely, using the chelicerases for flanking bonuses and attacking entangled opponents to take advantage of the Dexterity penalty they suffer.

Special Effect

If any of the PCs pull the belfry rope (in area K40) enough to get the bell to ring, read:

High above, a great, unseen bell peals, its melancholy ring echoing throughout the castle. The sad, otherworldly sound threatens to overwhelm you with each reverberating clang of the swinging bell.

If the bell rings, the PCs must make successful DC 15 Will saves to avoid the effects of the waves of melancholy reverberating with every peal. A character who makes the save is not affected by the sad sound. A character who fails the save, however, receives a -4 penalty on initiative checks for the next hour.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Cobwebs: Thick, dusty cobwebs fill the Hall of Riches and the Belfry (K39 and K40 on the map). These cobwebs obscure vision beyond 5 feet in this area, similar to the *obscuring mist* spell. A creature 5 feet away from an attacker has concealment (20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker cannot use sight to locate the target).

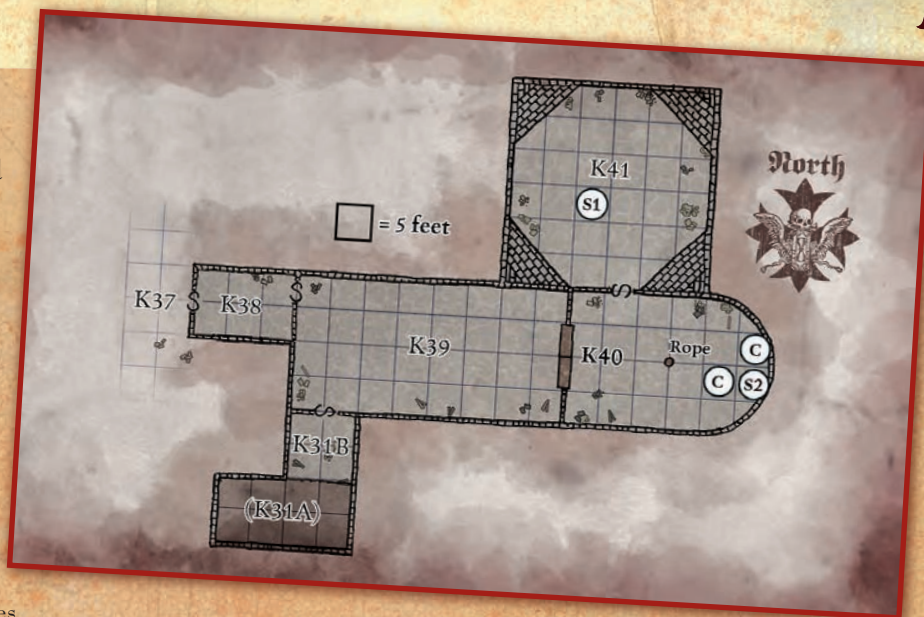
As with the *obscuring mist* spell, wind and fire can clear the cobwebs. A moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the cobwebs in 4 rounds. A strong wind (21+ mph), such as from a *gust of wind* spell, disperses the cobwebs in 1 round. A fire spell clears away the cobwebs in the fire's area; targeted fire spells do not help in clearing the webs.

A narrow path of clear space runs down the center of the hall to the next room, ending around the hanging rope. This clear path is so low and narrow that it doesn't improve visibility at all.

Secret Doors: There are secret doors throughout this area. DC 25 Search check to find a specific secret door. There are tiny cracks around each secret door that Strahd can pass through in gaseous form. If a PC has seen Strahd pass through these cracks, that character gains a $+4$ circumstance bonus on Search checks to find and open the door. Because of the cobwebs, however, a character must be adjacent to the secret doors in areas K39 and K40 when Strahd turns gaseous and slips through them to notice this happen.

Trap Access (K31B): This is a short, narrow corridor, connecting the trap shaft (K31a) by way of a secret door to the Hall of Riches (K39). The shaft drops 130 feet to K61, so a character falling down the shaft takes 13d6 points of falling damage.

Belfry Rope (K40): The rope is attached to a great bell 50 feet overhead. It takes some effort to get the bell swinging enough to ring; a character must pull on the rope for three



consecutive rounds and make three successful DC 11 Strength checks. If this is done, the bell rings loudly, and continues ringing as the bell swings back and forth for a few rounds (1d4+1).

Treasure Heaps (K41): Coins, precious vessels, and other items are heaped in large piles in the treasury. While valuable, these heaps make maneuvering in the treasury difficult. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter any square in this room. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2 while characters are in this room.

Treasure (K41): Strahd's treasure is great and varied, heaped in piles on the floor of the room. Coinage accounts for much of its bulk: There are 5,000 gp, 4,000 sp, and 300 pp scattered on the floor. There is a $+1$ ghost touch bastard sword, and several large art objects (total value 6,000 gp). These art objects include a large silver urn (850 gp), a heavy (10 lb.) gold idol of some nameless squat demon-thing (700 gp), a decorative shield of steel inlaid with silver and lapis lazuli (300 gp), a golden circlet set with topaz (3,000 gp), a gold pendant set with a bloodstone on a heavy chain (150 gp), a fine lute with mother-of-pearl inlay (650 gp), and a fine wool tapestry depicting Strahd's conquest of these lands (350 gp).

HALL OF HEROES

Encounter Level 9

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 102.

The spirits of the dead heroes of Ravenloft haunt this hall. Five of the six are corrupted and evil now in their undeath, while the sixth—Lady Vey Rallen (V)—is preserved in a holy deathless state. Because she is the most alert of the six, she stirs as soon as the PCs enter the hall, emerging from the statue that bears her likeness and speaking to them. After she converses with them for a few rounds, however, her evil counterparts—two wraiths (W) and three cursed spirits (C)—awaken and emerge from their statues to attack the PCs.



LADY VEY RALLEN

CR —

Female spirit (human) paladin 4/knight of the raven 2
LG Medium deathless

Senses Listen +1, Spot +1

Aura courage (allies within 10 ft., +4 on saves against fear)

Languages Common, speak with ravens

Immune all attacks

Weakness dispel good or blasphemy banishes spirit

Abilities Str —, Dex 8, Con —, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 18

SQ cannot act against physical targets, aura of good

Skills Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8,
Knowledge (religion) +9

WRAITHS (2)

CR 5

HP 32

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12

Aura unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)

Languages Common, Infernal

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12

HD 5

Immune nonmagical attacks, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist turn resistance +2

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Weakness daylight powerlessness

Speed fly 60 ft. (good) (12 squares)

Melee incorporeal touch +5 (1d4 plus Constitution drain)

Atk Options Constitution drain (Fort DC 14, 1d6 Con)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** —

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes

Abilities Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness^B, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative^B

Skills Diplomacy +6, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +12

Incorporeal Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See DMG 295 for more information.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals can sense the presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that, and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Daylight Powerlessness (Ex) Wraiths are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it.

Constitution Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 14 Fort save or take 1d6 points of Constitution drain. The wraith gains 5 temporary hit points if this attack succeeds.

CURSED SPIRITS (3)**CR 3**

HP 22

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5

Aura curse (adjacent creatures take –2 on all saves)

Languages Common

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11

HD 3

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist incorporeal

Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +2

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect) (6 squares)

Melee incorporeal touch +3 (1d8+1)

Base Atk +1; Grp —

Abilities Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 13

Feats Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Intimidate +7, Listen +5, Spot +5

can send her to her final rest in the Seven Heavens, and she will not depart the castle until he is destroyed.

Wraith: A wraith is an incorporeal creature born of evil and darkness. It appears as a spectral figure with glowing red eyes, robed in darkness and hovering in the night air.

TALKING TO LADY VEY RALLEN

Lady Vey wants to speak to the PCs. She doesn't want to fight them, and indeed she cannot fight back if they attack her. Her starting attitude is friendly, and there is little need to improve it further. All the same, a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check makes her helpful. If the PCs mention having helped Sir Urik (see Encounter F, page 74) or that they seek to destroy Strahd, they receive a +4 bonus on this check for each of those circumstances that apply.

Lady Vey implores the PCs to continue their quest to destroy Strahd. She was a knight of the raven in life, and is eager to pass on the heritage of that knightly order to a PC who qualifies (any character who can cast divine spells can qualify). See the prestige class description on page 200 for more information.

FIRST VIEW

When the PCs enter the hall, read:

Long, low moans drift through this long hall. The ceiling has fallen, leaving rubble strewn across the floor. Overhead, the beams of the castle's roof are exposed. Lightning flashes sporadically across the sky, casting shadows among the statue-filled alcoves that line the hall.

A second lightning flash illuminates the hall, and in that light you see a ghostly figure emerge from one of the statues. It appears to be a human woman in heavy armor, the emblem of a raven clearly visible on her breastplate. She raises one hand and whispers, "Blessings to you," in a cold, dead voice.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Cursed Spirit: A cursed spirit is an incorporeal undead creature that appears as a tormented, somewhat manic, ghostly humanoid. Its lower body trails off into a ghostly cloud. Its hollow eyes convey malicious intelligence.

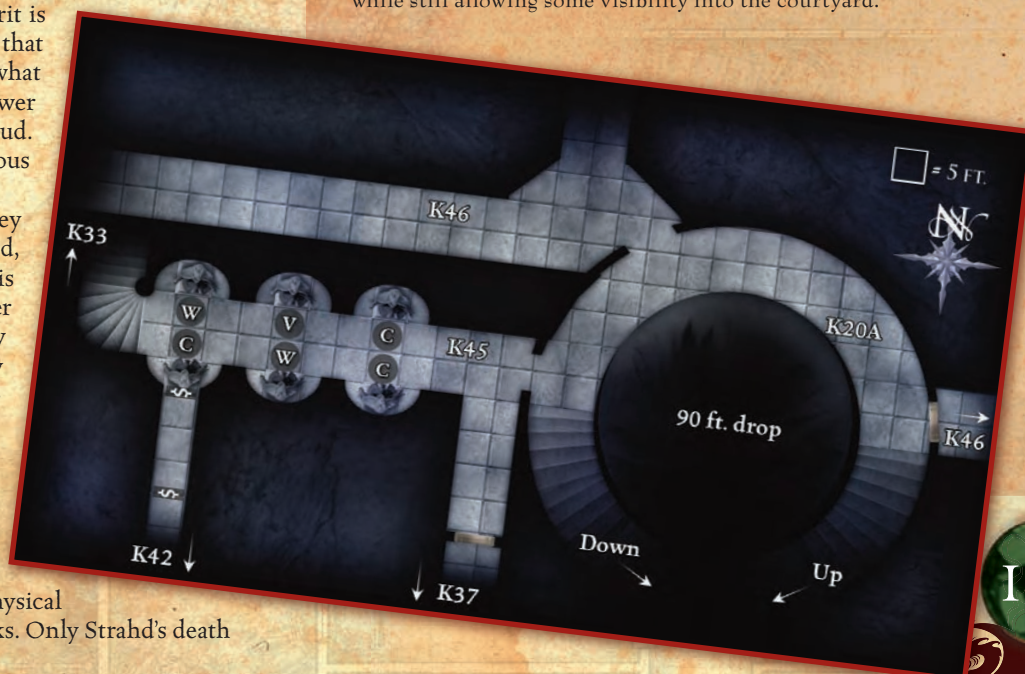
Lady Vey Rallen: Lady Vey is deathless rather than undead, which means primarily that she is powered by positive energy rather than negative. She is affected by positive energy in the same way that undead are affected by negative energy—cure spells heal her, she benefits from consecrate effects, and she can be turned by an evil cleric or rebuked by a good cleric. She is little more than a lingering incorporeal spirit, unable to act on the physical world and immune to any attacks. Only Strahd's death

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Tower Hall Stair (K20A): These stairs circle upward 150 feet to K60, and down 90 feet to K20. These stairs rise gradually and do not impede movement. Characters who attack a foe below them on the stairs gain a +1 bonus on melee attacks from being on higher ground. There is no inner wall protecting characters from falling down the central shaft of the stairs. It is a 90-foot drop to the floor of K20 (9d6 falling damage).

Parapets (K46): This wide walkway runs along the top of the wall that surrounds the front of the keep, looking down some 90 feet to the courtyard far below. A crenellated wall makes it effectively impossible to bull rush a creature off the parapets, while still allowing some visibility into the courtyard.



THE LANDING

Encounter Level 8

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 102.

This encounter occurs the first time the PCs enter the landing. When the PCs enter the landing, read the description and ask where each character is standing.

FIRST VIEW

If PCs look into or enter this landing, read:

A chill wind whistles mournfully across this flagstone landing. An alcove next to the north stairwell contains a leering stone statue, while the facing alcove contains a disquieting sculpture composed completely of chains. A single ironbound door provides egress on the western wall. On the same wall hangs a portrait of a noble woman. The woman's eyes appear defiant, mischievous, and slightly cruel. The woman bears a striking resemblance to Ireena!

SURPRISE ROUND

After determining where the PCs are standing, call for DC 20 Spot checks to see if anyone notices that the statues are not what they appear to be. Those who succeed can participate in the surprise round when the portrait reveals its true nature as a malignant construct and attacks.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Chain Golem: The creature in the southern alcove is a chain golem (marked as **C** on the map). Composed entirely of shifting chains that vary in size and shape, a chain golem takes on a vaguely humanoid shape as in clangs and rattles its way into battle.

Gargoyle: The creature in the northern alcove is a gargoyle (**G**). It appears to be a grotesque, winged statue until it moves to attack.

Malignant Construct: The portrait marked on the map is really an animated construct that attacks characters who explore the landing. The woman in the painting animates and appears to cast spells. Though the abilities of the portrait mimic spellcasting, they are actually supernatural abilities that do not draw attacks of opportunity.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

In the surprise round, the portrait and any PCs who made DC 20 Spot checks (see above) get to act.

The gargoyle and chain golem let the portrait have the first action; they do not move during the surprise round.

CHAIN GOLEM

CR 5

HP 58

N Medium construct

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Listen** +0, **Spot** +0

AC 21, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 18

HD 7

Immune magic, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist +2 on saves against ranged spells

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, can't run)

Melee 2 chain rakes +9 (1d8+4 plus wounding)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +9

Atk Options wounding; **Dodge**, **Improved Disarm**, **Improved Trip**

Special Actions chain barrier

Abilities Str 18, Dex 17, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1

Feats Dodge^B, Expertise^B, Improved Disarm^B, Improved Trip^B

Chain Barrier (Ex) As a full-round action, a chain golem can surround itself with a whirling, slicing shield of chains, similar in effect to a blade barrier spell. Anyone adjacent to a chain barrier must make a successful DC 17 Reflex save or take 7d6 points of damage. Any creature or object entering or passing through such a barrier automatically takes that amount of damage. The chain barrier moves with the golem and provides it cover (+4 bonus to AC). Maintaining the barrier once it has been activated requires a standard action.

Wounding (Ex) A wound resulting from a chain golem's chain rake attack bleeds for an additional 1 point of Constitution damage on a failed DC 17 Fortitude save. Multiple wounds from such attacks result in additional potential Constitution damage.

Magic Immunity (Ex) A chain golem is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects except as follows. An electricity effect slows it (as the slow spell) for 2 rounds (no saving throw). A fire effect breaks any slow effect on the chain golem and repairs 1 point of damage for each 2 points of damage it would otherwise deal. A chain golem gets no saving throw against fire effects.

They take actions normally when regular rounds of combat begin.

In the surprise round, the portrait animates within its frame. The painted woman begins to cast spells that the PCs can actually hear and see.

The portrait begins combat by casting *mass hold person* if it can target three or more PCs. Otherwise, it begins by casting *hold person*, saving its *mass hold person* ability until it sees three or more PCs whom it can capture with the effect.

GARGOYLE**CR 4**

HP 45

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +4

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

HD 4; DR 10/magic

Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +4

Speed ft. 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d4+2) and

bite +4 melee (1d6+1) and

gore +4 melee (1d6+1)

Base Atk +4; Grp +6

Special Actions freeze**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7**Feats** Multiattack, Toughness**Skills** Hide +7 (+15 when against stone background),

Listen +4, Spot +4

Freeze (Ex) A gargoyle passes as a statue when not moving unless observers succeed on a DC 20 Spot check.**TATYANA PORTRAIT****CR 6**

HP 90

NE Medium construct

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen —, Spot —

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21

HD 11; DR 10/adamantine and bludgeoning

Immune magic, construct trait immunities

Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3

Speed 0 ft. (0 squares)

Melee None

Special Actions mass hold person, hold person**Abilities** Str —, Dex —, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 11**Mass Hold Person (Su)** 1/day—*mass hold person* effect (PH 241). Will DC 22 negates. DC Charisma-based.**Hold Person (Su)** At will—*hold person* effect (PH 241). Will DC 18 negates. DC Charisma-based.

The portrait attempts to hold characters in front of it so that the gargoyle and chain golem can attack and finish them off. If the gargoyle and chain golem are defeated but the PCs are still captured, the portrait holds them until Strahd commands it to release those it has captured.

TACTICS

The chain golem delays until the portrait has had a chance to attempt to hold the PCs. Then it activates its chain barrier ability, moving slowly forward to mow down PCs. The chain golem won't shred the gargoyle or the portrait if it can help it. Also, it won't follow PCs who leave the landing. It always remains within the confines of the landing and alcoves.

On its turn, the gargoyle rushes the closest PC and engages with that character to the exclusion of others. Unlike the portrait and the chain golem, the gargoyle follows the PCs to the best of its ability if they attempt to flee, attacking until it is slain or it vanquishes the PCs.

The Trap

The central 10-by-10-foot section of the floor is a secret door that is part of the trap in area K61. It won't open from this end unless forced (DC 35 Search check to find, DC 30 Disable Device check to open), and then only shows a deep shaft.

If PCs end up on the landing as part of the trap triggered in room K61, they are immediately attacked, even if they are sleeping.

TREASURE

After defeating the monsters, the PCs can search the area. If characters succeed on a DC 20 Search check (or they remove the portrait from the wall), they discover a small locked safe (Open Lock DC 23 to open) on the wall. Within the narrow safe is a selection of expensive, antique woman's jewelry worth a total of 3,400 gp.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

The Alcoves: The northern alcove holds a statue that looks like a grotesque, winged humanoid with a horned head. It's a gargoyle, but it begins the encounter using its freeze ability so that an observer must make a DC 20 Spot check to notice it is alive.

The southern alcove holds a sculpture composed entirely of chains that vary in size and shape, ranging from extremely thin and razor-sharp to thick and mounted with barbs, spikes, and blades. It has a vaguely humanoid shape, but until it begins moving, it is impossible to distinguish it from an inanimate collection of iron.

The North Stairs (K48): This dusty spiraling staircase climbs up into the tower. It rises 20 feet to a landing outside room K54, and continues upward another 20 feet to end at K57.

The South Stairs (K21): Fluttering torches in iron sconces light this stairway that descends 40 feet to K35 before continuing deeper into the bowels of the castle.

Ironbound Door (unlocked): Hardness 5; 20 hp. Characters who make a DC 20 Listen check hear the sound of rustling paper. This door leads to area K49.



GUEST ROOM

Encounter Level 9

Use this tactical encounter with the room entry on page 104.

Use this encounter if the characters rest in this chamber for more than an hour, and if they haven't already dealt with the warlocks in K55. Any PCs who are still awake can make DC 30 Listen checks. PCs who succeed hear a noise from the closet (K51); these PCs can join in the surprise round.

Roll initiative for all acting characters and the three warlocks (Afina, Cristofor, and their leader, Trina, each marked **W** on the map). The warlocks have slipped down the secret passage in the closet (that connects to room K55) and are launching an attack. The first warlock opens the closet door, so that the other two can attack.

TRINA

CR 7

HP 48

Female human warlock 7

NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** (darkvision 30 ft.); Listen +5, Spot +4

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 18

HD 7; **DR** 2/cold iron

Fort +4, **Ref** +4 (+8), **Will** +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Ranged *brimstone blast* +7 touch (4d6 fire plus brimstone [DC 17 Reflex save or additional 2d6 fire])

Melee masterwork short sword +5 (1d6)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +4

Special Actions *brimstone blast*, *dark one's own luck*, *devil's sight*, *flee the scene*
Combat Gear 3 *potions of fly*, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*
Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 18

SQ detect magic, deceive item (take 10 on Use Magic Device checks)

Feats Combat Casting, Toughness (3)

Skills Concentration +12, Listen +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +4

Possessions combat gear plus +2 *elven chain*, *cloak of Charisma* +1, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork short sword, 402 gp in pouch

Brimstone Blast (Sp) Ray attack at will, 60-foot range, 4d6 fire damage (no save), and creatures that fail a DC 17 Reflex save take an additional 2d6 points of fire damage from brimstone. This invocation is equivalent to a 3rd-level spell. Subject to spell resistance. Deals half damage to objects.

Dark One's Own Luck (Sp) At will, gain a +4 luck bonus on either Fortitude, Reflex, or Will saves for 24 hours (only one save category can receive the bonus at one time).

Devil's Sight (Sp) At will, gain ability to see in normal and magical darkness for 24 hours.

Flee the Scene (Sp) At will, *dimension door* up to 40 feet and leave behind a *major image* of herself in her place that lasts for 1 round and reacts appropriately to attacks as if she were concentrating on it.

AFINA

CR 5

HP 42

Female human warlock 5

NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 30 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15

HD 5; **DR** 1/cold iron

Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Ranged *frightful blast* +5 touch (3d6 plus frightful [DC 15 Will save or be shaken for 1 minute])

Melee mwk shortspear +3 (1d6)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +2

Special Actions *frightful blast*, *entropic warding*, *devil's sight*
Combat Gear 3 *potions of bear's endurance*, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*
Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16

SQ detect magic, deceive item (take 10 on Use Magic Item checks)

Feats Combat Casting, Toughness (2)

Skills Bluff +4, Concentration +9, Craft (alchemy) +7, Spellcraft +8

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *cloak of resistance*, masterwork shortspear, 321 gp in pouch

Frightful Blast (Sp) Ray attack at will, 60-foot range, 3d6 damage (no save), and makes creatures become shaken for 1 minute on failed DC 15 Will save; shaken creatures affected by *frightful blast* cannot be further frightened (but they still take damage); creatures immune to mind-affecting or fear effects cannot be shaken. This invocation is equivalent to a 2nd-level spell. Subject to spell resistance. Deals half damage to objects.

Entropic Warding (Sp) At will, gain 20% miss chance from ranged attacks (arrows, rays, and so forth as *entropic shield*), leave no trail (as *pass without trace*), and become immune to being tracked by scent.

Devil's Sight (Sp) At will, gain ability to see in normal and magical darkness for 24 hours.

THE BATTLE BEGINS

If PCs are attacked while resting in this room, read:

The closet door pops open. Darkness spills out in a roiling wave, and all goes black.

The darkness is magical in nature, brought into existence by Cristofor the warlock (as described below). Unless the PCs can see in the dark, the warlocks gain concealment (20% miss chance) for the course of this battle.

CRISTOFOR**CR 5**

HP 32

Male human warlock 5

NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** (darkvision 30 ft.);

Listen +1, Spot +1

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16 or**AC** 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (with *cat's grace*)**HD** 5; **DR** 1/cold iron**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3 (+5), **Will** +5**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Ranged** *sickening blast* +5 touch (3d6 plus sickening [DC 15 Will save or be shaken for 1 minute])**Melee** masterwork shortspear +3 (1d6)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +2**Special Actions** *sickening blast*, *darkness*, *devil's sight***Combat Gear** 3 *potions of cat's grace*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds***Abilities** Str 8, Dex 14, Con 13 (17), Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16**SQ** detect magic, deceive item (take 10 on Use Magic Item checks)**Feats** Combat Casting, Toughness (2)**Skills** Bluff +4, Concentration +9, Craft (alchemy) +7, Spellcraft +8**Possessions** combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork shortspear, 134 gp in pouch**Sickening Blast (Sp)** Ray attack at will, 60-foot range, 3d6 damage (no save), and sickens creatures for 1 minute on failed DC 15 Will save; sickened creatures affected by *sickening blast* cannot be further sickened (but they still take damage). This invocation is equivalent to a 2nd-level spell. Subject to spell resistance. Deals half damage to objects.**Darkness (Sp)** At will, use *darkness* as the spell (object touched sheds darkness out to a 20-foot radius).**Devil's Sight (Sp)** At will, gain ability to see in normal and magical darkness for 24 hours.**TACTICS**

Afina downs a *potion of bear's endurance* to gain 10 hit points and a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves, calls on her *devil's sight* invocation so she can see in the dark, and uses her *entropic warding* invocation (so she can't be tracked by scent, leaves no trace as *pass without trace*, and incoming ranged attacks have a 20% chance to miss her) before the surprise round begins. During combat, she uses her *frightful blast* against PCs. Afina flees if she is reduced to 10 hit points or less.

Cristofor drinks a *potion of cat's grace* to gain a +2 bonus to his Reflex saves and a +2 bonus to his AC, calls on his *devil's sight* invocation so he can see in the dark, and invokes *darkness* on each of 10 gold coins before the surprise round begins. He drops one *darkness* coin in the closet just before the door opens. When combat begins, he tosses the rest of the coins into the guest room. Cristofor and the others all utilize *devil's sight* to see normally in the darkness. During

**TACTICAL MAP DETAILS**

Details on the tactical map are described below.

The Bed: This four-poster bed counts as difficult terrain for PCs or NPCs who fight on top of it. The bed sits high off the floor, and a Medium creature could hide beneath it (for a +10 bonus to Hide checks). Hidden in a hollow between the mattresses (Search DC 17) are an old journal, a scroll, and a thin silver ring. See page 104 for details.

Closet (K51): The closet contains a few old black robes. It also contains a locked secret door in the ceiling (Search DC 29 to find, Open Lock DC 30 to open). If opened, an iron ladder is revealed, with an extendable piece that slides to the floor, allowing easy access up to the next level (K55).

Lounge (K49): Details on this area can be found on page 103.

combat, he uses *sickening blast* against PCs. He flees if he is reduced to 5 hit points or less.

Trina calls on *devil's sight* so she can see in the dark, and invokes *dark one's own luck* to boost her Reflex saving throws prior to the start of battle. After Cristofor has darkened the room in which the PCs are gathered, she moves forward to put space between herself and her companions. During combat, she uses *brimstone blast* against PCs. She makes certain to use flee the scene if she is knocked to 13 hit points or less (she retreats to area K56).

AFTERMATH

If the warlocks are subdued, Afina and Cristofor can easily be convinced to talk about their patron, Khyristrix. See the entry on page 104 for the types of things they might say. Trina, on the other hand, refuses to talk, no matter what the player characters do to try to persuade her.

If any of the warlocks escape, they prepare to challenge the PCs again (either in area K55 or K56).

FAMILIARS

Encounter Level 6

Use this tactical encounter with the room entry on page 105.

This encounter begins when PCs open the door to this room. If any PC can see invisible creatures, he or she can participate in the surprise round.

The three imps (marked as I on the map), each in the shape of an emaciated white cat, begin the encounter invisible. The redcap (R) begins the encounter behind a couch, tormenting a shocker lizard (S) the warlocks tossed into the chamber earlier today.

In the surprise round, the imps, the redcap, and any PCs who can see invisible creatures get to act. Each imp attempts to use its *suggestion* power on the same PC (preferably a PC with a low Will save such as a fighter type, for instance), suggesting the affected PC turn on his companions. The redcap delays until after at least one “cat” has had a turn. The redcap begins its first round by firing an eldritch stone from its sling.

When regular rounds of combat begin, the shocker lizard, in its fright, attempts to bolt through the open door, shocking any PCs in its path.

FIRST VIEW

When the PCs are attacked by the imps and the redcap, read:

From out of nowhere, a thin white cat appears, its eyes glowing green. It hisses, “Your companions—they’ve all been subverted by Strahd! Kill them quick!”

TACTICS

The imps in this chamber appear as emaciated white house cats with glowing green eyes. Despite their cat shape, the imps retain the abilities of their underlying impish form: impish humanoids with leathery bat-wings, a barbed tail, and sharp, twisted horns. After the imps lead off with their suggestion power, they swarm a single PC with the lowest AC (preferably a wizard or rogue-looking character), attempting to use their poison to bring the target down. When their target falls, the imps swarm onto the next to employ the same group-attack tactic. The imps fight to the death. As each “cat” is slain, it briefly regains its true imp shape before dissolving in a puff of evil-smelling smoke.

A bloodthirsty fey, the redcap appears as a very short, tough-looking old man with leathery skin, iron boots, and a bright red hat. It wields a scythe too large for it. It’s a vicious thing, but the imps keep it mostly in check. It’s happy to unleash its pent-up aggression on the PCs. After

IMPS IN CAT FORM (3)

CR 2

HP 15 each

LE Tiny outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +7, Spot +7

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17

HD 3; Fast Healing 2; DR 5/good or silver

Immune poison

Resist fire 5

Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee bite +8 (1d4 plus poison)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Base Atk +3; Grp -5

Atk Options poison

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

At will—*detect good, detect magic, invisibility* (self only)

1/day—*suggestion* (DC 15)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14

SQ alternate form

Feats Dodge, Weapon Finesse (bite)

Skills Diplomacy +8, Hide +17, Knowledge (local) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +7, Survival +1 (+3 following tracks)

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial damage 1d4

Dex, secondary damage 2d4 Dex. Save

DC Constitution-based (includes +2 racial bonus).

Alternate Form (Su) Assume the form of cat or an imp as a standard action. Statistics do not change between forms (except bite attack becomes sting attack), nor are hit points gained when form is switched.

beginning the combat with its sling, the redcap switches to its scythe if it can’t find a clear target or if all possible targets are engaged in melee. If the redcap downs a PC, it takes a round to douse its cap in its victim’s blood, thereby adding more crimson to its foul, terrible headpiece. The redcap fights to the death.

The shocker lizard is about the size of a terrier and sports a large pair of horns that sweep back from the sides of its head like spiky ears. A similar spike grows from the tip of its tail. The shocker lizard bolts toward the open door on its turn, shocking any PC in its path. However, it’s more interested in escaping than fighting. If it escapes the room, it enters the landing (K47) and flees down the stairs.

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs enter this room from K48, then the ensuing battle alerts the warlocks in K55 (giving them enough time to prepare for the intruders).

If the PCs enter from K55 after having already dealt with the warlocks, then the shocker lizard runs around wildly in the alchemy workshop until it finds the open secret door in the floor (that leads to K51).

LESSER REDCAP**CR 2**

HP 22

CE Small fey

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +9, Spot +9

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 12

HD 4; DR 5/cold iron

Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee Medium scythe +3 (2d4+7)**Ranged** Medium sling +4 (1d6+3)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +4**Atk Options** Power Attack**Special Actions** eldritch stone**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13**SQ** powerful build**Feats** Improved Initiative, Power Attack**Skills** Hide +13, Intimidate +9, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Spot +9, Survival +9

Eldritch Stone (Su) Bullets fired from a redcap's sling glow with greenish blue magical energy, giving them a +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls as well as dealing 1d6 points of damage (instead of 1d4). (This is already calculated in the ranged attack statistics, above.)

Powerful Build (Ex) A redcap is treated as one size larger than Small if it is advantageous for it to be treated so.

SHOCKER LIZARD**CR 2**

HP 13

N Small magical beast

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., electricity sense, low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +4

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14

HD 2

Immune electricity

Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d4)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** -4**Special Actions** stunning shock, lethal shock**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6**Feats** Improved Initiative**Skills** Climb +11, Hide +11, Jump +7, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +10

Stunning Shock (Su) Once per round, a shocker lizard can deliver an electrical shock to a single opponent within 5 feet. This attack deals 2d8 points of nonlethal damage to living opponents (DC 12 Reflex save for half damage). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Lethal Shock (Su) Whenever two or more shocker lizards are within 25 feet of each other, they can work together to create a lethal shock. This effect has a radius of 25 feet, centered on any one contributing lizard. The shock deals 2d8 points of electricity damage for each lizard contributing to it, to a maximum of 12d8. A Reflex save (DC 10 + number of lizards contributing) reduces the damage by half.

Electricity Sense (Ex) Shocker lizards automatically detect any electrical discharges within 100 feet.

Skills Shocker lizards have a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks due to their coloration.

Shocker lizards have a +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

Shocker lizards use their Dexterity modifier instead of their Strength modifier for Climb and Jump checks. A shocker lizard has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Couches: The couches in this chamber, whether upright or on their side, count as difficult terrain for Medium PCs who fight on top of them. Small and Tiny NPCs (such as the imps in cat form and the redcap) are not hindered in this way. The couches provide partial cover to any creature that crouches behind one.

Chairs: Two chairs are shown on the map. These count as difficult terrain for Medium PCs who stand in the same square, as them. Small and Tiny NPCs (such as the imps in cat form and the redcap) are not hindered in this way.

Strong Door: A strong door (Hardness 5; 20 hp; Strength DC 23 to burst) leads to area K55. The door is securely locked (Open Lock DC 33 to disengage the lock).



WARLOCK ALCHEMY

Encounter Level 9

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 105.

Use this encounter if the player characters haven't already encountered the warlocks in area K50, or if one or more warlocks escaped from that encounter.

The details of this encounter presented here assume that this is the first time that the PCs are meeting the warlocks. Make adjustments as necessary, based on what had gone before in your adventure.

If the PCs encountered the creatures in K54, the warlocks know the PCs are on their way. This gives them plenty of time to prepare for the intruders. Unless the PCs have slipped into the chamber very stealthily and bypassed the imps in some way, they can't surprise the warlocks.

TRINA

HP 48

Female human warlock 7

NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** (darkvision 30 ft.); Listen +5, Spot +4

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 18

HD 7; **DR** 2/cold iron

Fort +4, **Ref** +4 (+8), **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Ranged *brimstone blast* +7 touch (4d6 fire plus brimstone [DC 17 Reflex save or additional 2d6 fire])

Melee masterwork short sword +5 (1d6)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +4

Special Actions *brimstone blast*, *dark one's own luck*, *devil's sight*, *flee the scene*

Combat Gear 3 *potions of fly*, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 18

SQ detect magic, deceive item (take 10 on Use Magic Device checks)

Feats Combat Casting, Toughness (3)

Skills Concentration +12, Listen +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +4

Possessions combat gear plus +2 *elven chain*, *cloak of Charisma* +1, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork short sword, 402 gp in pouch

Brimstone Blast (Sp) Ray attack at will, 60-foot range, 4d6 fire damage (no save), and creatures that fail a DC 17 Reflex save take an additional 2d6 points of fire damage from brimstone. This invocation is equivalent to a 3rd-level spell. Subject to spell resistance. Deals half damage to objects.

Dark One's Own Luck (Sp) At will, gain a +4 luck bonus on either Fortitude, Reflex, or Will saves for 24 hours (only one save category can receive the bonus at one time).

Devil's Sight (Sp) At will, gain ability to see in normal and magical darkness for 24 hours.

Flee the Scene (Sp) At will, *dimension door* up to 40 feet and leave behind a *major image* of herself in her place that lasts for 1 round and reacts appropriately to attacks as if she were concentrating on it.

CR 7

AFINA

HP 42

Female human warlock 5

NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 30 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15

HD 5; **DR** 1/cold iron

Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Ranged *frightful blast* +5 touch (3d6 plus frightful [DC 15 Will save or be shaken for 1 minute])

Melee mwk shortspear +3 (1d6)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +2

Special Actions *frightful blast*, *entropic warding*, *devil's sight*
Combat Gear 3 *potions of bear's endurance*, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16

SQ detect magic, deceive item (take 10 on Use Magic Item checks)

Feats Combat Casting, Toughness (2)

Skills Bluff +4, Concentration +9, Craft (alchemy) +7, Spellcraft +8

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *cloak of resistance*, masterwork shortspear, 321 gp in pouch

Frightful Blast (Sp) Ray attack at will, 60-foot range, 3d6 damage (no save), and makes creatures become shaken for 1 minute on failed DC 15 Will save; shaken creatures affected by *frightful blast* cannot be further frightened (but they still take damage); creatures immune to mind-affecting or fear effects cannot be shaken. This invocation is equivalent to a 2nd-level spell. Subject to spell resistance. Deals half damage to objects.

Entropic Warding (Sp) At will, gain 20% miss chance from ranged attacks (arrows, rays, and so forth as *entropic shield*), leave no trail (as *pass without trace*), and become immune to being tracked by scent.

Devil's Sight (Sp) At will, gain ability to see in normal and magical darkness for 24 hours.

The three warlocks are marked **W** on the map.

The prepared warlocks take their places before the PCs open the door to the room. The leader, Trina, waits within the warlock bedchamber (K56). Afina waits within the secret compartment. Cristofor hides behind a table in the main chamber.

When the PCs open the door to this chamber, call for DC 30 Spot checks. PCs who succeed notice Cristofor hiding behind the table in the eastern part of the chamber and can join in the surprise round. Others are caught flat-footed when the warlocks attack.

CRISTOFOR**CR 5**

HP 32

Male human warlock 5

NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** (darkvision 30 ft.); Listen +1, Spot +1

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16 or

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (with *cat's grace*)HD 5; **DR** 1/cold iron**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3 (+5), **Will** +5**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Ranged** *sickening blast* +5 touch (3d6 plus sickening [DC 15 Will save or be shaken for 1 minute])**Melee** masterwork shortspear +3 (1d6)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +2**Special Actions** *sickening blast*, *darkness*, *devil's sight***Combat Gear** 3 *potions of cat's grace*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds***Abilities** Str 8, Dex 14, Con 13 (17), Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16**SQ** detect magic, deceive item (take 10 on Use Magic Item checks)**Feats** Combat Casting, Toughness (2)**Skills** Bluff +4, Concentration +9, Craft (alchemy) +7, Spellcraft +8**Possessions** combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork shortspear, 134 gp in pouch**Sickening Blast (Sp)** Ray attack at will, 60-foot range, 3d6 damage (no save), and sickens creatures for 1 minute on failed DC 15 Will save; sickened creatures affected by *sickening blast* cannot be further sickened (but they still take damage). This invocation is equivalent to a 2nd-level spell. Subject to spell resistance. Deals half damage to objects.**Darkness (Sp)** At will, use *darkness* as the spell (object touched sheds darkness out to a 20-foot radius).**Devil's Sight (Sp)** At will, gain ability to see in normal and magical darkness for 24 hours.

darkness, delaying if they need to so that Cristofor gets to act first in the surprise round.

In subsequent rounds, Cristofor uses his *sickening blasts* against the PCs, moving each round to keep some distance between himself and his foes. He resorts to fighting with his masterwork shortspear only under the most dire of situations. Cristofor fights to the death if encountered in this area.

Afina employs her *frightful blasts* against the PCs and also fights to the death, especially if such an act provides Trina with time to escape. She moves every round to stay out of melee range of the player characters for as long as possible. Afina uses her masterwork shortspear in melee only if there is no alternative in a round.

Trina uses *brimstone blast* against the PCs during the battle. She moves every round, working to stay out of melee range while also keeping a clear escape path available. When the situation calls for it, Trina hacks and slashes her foes with her masterwork short sword. If Trina is reduced to 13 hit points or less, she uses *flee the scene* to retreat and tries to reach area K57 so that she can warn Khyristrix about the intruders.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Tables: The tables are stacked with an array of materials, most of them not particularly valuable. A careful examination (DC 18 Search check) of the tables in K55 uncovers 1 vial of acid, two flasks of alchemist fire, 100 tindertwigs, 3 vials of antitoxin, 2 sunrods, 1 tanglefoot bag, 3 thunderstones, 10 vials of ipecac (see page 209), and a glass jar with a single live garden larva sealed inside it (see page 157). One jar holds a dead shocker lizard, while another contains 18 shocker lizard eggs, half of which are viable (each worth about 10 gp).

Cauldron: A silver key is visible at the bottom of this cauldron. PCs are unlikely to interact with this until the conflict resolves. If a PC sticks a limb or other item into the cauldron, he or she gets the attention of the gelatinous cube residing within.

Podium: A book bound in dark red leather sits open on the podium. See page 106 for details.

FIRST VIEW

As the surprise round kicks off, read:

A pale man with fell magic dancing on his fingertips jumps up from behind a table and gestures, throwing darkness around the room.

TACTICS

Prior to the surprise round, Cristofor drank a *potion of cat's grace*, called on his *devil's sight*, and prepared 10 gold coins with *darkness*. Afina drank a *potion of bear's endurance*, called on her *devil's sight*, and used *entropic warding* to discourage tracking attempts. Trina invoked her *devil's sight* and *dark one's own luck* as preparation for the battle to come.

During the surprise round, Cristofor tosses his *darkness* coins throughout the room, plunging the entire area into supernatural darkness. (The warlocks are not hampered by the darkness due to their *devil's sight* abilities. Afina and Trina, meanwhile, use their surprise round actions to open the doors that conceal them. They do this as soon as the room falls into



DEVIL'S GARDEN

Encounter Level 12

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 107.

Use this encounter when the player characters first visit the parapet and if they haven't dealt with Khyristrix earlier in the adventure.

Randomly scatter the ten garden larvae on the map. The garden larvae initially ignore the PCs, only becoming active when Khyristrix makes her appearance.

Khyristrix (marked as **K** on the map) lounges in the effluvia pool closest to tower K18, completely submerged (Spot DC 40 to notice). Unless the PCs notice her, Khyristrix uses a surprise round to summon Trina (if Trina is still alive), or to attack the first PC who moves into a square adjacent to the pool in which she lounges. Trina appears in the square marked **T** if she is summoned.

The garden larvae begin to react normally (attack non-devils) after Khyristrix's first attack.

FIRST VIEW

When PCs first look upon this area, read:

This parapet rises high above the castle—only two towers rear higher. Bluish sludge covers the parapet, secreted by nearly a dozen white, wet, rat-sized slugs. The slugs move slowly, migrating among pooled sludge and vaguely anthropoid fleshly bulbs rooted into the stone parapet. The parapet is ever so slightly canted, enough so that the excess sludge languidly drains along the northern catwalk into an entrance on the neighboring tower. An acidic, vinegar-like odor dominates the air.

When Khyristrix makes her appearance, read:

A humanoid covered with barbs surges from a pool, sending a spray of blue goo in all directions. The humanoid looks female, but the barbs and scales covering her body, including her meaty tail, show she is in no way human. As if energized by her appearance, the white slugs begin to spasm and writhe aggressively.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Khyristrix: This barbed devil appears as a tall woman covered with sharp barbs, right down to the tip of her long tail. She cares more about her garden than anything else.

KHYRISTRIX

CR 11

HP 126

LE Medium outsider (baatezu, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Listen +19, Spot +19

Languages Common, Infernal, telepathy 100 ft.

AC 30, touch 17, flat-footed 24 [includes dusty rose ioun stone]

HD 12; **DR** 10/good

Immune fire, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 23

Fort +14, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws each +18 (2d6+6 plus fear, improved grab, impale)

Ranged 2 scorching rays each +18 (4d6 fire)

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +22

Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack; Barbed Defense, Fear, Impale, Improved Grab

Special Actions summon bound warlock, spell-like abilities

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th):

1/day—*order's wrath* (DC 18), *unholy blight* (DC 18)

At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 lb. of objects only), *hold person* (DC 16), *major image* (DC 17), *scorching ray* (2 rays only)

Abilities Str 23, Dex 23, Con 23, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 18

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Improved Grapple, Iron Will, Power Attack

Skills Concentration +21, Diplomacy +6, Hide +21, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (local) +16, Listen +19, Move Silently +21, Search +16, Sense Motive +17, Spot +19, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks)

Possessions hellheart locket (see page 213), dusty rose ioun stone

Fear (Su) A creature hit by a barbed devil must succeed on a DC 20 Will save or be affected as though by *fear* (caster level 9th). Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected by that same barbed devil's fear ability for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Impale (Ex) A barbed devil deals 3d8+9 points of piercing damage to a grabbed opponent with a successful grapple check.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a barbed devil must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can impale the opponent on its barbed body.

Summon Bound Warlock (Sp) Once per day Khyristrix can attempt to summon one bound warlock (Trina) with a 35% chance of success. This ability is equivalent to a 4th-level spell.

Barbed Defense (Su) Any creature striking a barbed devil with handheld weapons takes 1d8+9 points of piercing and slashing damage from the barbs that reach and entwine over the devil. Note that weapons with exceptional reach, such as longswords, do not endanger their users in this way.

GARDEN LARVA (10)**CR 1**

HP 9 each

LE Tiny outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 12

HD 2; DR 5/good or silver

Immune fire, poison, mind-affecting

Resist acid 10, cold 10

Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee touch +4 (1d4 acid plus grapple attempt and insinuate)

Space 0 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Base Atk +2; Grp +4 (–8 size, +10 devilish grapppler bonus)

Atk Options devilish grapppler, insinuate

Abilities Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int-, Wis 11, Cha 5

Devilish Grapppler (Ex) A garden larva always makes a grapple attempt as part of every touch attack it makes. Garden larva have a +10 racial bonus on grapple checks.**Insinuate (Su)** A garden larva can attempt to squirm down the throat of a creature at least two sizes larger than it by making a successful grapple attack, if it has already started a grapple on a potential victim (as part of a melee touch attack). On a second successful grapple attack, the larva forces its way into the mouth and down the throat of its victim. Once inside, the victim takes 2d4 points of acid damage each round. A *remove curse* spell or an alchemical agent capable of inducing vomiting, such as ipecac (see page 209), immediately dispels the larva and renders it helpless. If a victim is killed while hosting a devil's larva, the victim transforms into a devil's tree (see page 108). This transformation also consumes the garden larva.**Trina's Statistics:** If Trina takes part in this encounter (either because Khyristrix summons her or because she retreats here after fighting the PCs to warn the devil about the intruders), use the tactical statistics found on page 154.**Garden Larva:** These creatures appear as too-large maggots, wriggling and oozing across the "tree" dotted parapet.**TACTICS**

Khyristrix cares more about her garden than anything else. She won't use her *greater teleport* ability to run away, though she might use the ability to position herself for tactical advantage. She spends a round to summon Trina, one of the warlocks bound to her (Khyristrix has this ability instead of the usual *summon baatezu* ability enjoyed by other barbed devils) if Trina yet lives. After that, she attempts to kill as many PCs as she can with her claw attacks, although she might attempt *hold person* on a PC already grappling with a garden larva, ensuring that the larva will insinuate the host.

Garden larvae attack the same target in groups of three, so that if the first one is smashed by an attack of opportunity, the second or third has a chance to make it into the target's square.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Battlements: The alternating merlons and embrasures that form the battlements are composed of rough stone. The merlons are 5 feet above the parapet floor, while the embrasures rise only 1 foot. Any humanoid that fights on the goo-slicked battlement must make a DC 15 Balance check each round or fall 190 feet (19d6 damage) to the courtyard or 100 feet (10d6 damage) to a roof of a lower part of the castle.

Devil's Garden Terrain: The press of devil's trees and slippery goo that coats the parapet top is navigable, but makes for difficult terrain for Medium and larger creatures (except for Khyristrix, who is adapted to the environment). Difficult terrain hampers movement. Each square of difficult terrain counts as 2 squares of movement. PCs can't run or charge across difficult terrain. Characters can choose to ignore the slick surface and attempt to move using normal movement, but each such move action requires a DC 15 Balance check or they fall prone.

Catwalk (K58): The catwalk bridges the top of the parapet (K57) to the Dayheart landing (K60A). The slender stone and masonry bridge hangs in the swirling fog. The stone is slick with a thin rivulet of blue goo and the old iron railing rusted away years ago. Any humanoid that fights on the goo-slicked catwalk must make a successful DC 15 Balance check each round or fall 100 feet (10d6 damage) to a roof of a lower part of the castle.

Ichor Pools: Excess effluvia from garden-larva form two pools of bluish goo in low spots on the parapet. Each pool is about three feet deep at the center, completely transparent, and potentially hiding items of interest (see *Treasure* on page 108), as well as Khyristrix when PCs first arrive.

Stairs: These spiral stairs lead down to K48.

Devil's Tree: Awful trees are rooted all across the parapet. Each tree is about five and half to six feet tall, is fleshy instead of woody, and looks vaguely like a humanoid in shape, as if people were transformed into shrubbery.



DAYHEART LANDING

Encounter Level Variable

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 108.

Use this encounter when characters first visit the top of this landing. If the PCs approach stealthily and make DC 27 Listen or Spot checks, they might get the drop of the occupants of this area. Otherwise, the PCs find themselves spotted and a fight begins.

Rafail the vampire fighter (marked as **R** on the map) spends his time hovering just above the heart in gaseous form, ready to defend it. Four vampire spawn (**S**) obey Rafail's commands without question.

On the third round of combat, Strahd arrives in his feral form to protect the Dayheart.

FIRST VIEW

When PCs first approach the parapet top, read:

A reddish light flares to life in the center of the tower—a crystalline heart hanging in the air, defying gravity. The nearly 10-foot-diameter heart beats frenetically and unevenly. In the light of the massive crystalline heart, red, hungry eyes stare down from higher on the stairs.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Vampire Spawn: This human's body is gaunt and pale. Its once-fine clothes are tattered, and a pair of vicious canines dominates its dark red mouth.

Rafail: Once he materializes from a bank of mist, Rafail appears as a human fighter wielding a blood-red bastard sword. He wears a fine chain shirt and a flapping cloak of scarlet. His mesmerizing eyes and canines reveal him as a vampire, however.

Strahd's Statistics: When Strahd appears, use the statistics for Strahd in feral form found on page 136.

TACTICS

The vampire spawn appear first. Two emerge from the shadows on the landing, wading into battle. They seek to destroy clerics first, then arcane spellcasters (such as sorcerers and wizards). The other two vampire spawn cling to the walls above the stairs and attempt to dominate PCs. The vampire spawn fight until turned gaseous, and then they flee to their coffins in K60B.

Rafail delays until the vampire spawn engage the PCs, then he materializes and attacks. He uses his sword *Blood-song*, a +1 bastard sword that channels his energy draining touch through the blade. Rafail retreats to his coffin (K60B) if reduced to 0 hit points.

VAMPIRE SPAWN (4)

CR 4

HP 34 each

NE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +11, Spot +11

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

HD 4; **Fast healing** 2; **DR** 5/silver

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist turn resistance +2, cold 10, electricity 10

Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Weaknesses see Vampire Characteristics, page 8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee slam +5 (1d6+4 plus energy drain)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5

Atk Options blood drain, energy drain

Special Actions domination, gaseous form, spider climb, undead traits

Abilities Str +16, Dex +14, Con —, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14

Feats Alertness^B, Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Toughness (2)

Skills Bluff +6, Climb +8, Craft or Profession (any one) +4, Diplomacy +4, Hide +10, Jump +8, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11

Blood Drain (Ex) If a vampire spawn pins a foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round. On each such successful drain attack, the vampire spawn heals 5 points of damage to itself.

Domination (Su) If the spawn uses a standard action, a single target must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or fall instantly under the vampire's influence as if by a *dominate person* spell from a 5th-level caster. The ability has a range of 30 feet. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a vampire spawn's slam attack gain one negative level. The DC is 14 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed, the vampire spawn heals 5 points of damage to itself.

Fast Healing (Ex) A vampire spawn heals 2 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes gaseous form and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in 2 hours.) Once at rest in its coffin, it is helpless. It regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of 2 hit points per round.

Gaseous Form (Su) As a standard action, a vampire spawn can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (caster level 6th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.

Spider Climb (Ex) A vampire spawn can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

RAFAIL

CR 7

HP 78

CE Medium undead

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Listen +17, Spot +17

AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21

HD 5; Fast healing 5; DR 10/silver and magic

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist turn resistance +4, cold 10, electricity 10

Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +4

Weaknesses aversions, sunlight vulnerability, running water vulnerability, wooden stake vulnerability

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee Bloodsong (+1 bastard sword) +11 (1d10+12/19-20×2 plus energy drain)

Ranged masterwork shortbow +9 (1d6×3)

Base Atk +5; Grp +11

Atk Options energy drain; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Power Attack

Special Actions blood drain, domination (30 ft., Will DC 14), gaseous form, spider climb

Abilities Str +16, Dex +14, Con --, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ children of the night, create spawn

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword)

Skills Bluff +9, Climb +10, Hide +10, Listen +17, Move Silently +10, Ride +11, Search +9, Sense Motive +11, Spot +17

Possessions +1 bastard sword, +1 chain shirt

Aversions A vampire cannot tolerate the strong odor of garlic. It recoils from a mirror or a strongly presented holy symbol. When recoiling, it must stay at least 5 feet away from a creature holding the mirror or holy symbol and cannot touch or make melee attacks against the creature holding the item for the rest of the encounter. Holding a vampire at bay takes a standard action.

Sunlight Vulnerability see Vampire Characteristics, page 8.

Running Water Vulnerability see Vampire Characteristics, page 8.

Wooden Stake Vulnerability see Vampire Characteristics, page 8.

Strahd's Tactics: Strahd arrives in the third round. He first attempts to dominate an outlying PC. Strahd then enters combat. He is quite concerned about the PCs destroying the Dayheart. However, he tries not to let that concern override his own safety. If he takes half or more of his maximum hit points, he flees, promising vengeance.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Tower Shaft: The landing is slick with bluish goo that slowly oozes in from K57. Any humanoid that fights within 5 feet of the goo-slicked edge of the shaft must make a DC 15 Balance check each round or fall 190 feet (19d6 damage) to the tower floor (K20).

Stairs: Each step up and down from the landing ascends or descends two feet. Each step is 5 feet wide. No railing guards against accidental fall into the tower shaft.

The Dayheart: This 10-foot-diameter heart carved of crystal is immovably anchored in free space at the level of the landing. The Dayheart grants Strahd and the vampire spawn under his control immunity to sunlight. The Dayheart has a magically enhanced hardness of 30 and 200 hit points. If the

Blood Drain (Ex) A vampire can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the vampire gains 5 temporary hit points that last for up to 1 hour. This ability does not affect elementals, plants, or creatures that lack a Constitution score.

Domination (Su) A vampire can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack with a range of 30 feet, except that the vampire must use a standard action and choose a single target—those merely looking at him are unaffected. The vampire's target must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or fall instantly under the vampire's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th).

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a vampire's slam attack gain one negative level. The DC is 14 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed, the vampire heals 5 points of damage to itself.

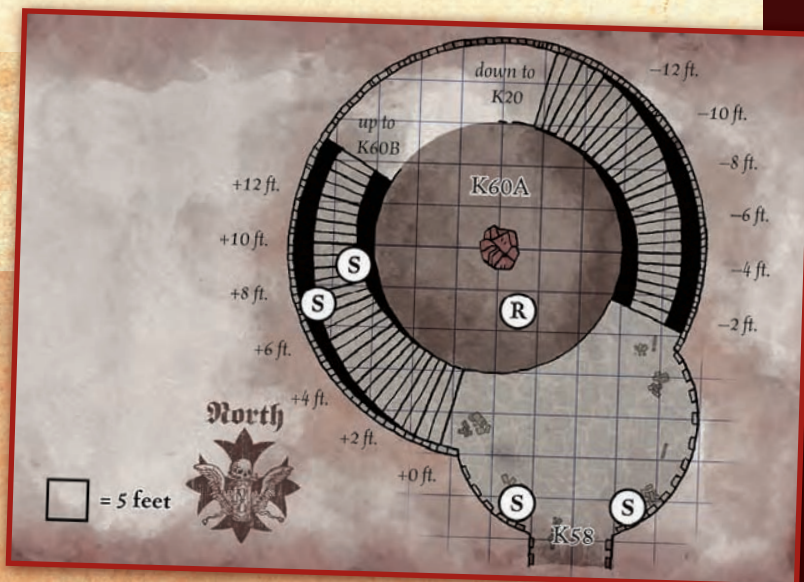
Fast Healing (Ex) A vampire heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes gaseous form and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in 2 hours.) Once at rest in its coffin, it is helpless. It regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of 5 hit points per round.

Gaseous Form (Su) As a standard action, a vampire can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (caster level 6th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.

Spider Climb (Ex) A vampire can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Children of the Night (Su) 1/day call forth a pack of 4d8 dire rats, a swarm of 10d10 bats, or a pack of 3d6 wolves as a standard action. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the vampire for up to 1 hour.

Create Spawn (Su) A humanoid or monstrous humanoid slain by a vampire's energy drain rises as a vampire spawn 1d4 days after burial.



hellheart locket (in Khyristrix's possession, K57) is destroyed, the Dayheart's hardness drops to 5, and the Dayheart's ability to pass on sunlight immunity to linked vampires fades in one month's time.

NORTHTOWER PEAK

Encounter Level 10

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 109.

Use this encounter when the player characters first enter the top of this tower. Because each step is two feet below the level of the next, PCs can likely see into the tower room before they fully ascend. If any PC steps on the last step adjacent to the floor of the northtower room, the *circle of death* trap triggers. After the trap triggers, apply the results of the trap and roll initiative.

It is likely that in order to reach this area, the PCs had to defeat Rafail and four vampire spawn in K60A. In this case, the vampires returned to their coffins in this area to heal. Unless the PCs were very slow to come to this area, these vampires will still be recovering when the PCs arrive.

There are other guardians, however. A vampire spawn (marked as V on the map), a forsaken shell (F), and a shadow (S) keep watch over these coffins.

FIRST VIEW

When the PCs rise high enough on the stairs to see into the tower room, read:

The top room of this tower is a somber mosaic of gray and black tile. Ornate coffins are strewn about, all closed but one. A mausoleum-like door seals off one section of the room.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Vampire Spawn: This human's body is gaunt and pale. Its once-fine clothes are tattered, and a pair of vicious canines dominates its dark red mouth. Use the statistics found on page 158.

Forsaken Shell: Roiling and coiling, this long, slender creature snakes forward like a strangely short, loose snake. A moment's study reveals the creature for what it is—an evacuated but horribly animate human skin that slithers and hungers. This is the skin of an unfortunate Barovian villager, now set here as a guard.

Shadow: This patch of shifting gloom has the vague outline of a humanoid shape.

Circle of Death Trap

If the PCs trigger the circle of death trap at the top of the stairs, read:

A wave of shadowy, pulse-stopping force blossoms from the center of the tower room and spreads out, extinguishing life wherever it touches.

FORSAKEN SHELL

CR 6

HP 105

CE Medium undead

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Listen +11, Spot +15

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16

HD 14

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee skin slap +7 (1d6+10)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Power Attack, improved grab

Special Actions constrict

Abilities Str 21, Dex 13, Con —, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness (gain hp equal to number of hit die), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Skills Climb +13, Hide +22 (+4 racial bonus to Hide figured), Listen +11, Move Silently +18, Spot +15, Swim +9

Constrict (Ex) Deal 1d6+5 points of damage with a successful grapple check. Constricting uses the entire body of the shell, so it cannot take any move actions while constricting.

Improved Grab (Ex) On a successful skin slap attack, a shell can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Create Spawn (Su) Creatures killed by a forsaken shell slough their skins after 1d4 rounds. These sloughed skins are new forsaken shells under the spawner's control. These forsaken shells do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

The topmost step of the spiral stairs triggers a *circle of death* effect that has its origin at the center of the room. All those still on the stairs whose heads are below the level of the top landing are unaffected.

Circle of Death Trap: CR 10; magic device; proximity trigger (final step); no reset; spell effect (*circle of death*, 11th-level wizard, 11d4 HD of creatures affected in 40-foot-radius burst from center of tower room); multiple targets (all in range of burst); Search DC 29 to find; Disable Device DC 29 to deactivate.

Chute Trap

The five-foot-square area in front of the door contains a trap door that drops victims into a chute that ejects them from the side of the tower to a long fall into the courtyard. The door is not locked.

SHADOW

CR 3

HP 19

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +7, Spot +7

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11

HD 3

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist turn resistance +2

Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4

Speed fly 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee incorporeal touch +3 (1d6 Str)

Base Atk +1; Grp —

Atk Options Dodge, Strength damage

Abilities Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13

SQ create spawn, skills

Feats Alertness, Dodge

Skills Hide +8*, Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7

Strength Damage (Su) The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 rounds.

Skills Shadows have a +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks and a +4 racial bonus on Search checks.

*A shadow gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In brightly lit areas, it takes a –4 penalty on Hide checks.

Chute Trap: CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Reflex DC 25 avoids; chute channels victims outside tower 260 feet above northeast quadrant of courtyard (20d6, fall); Search DC 27 to find; Disable Device DC 18 to deactivate.

TACTICS

The spawn rises from where it lies in its already open coffin as a move action. It attempts to dominate the largest, meanest-looking PC, then turns gaseous and goes beneath the door to Rafail's coffin. It hides in Rafail's coffin, hoping that 1 or more PC is caught up in the chute trap, waiting even until Rafail's coffin is opened to make another domination attempt, then attacks with its claws. (If Rafail is in the coffin, it hides behind it.)

The shadow incorporally flits through the coffin it resides in, moving toward the closest PC. The shadow tries to sap the PC's Strength until the PC drops or it is destroyed.

The forsaken shell slithers into view from behind a coffin. It latches onto the weakest-looking PC it can reach and attempts to constrict the life from its victim. If successful, the forsaken shell then launches itself at a new victim, and so on, until it is destroyed.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Stairs: Each step down from the landing descends 2 feet. Each step is 5 feet wide. No railing guards against falls into the tower shaft.

Coffins: Five coffins are made of wood and locked from inside (Open Lock DC 25). Each has a vent large enough to allow a creature in gaseous form easy entry. The locked coffins are either empty or contain a rejuvenating vampire spawn from K60A, depending on the PCs previous actions. The unlocked coffin contains a vampire spawn alert to trouble.

Rafail's Coffin: An ironbound door seals off a portion of this room where Rafail's coffin is hidden. This coffin, made of iron, is locked from the inside (Open Lock DC 35 to unlock). It has a vent large enough to allow a creature in gaseous form easy entry. If the coffin is opened, anyone standing between the coffin and the doorway is struck by a spring-loaded mechanism in the lid, which knocks Medium or smaller creatures 5 feet to the west and onto the chute trap (Reflex DC 17 to avoid). The rejuvenating form of Rafail might also be here, depending on PCs' earlier actions.

Ironbound Door: Locked (Open Lock DC 25 to unlock); Hardness 5; 20 hp; burst (Strength DC 23 to open). Listen DCs increase by 5 through a door.



HALLWAY

Encounter Level 10

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 109.

Use this encounter when characters first enter this hallway. There is an elevator trap here (see below), as well as an invisible troll stalker (marked as **S** on the map). Beyond the secret door, two giant ants (a worker ant, marked **Aw**, and a soldier ant, marked **As**) wait to attack the PCs.

ELEVATOR TRAP

As soon as two player characters move into the central 10-foot section of the hallway, the elevator trap is triggered. Read:

Two thick stone slabs drop with lightning speed, closing off the middle 10-foot section of the hallway. Terrible grinding noises issue from within, then the stones rise, revealing an empty corridor.

Call for initiative checks. The trap activates on the surprise round, and those caught in it are elevated away. The guardian, a troll stalker, attacks those left behind.

Elevator Trap: CR 8; mechanical and magical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex DC 25 avoids (successful avoidance means character moves out of trap area by shortest route); characters caught in trap area are subject to *sleep* effect (no HD limit, Will DC 15 to resist) and are raised in the mechanical lift shaft and deposited into area K47 (transit time 1 round); Search DC 27 to find; Disable Device DC 18 to deactivate.

Handling Parties Separated by the Trap

If PCs are by the elevator trap, there are a number of ways to run the split parties. The stairs (K21) provide a long and spiraling connection between the two separated positions. Each round PCs battle in either of the two locations, the PCs in the opposite location can make a DC 25 Listen check to hear the distant sound of a fight. If either group intentionally yells at the top of their lungs up or down the shaft, the PCs on the opposite end need only succeed on a DC 15 Listen check to hear the message. However, each time such a yell reverberates through the castle, there is a 45% chance that a drowned from room K74 shows up two rounds later.

Use cut-away action to handle the simultaneous encounters. Keep track of all initiatives on the same list, and cut back and forth between the two areas on the appropriate turn in the order. For example, on initiative order 20, a fighter in area K47 acts. Then on order 19, the troll stalker in K61 attacks, and so on.

NICORAMUS, TROLL STALKER

CR 8

HP 84

N Large elemental (air, extraplanar)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +13, Spot +13

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 13

HD 8; regeneration 5

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws each +10 (2d4+4 plus possible rend) and bite +5 (1d6+2)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +14

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, rend

Abilities Str 18, Dex 19, Con 23, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 11

SQ elemental traits, natural invisibility, improved tracking

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Listen +13, Move Silently +15, Search +13, Spot +13, Survival +2

Rend (Ex) A troll stalker that hits with both claw attacks latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an extra 4d4+8 points of damage.

Natural Invisibility (Su) This ability is constant, allowing a stalker to remain invisible even when attacking. This ability is inherent and not subject to the *invisibility* *purge* spell.

Improved Tracking (Ex) An invisible stalker is a consummate tracker and makes Spot checks instead of the usual Survival checks to trace a creature's passage.

GIANT ANT, WORKER

CR 1

HP 9

N Medium vermin

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17

HD 2

Immune mind-affecting

Fort +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +1 (1d6)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +1

Atk Options improved grab

Abilities Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 9

Feats Track^B

Skills Climb +8

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a giant ant must hit with its bite attack.

Skills Giant ants have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

GIANT ANT, SOLDIER**CR 2**

HP 11

N Medium Vermin

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17

HD 2

Immune mind-affecting**Fort** +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1**Speed** 50 ft. (10 squares), climb 20 ft.**Melee** bite +3 (2d4+3)**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +3**Atk Options** improved grab**Special Actions** acid sting**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 11**Feats** Track^B**Skills** Climb +10

Acid Sting (Ex) A giant soldier ant has a stinger and an acid-producing gland in its abdomen. If it successfully grabs an opponent, it can attempt to sting each round using its full attack bonus. A hit with the sting attack deals 1d4+1 points of piercing damage and 1d4 points of acid damage.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a giant ant must hit with its bite attack. A giant soldier ant that wins the ensuing grapple check establishes a hold and can sting.

Skills Giant ants have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

If the PCs attempt to talk to the troll stalker, they need to make a successful DC 35 Diplomacy check (+10 bonus if a PC speaks Auran). A successful check gets the stalker to stop fighting. See page 109 for details of the ensuing conversation.

If the PCs enter the area behind the secret door, the worker ant moves toward the nearest PC and attacks. It fights to the death.

The soldier ant's tactics aren't much more sophisticated than the worker's. It attempts to grab prey with its pincers and administer its acid sting when possible.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

South Stairs (K21): This stairway is dark. From this level, the stairs ascend 40 feet to K9, and descend 80 feet to K73.

Servant's Hall (K62): Eerie ground fog fills this mostly empty room. A crazy old man named Cyrus also can be found here (if he hasn't already met the PCs elsewhere in the castle). He ignores any commotion in K61, but reacts as described on page 109 if any PCs open the door and enter this area.

Troll Stalker Den: A secret door (DC 15 Search check to find) leads to the troll stalker's den. This room is covered in refuse, bones, and the detritus of a creature forced to live in a space too small for it. A roughly delved tunnel also opens into this chamber from the east, and two giant ants (a worker and a soldier ant) currently mill about the chamber. The troll stalker hasn't done anything about the ant incursion, as the occasional appearance of ants gives him easy access to food. The tunnel descends vertically down to an ant colony and primitive temple below the castle (area K89).

PCs who search through the refuse learn that whatever lives here is carnivorous, and with a successful DC 15 Search check they discover three opals each worth 300 gp, a gold military-style medal with the words "For Courage in the Field" inscribed in Auran, and a *potion of eagle's splendor*.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

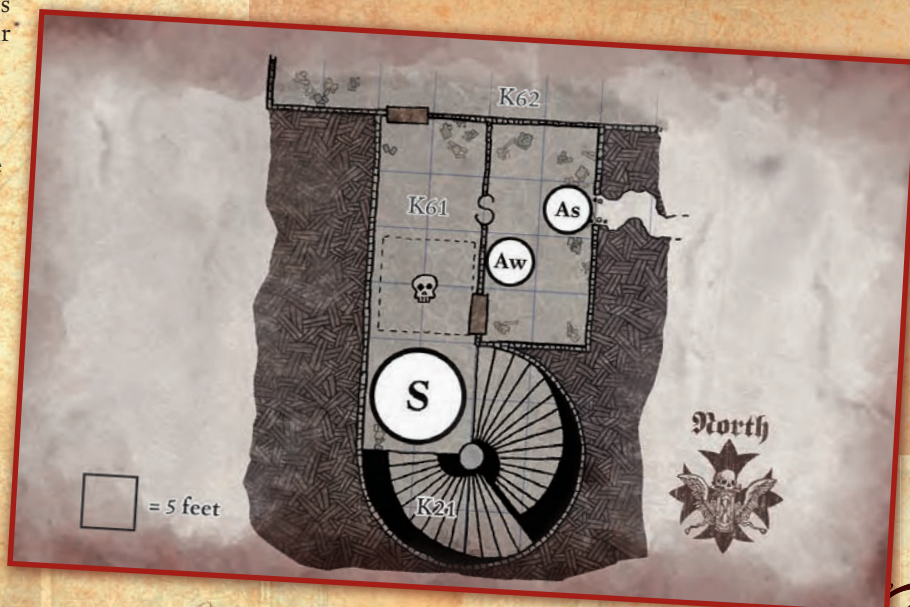
Troll Stalker: The troll stalker is a naturally invisible creature. If partly visualized through the use of *faerie fire* or some other method, a troll stalker appears as the outline of a troll whose skin is a constantly roiling layer of vapor.

Only thirty troll stalkers are still thought to exist. Troll stalkers were originally bred from trolls and invisible stalkers by an ancient war mage during the forgotten Jade Wars. In the current age, remaining troll stalkers hide in various corners of the world. If disturbed, they react violently, intent on destroying intruders.

Giant Ants: A giant worker ant and a giant soldier ant mill about the stalker's den. Giant ants look like regular ants, except for their extraordinary size.

TACTICS

The troll stalker emerges from the K21 stairwell and attempts to attack the PC who most looks like a warrior. Being invisible, the troll stalker gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls against sighted opponents, and ignores its opponents' Dexterity bonus to AC (if any). The stalker's position cannot be pinpointed by visual means. It has concealment; even if the square where it is located is correctly guessed, the attacker has a 50% miss chance in combat.



WINE CELLAR

Encounter Level 9

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 110.

This encounter takes place when the player characters attempt to enter this area. If the PCs attempt to open the portcullis by bending the bars or lifting the gate, they set off the pit trap in the floor of room K62. All those who succumb to the trap fall diagonally into a concealed pit in room K63. A wraith (marked as **W** on the map) haunts the concealed pit, attacking all that fall into the pit.

When the trap is triggered, or when the room is entered, combat rounds begin. A construct of broken wine-bottle shards (a glass shrapnyl, **S** on the map) assembles on its turn in the initiative order. It attacks those PCs not in the pit. Another wraith (**W**) haunts the K18 stairwell. It moves through a crack in the wall on the second full round of actions to attack the nearest PC. A spiderlike vermin called a chelicera (**C**) hides in the southern corner of the room. It begins to use its mimicry ability to attract one or more PCs.

FIRST VIEW

When the pit trap is triggered, read:

The floor in front of the portcullis drops away, sending all those standing on it tumbling down a dark, diagonal shaft.

PIT TRAP

The floor to the west of the portcullis (a 10-foot by 40-foot section) is really a trap door. When the PCs attempt to open the portcullis, the trap door swings down and drops any PCs standing on it diagonally into a 10-foot-by-40-foot pit on the other side of the portcullis. The pit is 20 feet deep. It is open to the room above, but until the trap is triggered it is concealed by a *minor glamor* (CL 5th; illusion) that makes the area appear to be solid floor.

A wraith hides within the pit, waiting for anyone to fall in. Broken bottles, bones, and other useless trash litter the floor of the pit.

The portcullis can't be opened in any way, but it doesn't descend lower than the level of the floor. Characters can enter the pit and climb out the other end to get into area K63.

Portcullis Pit Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; DC 22 Reflex save avoids (successful avoidance means character moves out of trap area by shortest route); characters caught in trap area tumble diagonally into the concealed pit and take 2d6 points of damage; Search DC 24 to find; Disable Device DC 18 to deactivate.

GLASS SHRAPNYL

CR 7

HP 69

N Large construct

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +14, Spot +14

AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24

HD 12

Immune construct immunities

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +8

Weakness *shatter* spell deals 3d6 points to shrapnyl

Speed fly 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee slash +13 (1d8+4 plus improved grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Gp** +15

Special Actions improved grab, wrap, control host, cloud of steel

Abilities Str 18, Dex 11, Con —, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 17

SQ construct traits

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (slash), Toughness

Skills Listen +14, Move Silently +10, Spot +14

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a shrapnyl must hit with its slash attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple (+15 grapple check) as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can wrap.

Wrap (Ex) With a second successful grapple check, a shrapnyl wraps itself around a foe it has already grappled, forming a skin-tight layer of glass around the wrapped creature (covering it from head to toe but leaving enough space for the victim to breathe). Attacks on a wrapped shrapnyl deal half damage to the shrapnyl and half to the victim. An affected creature can extract itself by making a successful grapple check. Once a shrapnyl has wrapped a creature, it can attempt to control the victim on its next action.

Control Host (Su) The round after a shrapnyl wraps a creature, it can attempt to control the wrapped victim as if with the *dominate monster* spell (CL 18th; Will DC 19). As a free action the shrapnyl can relinquish control over its host by physically and mentally disengaging itself from the victim's body.

Cloud of Steel (Ex) Once per day, the creature can explode into a deadly cloud of flying glass shards. Every creature adjacent to (or in the same square as) the shrapnyl takes 4d10 points of damage (DC 16 Reflex save for half). This attack instantly frees a creature wrapped by the shrapnyl from control.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Wraith: A wraith is an incorporeal creature born of evil and darkness. It appears as a spectral figure with glowing red eyes, robed in darkness and hovering in the night air.

WRAITHS (2)**CR 5**

HP 32 each

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12**Aura** unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)**Languages** Common, Infernal

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12

HD 5

Immune nonmagical attacks, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Resist** turn resistance +2**Fort** +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6**Weakness** daylight powerlessness**Speed** fly 60 ft. (good) (12 squares)**Melee** incorporeal touch +5 (1d4 plus Constitution drain)**Atk Options** Constitution drain (Fort DC 14, 1d6 Con)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** —**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes**Abilities** Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15**SQ** create spawn**Feats** Alertness^B, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative^B**Skills** Diplomacy +6, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +12**Incorporeal** Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See *DMG* 295 for more information.**Unnatural Aura (Su)** Animals can sense the presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that, and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.**Daylight Powerlessness (Ex)** Wraiths are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it.**Constitution Drain (Su)** Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 14 Fort save or take 1d6 points of Constitution drain. The wraith gains 5 temporary hit points if this attack succeeds.**Glass Shrapnyl:** This construct is composed of whirling, airborne shattered wine bottles. Razor sharp shards spin and whirl in a large vortex, obviously dangerous once active. When quiet, the shrapnyl appears as a layer of broken glass on the ground.**Chelicera:** This monstrous arachnid resembles a human-sized but spindly black spider. Two thin arms extend from its body, each ending in a sharp claw. A pair of thick antennae sits atop its head like tuning forks. Unlike most cheliceras (described in *Monster Manual III*), this creature is a web-spinner—possibly the result of cross-breeding with monstrous spiders. See page 148 for statistics.**TACTICS**

The chelicera tries to use its mimicry ability (“help me, please help me”) to attract a PC to where it hides in the southern corner of the room. If it can't attract anyone

within two rounds, it moves forward on the third round of combat and enters melee.

The shrapnyl seeks to wrap the smallest PC it sees, knowing with its limited intelligence that such a creature is least likely to put up much resistance.

The wraith in the pit attacks the nearest creature to it that falls in. If PCs avoid the pit, it rises from the concealed pit when the shrapnyl attacks. The wraith in the stairwell (K18) is alerted by the sound of conflict and arrives during the second round of combat to attack the nearest PC.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Wine Racks: These massive, heavy racks each store a hundred or more wine bottles. Most of the contents have turned to vinegar.**North Stairs:** This stairway is dark. It steeply climbs 40 feet up to room K23.**Servant's Hall (K62):** Eerie ground fog fills this mostly empty room. A crazy old man named Cyrus also can be found here (if he hasn't already met the PCs elsewhere in the castle). He ignores any commotion in K61, but reacts as described on page 109 if any PCs open the door and enter this area.**Kitchen (K65):** Cyrus prepares horrid treats here.**High Tower Staircase (K18):** This stairwell is seemingly separate from the wine cellar. However, at the far south end of the west wall, a long crack allows easy access for gaseous creatures.**High Tower Shaft (K18A):** This hollow shaft is closed off on this level. The base of the shaft lies in K84 and it rises to K59.

KITCHEN

Encounter Level 8

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 110.

This encounter takes place when the player characters open one of the doors leading to the kitchen.

Three monsters wait within the room: a Strahd zombie (standing in the open next to the pot, **Z** on the map), a mohrg (hiding in the pot, marked **M** when it emerges), and a wight (hiding in a cabinet, marked **W**).

The zombie ignores the PCs. It thrusts its hands into and out of the pot, splashing liquid around. It appears to be searching the contents of the pot for something, but in reality it is trying to keep the mohrg from getting out of the pot.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

If Cyrus is with the PCs, he grabs a wooden spoon from a countertop and moves toward the pot. He takes a few whacks at the zombie, then starts stirring the liquid, occasionally smacking something in the pot with the spoon. "I'm not the cook I used to be," he yells while tending to whatever is in the pot. None of the undead creatures in this room attack Cyrus, but they turn against the PCs at the first opportunity.

If Cyrus remains with the PCs, he explains further. "Strahd says I can do what I want with the corpses. They have to listen to me." This is true, as far as the three undead in this room go. Other undead will not attack Cyrus, but they won't listen to him either. Cyrus totally believes what he says, nonetheless.

If the PCs are on their own, the zombie continues to ignore them and the mohrg and wight remain hidden. When a PC gets close to the zombie, it suddenly forgets about the pot and turns to attack. The wight waits until the mohrg emerges to join in.

When a PC gets close to the pot, read:

A gangrenous arm reaches out of the pot and tries to grab you. A head and the rest of the body emerge next, dripping wet and in an advanced state of decay.

STRAHD ZOMBIE

CR 2

HP 40

NE Medium undead (humanoid)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, can't run)

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ hard to kill, plodding

Feats Toughness

Skills —

Hard to Kill (Ex) Whenever a Strahd zombie has taken enough damage to drop it, roll a d20. On any roll of 11 or higher, the zombie ignores the damage that would have dropped it.

Plodding (Ex) Zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

MOHRG

CR 8

HP 91

CE Medium undead

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +15

AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 14

HD 14

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +4, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee slam +12 (1d6+7) and
tongue +12 melee touch (paralysis)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +12

Atk Options improved grab, paralysis, Dodge, Mobility

Abilities Str 21, Dex 19, Con —, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lighting
Reflexes, Mobility

Skills Climb +13, Hide +21, Listen +11, Move Silently +21,
Spot +15, Swim +9

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a mohrg must hit a creature of its size or smaller with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Paralyzing Touch (Su) A mohrg lashes out with its tongue in combat. An opponent the tongue touches must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or become paralyzed for 1d4 minutes. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Create Spawn (Su) Creatures killed by a mohrg rise after 1d4 days as zombies under the mohrg's control. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

WIGHT

CR 3

HP 26

NE Medium undead (humanoid)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Blind-Fight; Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

HD 4

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee slam +3 (1d4+1 plus energy drain)

Base Atk +2; Grp +3

Atk Options energy drain

Abilities Str 12, Dex 12, Con —, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 15

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight

Skills Hide +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +16, Spot +7

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid slain by a wight becomes a wight in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the wight that created them and remain enslaved until its death. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a wight's slam attack gain one negative level. The DC is 14 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed, the wight heals 5 points of damage to itself.

Skills Wights have a +8 racial bonus on Move Silently checks.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Pot: Despite how it looks, the water in the pot is not boiling. The mohrg within the pot agitates the liquid and causes it to roil. The water ceases to roil when the mohrg leaves the pot.

If the mohrg successfully dunks a paralyzed character into the pot, standard drowning rules do not apply because a paralyzed victim doesn't have an opportunity to draw a breath. Instead, the victim can breathe only if he makes a DC 10 Constitution check every round. Each round, the DC increases by 1. When the character finally fails a Constitution check, he begins to drown. In the first round, he falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, he drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, if still in the pot, he drowns.

Servant's Hall (K62): This fog-shrouded hall is the haunt of a mad Cyrus.

Wine Cellar (K63): A portcullis blocks the way to a dark wine cellar. See pages 162–163 for details.

Butler's Quarters (K66): Cyrus calls this chamber home, and it is filled to overflowing with items he has accumulated over the years (usually from visitors who fell afoul of Master Strahd).

Stairs: This stairway is dark. It steeply climbs 40 feet up to room K23.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Strahd Zombie: This creature looks like any other zombie, except that it is harder to dispatch.

Mohrg: This corpse appears to be a zombie until it makes a successful attack. Then its long, clawed tongue becomes obvious.

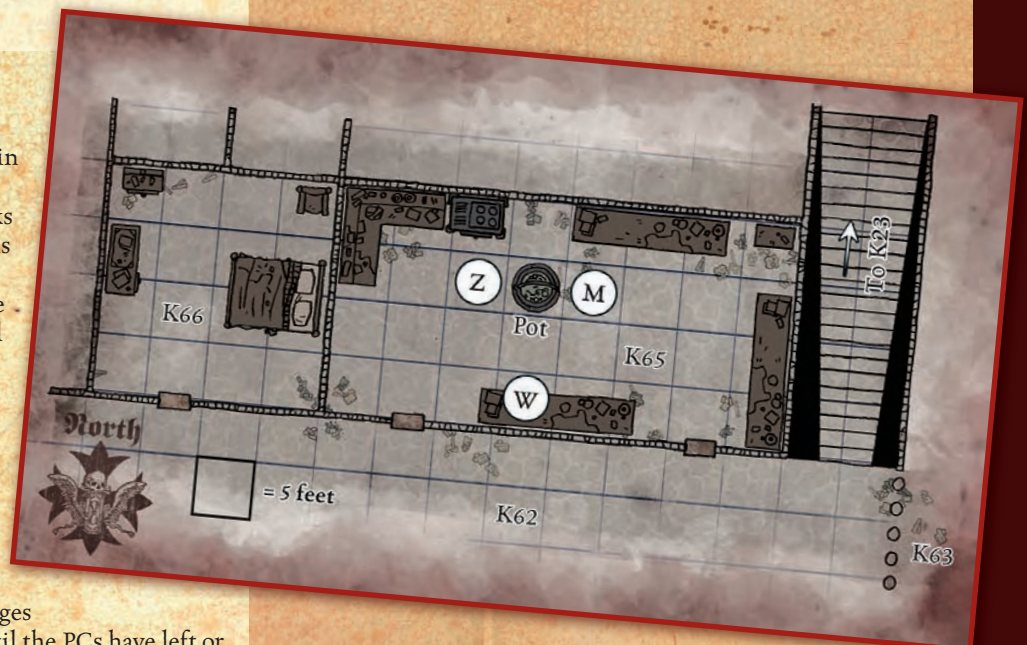
Wight: This corpse's frantic eyes burn with malevolence. Its leathery flesh is drawn tight across its bones, and its teeth are jagged needles.

TACTICS

Once the Strahd zombie acknowledges the presence of the PCs, it attacks until the PCs have left or it has been destroyed.

The mohrg tries to paralyze a PC; if it succeeds, it takes a round to drop the victim head-first into the pot. The liquid in the pot is warm, but not hot enough to burn. The mohrg hopes to drown the PC and eat him or her later.

The wight runs toward the least-armored PC and attempts to level drain the character. The wight flees if it takes any damage, attempting to flee up the stairs to K23 and beyond.



GUARD QUARTERS

Encounter Level 8

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 111.

This encounter takes place when the player characters enter this hallway.

FIRST VIEW

If a PC enters the hall or uses a bright light, read:

Thick, dusty cobwebs hang from the ceiling of this long passage. The webs grow thicker farther down the hall, almost completely filling the western end and the alcoves around it.

PCs examining the end of the hall can make a DC 18 Spot check to notice that there are bones visible within the thicker clumps of web to the west. Anyone who makes a

WEB GOLEM

CR 7

HP 67

Large construct

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17

HD 6; **Fast Healing** 5; **DR** 10/adamantine

Immune magic, construct immunities

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, not inhibited by *web* effects)

Melee 2 slams +12 (2d10+7) and bite +7 (1d6+2 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +17

Atk Options poison, adhesive

Special Actions spider climb, web

Abilities Str 20, Dex 17, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ +15 circumstance bonus to Hide

Feats —

Skills —

Poison (Ex) Bite, Fortitude DC 15; initial and secondary damage 1d6 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Web (Sp) A web golem can use a *web* effect, as the spell (DC 17), three times per day. Caster level 10th.

Adhesive (Ex) Anyone who makes an unsuccessful melee attack against a web golem must succeed on a DC 20 Reflex save, or the attacker's weapon sticks to the web golem and is yanked out of the wielder's grasp. Creatures using natural weapons are automatically grappled if they fail the save. Pulling a stuck weapon or limb loose from a web golem requires a DC 20 Strength check. DCs are Strength-based.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) Immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. A grease spell slows it (as slow) for 2d6 rounds with no save; DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check to know this.

Spider Climb (Su) Can spider climb as per the spell.

LARGE MONSTROUS SPIDERS (2)

CR 2

HP 22 each

N Large vermin

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +4*

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 11

HD 4

Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft. (can always take 10)

Melee bite +4 (1d8+3 plus poison)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +9

Atk Options poison

Special Actions web

Abilities Str 15, Dex 17, Con 12, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

Feats —

Skills Climb +11, Hide +3*, Jump +2, Spot +4

Poison (Ex) Bite, Fortitude DC 13; initial and secondary damage 1d6 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills Monstrous spiders have a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Spot checks and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A monstrous spider can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Monstrous spiders use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is higher.

*Web-spinning spiders have a +8 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks when using their webs.

Web (Ex): 8/day. Similar to an attack with a net but maximum range 50 feet; range increment 10 feet; effective against targets up to one size category larger than the spider. An entangled creature can escape with a successful DC 13 Escape Artist check or burst it with a DC 17 Strength check. The check DCs are Constitution-based, and the Strength check DC includes a +4 racial bonus.

DC 24 Spot check notices the web golem hiding among the thick ceiling webs. Any PCs who make the higher Spot check can participate in the surprise round along with the web golem.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Web Golem: This vaguely humanoid-shaped creature (W) is composed entirely of layer-upon-layer of spider webs, except for its eight spider-like eyes and sharp mandibles.

Monstrous Spider: There are two monstrous spiders (S) hiding in the alcoves. These aggressive predators use their poisonous bites to subdue and kill prey.

Ettercap: There are two ettercaps (E) hiding in the alcoves. Each of these revolting creatures resembles a cross between a gangly human and a bloated spider. Each has long, slender arms and legs protruding from a rounded, fleshy body. Each has a spider's head complete with mandibles and many beady black spider eyes.

ETTERCAPS (2)**CR 3**

HP 27 each

NE Medium aberration

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +8**Languages** Common

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11

HD 5

Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); climb 30 ft.**Melee** bite +5 (1d8+2 plus poison) and
2 claws each +3 (1d3+1)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +5**Atk Options** poison**Special Actions** web**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 8**Feats** Great Fortitude, Multiattack**Skills** Climb +10, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Hide +9, Listen +4,
Spot +8**Poison (Ex)** Injury, Fortitude DC 15, initial damage 1d6 Dex,
secondary damage 2d6 Dex. The save DC is Constitution
based and includes a +2 racial bonus.**Web (Ex)** An ettercap can throw a web eight times per day.
This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum
range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is
effective against targets of up to Medium size. The web
anchors the target in place, allowing no movement.

An entangled creature can escape with a DC 13

Escape Artist check or burst the web with a DC 17
Strength check. The check DCs are Constitution-based
and include a +4 racial bonus. The web has 6 hit points,
hardness 0, and takes double damage from fire.Ettercaps can also create sheets of sticky webbing
from 5 to 60 feet square. They usually position these to
snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the
ground. Approaching creatures must succeed on a
DC 20 Spot check to notice a web, or they stumble into
it and become trapped as though by a successful web
attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing receive
a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to
walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot-square
section has 6 hit points, hardness 0, and takes double
damage from fire.An ettercap can move across its own sheet web at its
climb speed and can determine the exact
location of any creature touching the web.**Skills** Ettercaps have a +4 racial bonus on
Craft (trapmaking), Hide, and Spot
checks. They have a +8 racial bonus on
Climb checks and can always choose to
take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or
threatened.

In the first regular round of combat, the spiders and ettercaps act. Both can move freely through the webbed areas. The spiders target opponents that have been immobilized (partially or fully) by the webs, trying to poison and further weaken them.

The ettercaps follow similar tactics, targeting those already caught in the webs. They prefer to concentrate on PCs who have already been poisoned by the spiders, delaying their actions in some cases to do so.

AFTER THE BATTLE

After the PCs dispatch the monsters, they can search the area. This requires that they clear away the webs (probably by burning them). Under the webs, the PCs find the rotting remains of long-forgotten chests that once held the personal items of the long-dead guards.

There is only one item of interest, which is found on a DC 20 Search check. One chest holds half of an untarnished silver key. The word "Key" is etched on it. When joined with the other half (found in K55), the complete "Portal Key" opens the door to vault 12 in area K84.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Guard's Stair (K64): Gray, dusty steps spiral into darkness. It goes up past K13 to K46.

Guard's Hall (K67): This large hall is empty except for the crushed and splintered oaken tables that are scattered about the room.

Guard's Run (K68): This simple corridor features a heavy wooden door on the north wall, a passage to the south, and an archway in the west wall.

TACTICS

The web golem acts in the surprise round, along with any PCs who happened to notice it (Spot DC 24). It begins by hurling a wave of ropy strands toward the PCs, clogging the hall with sticky webs and trying to capture as many of them as possible. It spends the following two rounds exhausting its web ability to completely envelope the hall. In subsequent rounds, it moves out to attack stuck foes.



KINGSMEN QUARTERS

Encounter Level 9

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 111.

This encounter occurs when the player characters enter K70 or K71, or examine the area from the stairs to K20A. If the PCs aren't particularly stealthy, the demon guardians get to make preparations for the upcoming battle (see Tactics, below).

FIRST VIEW

When the PCs approach this area, read:

Orange-haired ape-things leap from the dark alcoves to the north, their outsized clawed fists seemingly too large for their scrawny legs to support. From the southern alcoves slinks a malformed, half-melted humanoid clutching a double axe, and a black-leather-skinned humanoid with a mouth full of sharp, jagged teeth.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Bar-Iguras: These two demons (B on the map) look very much like lumbering orangutans, and the malevolent gleam in their eyes indicates that they really do want to rend flesh and eat the innards of any who get too close.

Rutterkin: This creature (R) appears crude, bestial, and misshapen. It howls and writhes in pain as its corrupted body continues to mutate.

Babau: This creature (BB) is tall and gaunt, looking much like a skeleton covered in black, leathery skin. It has a mouth full of jagged teeth and horn curving from its skull. Reddish paste oozes from the demon's skin, which smells of corruption and death.

TACTICS

As soon as the PCs enter K70 or near the bottom of the stairs, the demon guardians stir. They serve Lucian and are posted here to guard the approach to Lucian's chamber (K72). The demons attack anyone not specifically designated as off-limits by either Lucian or Strahd that enters K70, K71, or the lower stairs to K20A.

If given a round or two of warning, the bar-Iguras prepare by attempting to summon additional bar-Iguras. Then they apply invisibility and see invisibility to themselves. Once combat begins, one bar-Igura attempts to cause fear on a fighter-type PC (someone who appears to have a low Will save), while the other attempts to grapple a PC who appears to have a low Strength score. If a bar-Igura successfully grapples and pins a PC, it uses its greater teleport ability

BAR-LGURAS (2)

CR 5

HP 45 each

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil, tanar'ri)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages telepathy 100 ft., Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 18

HD 6; **DR** 10/cold iron or good

Immune electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 16

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +10 (1d6+4) and
bite +5 (1d8+2)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +10

Atk Options pounce; Dodge, Mobility

Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*, greater teleport

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

2/day—*change self*, *invisibility*, *major image*

At will—*cause fear* (Will DC 12), *darkness*, *dispel magic*,
see invisibility, *telekinesis*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12

SQ tanar'ri traits

Feats Dodge, Mobility

Skills Balance +13, Climb +13, Hide +17, Intimidate +10,
Jump +20, Listen +11, Move Silently +13, Spot +11,
Tumble +13

Pounce (Ex) If a bar-Igura charges, it can make a full attack even though it has moved.

Greater Teleport (Su) As the *greater teleport* spell, except that a bar-Igura can carry up to one other Medium creature with it and use it even while grappling, but the foe must be pinned first. A bar-Igura can use this ability at will.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) Once per day a bar-Igura can attempt to summon another bar-Igura with a 35% chance of success.

to appear 2,000 feet above the castle, drops the PC (falling damage 20d6), and then return a round later.

A PC can attempt an opposed grapple to keep holding onto a bar-Igura that attempts to drop him. A bar-Igura that can't successfully drop a passenger uses greater teleport to return to K71 on its next action to avoid contact with the rapidly approaching ground.

If given a round or two to prepare, the babau attempts to summon an additional babau. Then it applies *see invisibility* to itself. Once combat begins, the babau attempts to put itself into flanking positions (ideally with another summoned babau or with the rutterkin) so that it can use its sneak attack ability against the PCs.

If given a round to prepare, the rutterkin attempts to summon an additional rutterkin. Then it uses its *desecrate* spell-like ability on the area. Once combat begins, the rutterkin aids the babau by setting up flanking situations whenever possible.

BABAU DEMON

CR 6

HP 66 each

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +19, Spot +1

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

HD 7; DR 10/cold iron or good

Immune electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; protective slime; SR 14

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d6+5) and bite +10 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +12

Atk Options sneak attack +2d6, Cleave, Power Attack

Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th):

At will—*darkness*, *dispel magic*, *see invisibility*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lb. of objects only)

Abilities Str 21, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 16

Feats Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills Climb +15, Disable Device +12, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +11, Hide +19, Listen +19, Move Silently +19, Open Lock +11, Search +20, Sleight of Hand +11, Spot +1

Protective Slime (Su) A slimy red jelly coats a babau's skin, dealing 1d8 points of acid damage (ignoring hardness) to any weapon or natural attack that strikes it. Magic weapons and creatures attacking with natural weapons can attempt a DC 18 Reflex save to avoid the damage.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) 1/day, summon 1 babau 40%. Equivalent to 3rd-level spell.

RUTTERKIN

CR 3

HP 32

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil, tanar'ri)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16

HD 5; DR 5/silver

Immune electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; SR 14

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee double axe +5 (1d8+2/×3) and double axe +5 (1d8+1/×3) or

Melee 2 claws each +7 melee (1d6+2)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +7

Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th):

1/day—*desecrate*

At will—*darkness*, *cause fear*, *telekinesis*
Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 10

SQ tanar'ri traits

Feats Alertness, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Climb +10, Intimidate +8, Jump +10, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Spot +9, Tumble +10

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) Once per day, a rutterkin can attempt to summon 1 rutterkin with a 35% chance of success. This ability is equivalent to a 3rd-level spell.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Nests: The alcoves in K71 each hold a 5-foot diameter nest composed of lichen, rags, old bones, and rotting bits of fresher corpses. The bar-Igura nests also contain loose coins totaling 400 gp.

Guard's Hall (K67): Nothing fills this large hall except for the scattered remains of crushed and splintered oaken tables.

Kingsmen Hall (K70): Shattered furniture lies in heaps, bones lie scattered amid crumpled and crushed plate armor, and shields and swords jut from the walls as if driven there by some tremendous force. The demon guardians have used this chamber as a killing ground on more than one occasion.

Tower Stair Hall (K20A): This flight of stairs leads up 40 feet to area K20.

Office of Vengeance (K72): One of Strahd's momentary allies resides here—the shadow demon Lucian. Lucian currently possesses the ill-used body of a half-celestial. If a fight occurs in K70 or K71, Lucian prepares for visitors, though he doesn't come to the aid of the demon guardians. A locked ironbound door seals this room.

Ironbound Door: Locked (Open Lock DC 30); hardness 5; 20 hp; burst DC 23. Listen DCs increase by 5 through a door.


OFFICE OF VENGEANCE

Encounter Level 12

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 112.

This room serves as the home of the shadow demon Lucian, who currently inhabits the body of a half-celestial. Whether the PCs catch Lucian by surprise or the demon anticipates their arrival, Lucian begins the encounter next to his desk. He attempts to talk to the PCs, as described in the entry on page 111. If this ruse fails or when the PCs attack, combat begins.

WHEN TALKS BREAK DOWN

When the discussion turns to battle, read:

"I tried reason. But you won't have it. Your deaths are your own doing, not mine!" The half-celestial leaps forward, eyes shifting from bright gold to blackest night.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Lucian: This shadow demon (marked as **L** on the map) inhabits a noble knight, human looking but for his golden eyes and large pair of white-feathered wings spread from his shoulders. Lucian inhabits the half-celestial by means of a demonic item called the *fang of inhabitation* (see page 212) and his *magic jar* ability.

Shadow: When this monster appears (in the space marked **S**), it seems to be a patch of shifting gloom with the vague outline of a humanoid. See page 161 for the shadow's statistics.

Dolghast: This creature (**D**) is half living and half decaying flesh—a line of boiling, churning flesh divides its two parts, running from the tip of its skull down to its groin. The living half is hunched and emaciated, while the dead half is skeletal and rotted. The dolghast serves Lucian. It was created as a gift from the Necromancer (K77).

TACTICS

Lucian starts the encounter in plain sight, but the shadow is hidden beneath the desk and the dolghast is in a secret room behind the east wall.

Lucian's long-term inhabitation of the half-celestial paladin named Fandromar has begun to corrupt the form, altering some of the body's original abilities and destroying others. Abilities presented in brackets in the half-celestial's statistics block are those that have been corrupted, or that have leaked through from the shadow demon's true self.

When discussion breaks down, Lucian pulls out his sword and calls for help. This alerts the shadow under his desk, the dolghast in the secret room, and any demon guardians still active in K71. Lucian fights to the death, secretly jumping into the *fang of inhabitation* at the last moment.

HALF-CELESTIAL (INHABITED BY LUCIAN) CR 11

HP 90

Male half-celestial paladin 9

LG (CE) Medium outsider (augmented humanoid, native)

Init +1; Senses Listen +3, Spot +7

Languages Common, Celestial, [Abyssal]

AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 23

HD 9; DR 5/magic

Immune disease

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10; SR 19

Fort +14 (+18 against poison), Ref +8, Will +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee +2 *bastard sword* +17/+12 (1d10+7/19–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +11 (1d8+4/x3)

Base Atk +9; Grp +14

Atk Options Flyby Attack, Power Attack, [smite good 2/day (+4 attack, +9 damage)]

Special Actions [darkness], lay on hands 36 points/day, [rebuke undead 7/day (+4, 2d6+10, 6th)]

Paladin Spells Prepared (CL 4th):

[denied to Lucian]

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th):

1/day—*aid*, *cure serious wounds*, *neutralize poison*, [curse, dispel good]

3/day—[protection from good]

2/week—*remove disease*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 18

SQ [detect good], divine health

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Armor, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

Skills [Bluff +18], Concentration +13, Diplomacy +13, Ride +11, Spot +7

Possessions +2 *bastard sword*, masterwork composite longbow (+4 Str bonus) with 10 silvered arrows and 10 cold iron arrows, +2 *mithral breastplate*, +2 *large steel shield*

Smite Good (Su) The corrupting effect of demon inhabitation has altered the paladin's smite evil ability. Lucian can smite good twice per day. He adds his +4 Charisma modifier to his attack roll and deals an extra 9 points of damage if the attack hits. If he accidentally smites a creature that is not good, the smite has no effect and is used up for that day.

Darkness (Su) The corrupting effect of demon inhabitation has turned the celestial's daylight ability to darkness. Lucian can use darkness at will, as the spell.

Rebuke Undead (Su) The corrupting effect of demon inhabitation has altered the paladin's ability to turn undead; instead, he can rebuke undead as a 6th-level cleric up to 7 times per day.

Detect Good (Sp) The corrupting effect of demon inhabitation gives Lucian the ability to use detect good at will, as the spell.

Divine Health (Ex) Lucian has immunity to all diseases, including supernatural and magical diseases (such as mummy rot and lycanthropy).

DOLGHAST**CR 4**

HP 33

LE Medium aberration

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +2, Spot +2

Aura stench

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15

HD 6; Fast healing 5

Immune fatigue, exhaustion, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects

Resist 50% chance to resist additional critical hit or sneak attack damage dice

Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws each +8 (1d6+4) and bite +3 melee (1d6+2)

Base Atk +4; Grp +8

Atk Options dissolution, stench

Abilities Str 19, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 14

SQ half-dead

Feats Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Track

Skills Listen +2, Spot +2, Survival +9

Dissolution (Ex) If a dolghast hits with both claw attacks, a living opponent must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or see its flesh begin to boil away in dissolution—the opponent takes 1d4 points of Constitution damage and is stunned for 1 round; on a successful save, only 1 point of Constitution damage is dealt and the opponent is not stunned. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Stench (Ex) Living creatures within 10 feet must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by the same dolghast's stench for 24 hours. A *delay poison* or *neutralize poison* spell removes the effect from a sickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poison are unaffected, and creatures resistant to poison receive their normal bonus on their saving throws. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Half-Dead (Ex) Half-dead creatures share the traits of both living and dead creatures. Half-dead creatures have the following traits (in addition to the normal aberration traits):

—Immunity and resistances noted above

—Half-dead creatures can be healed by both negative energy (such as an *inflict* spell) and positive energy (such as a *cure* spell), but only if it successfully saves against the spell (using the spell's normal save DC). If the save fails, the spell deals damage as if the half-dead creature were living (for *inflict* spells) or as if it were undead (for *cure* spells).

On its turn, the shadow emerges from under the desk and moves toward the nearest PC. The shadow tries to sap the PC's Strength until the PC drops or it is destroyed.

On its turn, the dolghast emerges from its secret lair and attacks the nearest PC. It avoids coming within 10 feet of Lucian so as to not affect its master with its stench. The dolghast fights until dead, or until Lucian commands it to take some other action.

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the PCs succeed in defeating the demon-possessed half-celestial, Lucian secretly enters the *fang of inhabitation*. Once within the item, Lucian bides his time. Once the item is discovered, Lucian attempts to jump into the weakest creature he can sense. Cyrus is a prime candidate for possession, if he is traveling with the PCs. Once in control of a new body, Lucian seeks an opportunity to slip away and join up with Strahd. The next time the PCs encounter Strahd, Lucian is with him. In this case, he appears in his true shadow demon form or inside a suitable host (a captured NPC or PC, if possible).

Lucian's statistics in his shadow demon form can be found on page 112.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Secret Door (East): This door opens onto a secret room where the dolghast waits to defend Lucian. A DC 22 Search check is needed to find the secret door.

Secret Door (West): This door leads to stairs that descend to K79. A DC 22 Search check is needed to find the secret door.

Kingsmen Hall (K70): Shattered furniture lies in heaps, bones lie scattered amid crumpled and crushed plate armor, and shields and swords jut from the walls as if driven there by some tremendous force. The demon guardians have used this chamber as a killing ground on more than one occasion.



DUNGEON HALL

Encounter Level 8

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 113.

Water covers the floor of this hallway to a depth of 2 feet. Traps hide beneath the black, still water, waiting to catch the PCs unaware.

THE TRAPS

As the PCs slog through the water-filled hall, they cross the trapped squares (each marked with a skull icon on the map). When a PC steps into a trapped square, read:

Water explodes around you, rising in a geyser and raining down in the otherwise still hall. As the water settles, your companions notice that you have disappeared.

The four squares shown on the map are teleport traps. If any Medium creature or smaller steps into one of these squares and fails a DC 20 Reflex save, it is immediately teleported to one of the cells in K75. The wraith (W) immediately attacks the first PC to appear. The Strahd zombies (S) attack any PCs who suddenly appear within their cells (Cell 1 and Cell 3). Note that because of their size, the boneclaws from K74 cannot trigger these trapped squares.

Teleport Trap: CR 4; magical; location trigger; automatic reset; Reflex DC 20 avoids; teleports Medium or smaller victim to K75 cells (roll 1d4 to determine which cell); Search DC 30 to find; Disable Device DC 20 to deactivate.

THE DOORS

If the PCs navigate the hall without triggering a trap, they can reach any of the three sets of doors.

The doors to the north lead to K74. When the PCs open these doors, they attract the attention of the two boneclaws (B) that lurk within. The boneclaws also attack anyone arriving by way of the chute trap (K82), and they come to investigate if any of the other doors are opened.

The doors to the south lead to K75. The wraith and the Strahd zombies first attack any PCs who are teleported into the cells from the trapped squares in the hall. If the PCs avoid the traps but open this door, the wraith advances on them. The wraith won't leave this room to join other battles, however. In addition to the wraith and the Strahd zombies in the cells, Cell 4 contains a prisoner—Emil (E). See page 114 for details on Emil.

The doors to the west lead to area K76 and an encounter with the Necromancer (see page 178).

BONECLAWS (2)

CR 5

HP 105 each

CE Large undead

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +15

Languages Common, Abyssal

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12

HD 10; **DR** 5/bludgeoning

Immune cold, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist +2 turn resistance

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee 2 piercing claws each +9 (2d6+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +14

Atk Options reaching claws; Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

Abilities Str 21, Dex 18, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 19

SQ unholy toughness

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Power Attack

Skills Hide +13, Intimidate +17, Listen +15, Move Silently +17, Search +15, Spot +15

Reaching Claws (Ex) A boneclaw can make melee attacks with its bone claws, instantly extending them as part of an attack to a distance of up to 20 feet (thereby allowing the boneclaw to threaten more squares than its Large size would normally allow).

Unholy Toughness (Ex) A boneclaw gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier × its Hit Dice.

STRAHD ZOMBIES (2)

CR 2

HP 40 each

NE Medium undead (humanoid)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, can't run)

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ hard to kill, plodding

Feats Toughness

Skills —

Hard to Kill (Ex) Whenever a Strahd zombie has taken enough damage to drop it, roll a d20. On any roll of 11 or higher, the zombie ignores the damage that would have dropped it.

Plodding (Ex) Zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

WRAITH**CR 5**

HP 32

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12**Aura** unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)**Languages** Common, Infernal**AC** 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12**HD** 5**Immune** nonmagical attacks, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Resist** turn resistance +2**Fort** +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6**Weakness** daylight powerlessness**Speed** fly 60 ft. (good) (12 squares)**Melee** incorporeal touch +5 (1d4 plus Constitution drain)**Atk Options** Constitution drain (Fort DC 14, 1d6 Con)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** —**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes**Abilities** Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15**SQ** create spawn**Feats** Alertness^B, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative^B**Skills** Diplomacy +6, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +12**Incorporeal** Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See *DMG* 295 for more information.**Unnatural Aura (Su)** Animals can sense the presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that, and panic of forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.**Daylight Powerlessness (Ex)** Wraiths are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it.**Constitution Drain (Su)** Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 14 Fort save or take 1d6 points of Constitution drain. The wraith gains 5 temporary hit points if this attack succeeds.**MONSTERS**

The following creatures are active in this area:

Strahd Zombies: These zombies look much like any other zombie—decaying flesh, tattered clothes, plodding mannerisms—except that they prove to be extremely harder to destroy. When a PC is teleported into a cell that contains a Strahd zombie, the undead creature slowly rises out of the water to attack.**Wraith:** A wraith appears as a floating spectral figure robed in darkness. It has the barest shape of a humanoid, but the only distinguishing feature is its glowing red eyes.**Boneclaws:** These Large skeletal humanoids have slender, elongated, knife-sharp fingers that constantly change length, extending and contracting.**TACTICAL MAP DETAILS**

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Hallway (K73): The floor of the hallway is covered by 2 feet of water. Medium and smaller creatures treat these water-covered squares as difficult terrain (2 squares of movement to enter). Tumble checks made in the hallway have their DCs increased by 2. The water is dark and murky, making Search checks more difficult (as shown by the high DCs).**Cellblocks (K74, K75):** The floor of the cellblocks is covered by four feet of water. Medium creatures and smaller must use four squares of movement to enter these squares. This does not hinder the wraith.

The north chamber used to be a dungeon, but it was converted some years back to a necromancy lab. The water couldn't be kept out, however, and now the lab is abandoned to the undead.

This south chamber remains a dungeon, though some of the cell walls have collapsed and their iron bars have been scavenged.

The intact cells in K75 are locked. A DC 25 Open Lock check is required to disengage the locking mechanism. The bars can be forced open with a DC 28 Strength check.

Cell 4: This cell contains a terrified, water-logged villager named Emil whose calls for help become all the more frantic if he sees or hears PCs. See page 114 for more information about Emil.**South Stairs (K21):** This stairway is dark. It climbs higher in the tower. From this level, the stairs ascend 80 feet to K61, then higher to K9 and other locations.**The Doors:** The doors leading out of the hallway are all ironbound doors. They are all locked.**Ironbound Double Doors:** Locked (Open Lock DC 30 to open); hardness 5; 20 hp; burst (Strength DC 23 to break open). Listen DCs increase by 5 through a closed door.

TORTURE ROOM

Encounter Level 9

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 115.

When the player characters enter K76, this encounter unfolds. Read:

The figure in the left throne, bound and hooded in leather armor, looks at you with disdain and calls out, "Stefania, kill the intruders."

The figure in the right throne wears a prodigiously elaborate party gown, though she and her clothing are diaphanous and faintly luminous. Half her face is a mess of dripping gore.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Necromancer: The Necromancer (marked as N on the map) wears pale leather armor sewn from the skins of her victims, studded with sharp canine teeth and adorned with a voluminous hood. She never uses more words than necessary. On her turn, she stands as a free action, moves behind the red velvet curtain through the open door to K78, and locks the door behind her. She prepares to defeat the intruders in her sanctum. See page 178 for the Necromancer's statistics.

Spectre: This woman in the fancy dress with the half-smashed head has a slightly luminous, ghostlike form (S). Her name is Stefania, and she relentlessly serves the Necromancer. She flies toward the character who most looks like a cleric or arcane spellcaster. Her goal is first to provide the Necromancer with the time she needs to get to room K78, then to destroy the intruders.

Rot Reavers: Two of these creatures (R) help protect the area from intruders. They appear as hairless, ape-like creatures with cancerous blemishes that disfigure their yellow-green flesh. An ichor-slicked tentacular tongue protrudes from a rot reaver's mouth. The tongue winds around one of the creature's thick arms, looping down to lick the blades of the cleavers it wields in each hand. They work as a team, converging on the same target to flank and slice. They prefer to attack any PCs carrying light or radiating daylight, seeking to douse the light in the brackish water. Otherwise, they attack the nearest PC.

Strahd Zombies: Four of these creatures (Z) are in this area. They look like any other zombie—decaying flesh, tattered clothes, plodding mannerisms—except that they prove to be extremely harder to destroy.

The zombies start out squatting beneath the water. They ready actions to attack any PCs who move adjacent to them, at which point they rise from the water and attack. In the third round of combat, any zombies that have not emerged rise to engage the nearest targets.

Statistics for Strahd zombies are on page 172.

SPECTRE ("STEFANIA")

CR 7

HP 45

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14

Aura unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13

HD 7

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist incorporeal, turn resistance +2

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9

Weakness sunlight powerlessness

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +6 (1d8 plus energy drain 2 levels)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** —

Atk Options Blind-Fight, energy drain

Abilities Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative

Skills Hide +13, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +14, Search +12, Spot +14, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks)

Incorporeal Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See DMG 295 for more information.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a spectre's incorporeal touch attack gain two negative levels. The DC is 15 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed, the spectre heals 5 points of damage to itself.

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid slain by a spectre becomes a spectre in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the spectre that created them and remain enslaved until its death. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals, whether wild or domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of a spectre at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex) Spectres are powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it. A spectre caught in sunlight cannot attack and can take only a single move action or standard action in a round.

ROT REAVERS (2)**CR 6**

HP 65 each

NE Medium aberration

Init 6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6**Languages** Common**AC** 21, touch 14, flat-footed 19**HD** 10**Immune** energy drain**Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** +1 cleaver +9/+4 (1d6+3/×4 plus wound rot) and
+1 cleaver +9 (1d6+3/×4 plus wound rot)**Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +9**Atk Options** wound rot, drain unlife**Special Actions** animate dead, rebuke undead**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 16**SQ** cleaver mastery, skills**Feats** Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Two-weapon
Fighting, Weapon Focus (handaxe)**Skills** Climb +10, Listen +6, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6**Possessions** 2 +1 cleavers

Wound Rot (Su) Any time a rot reaver damages a living creature with one of its cleavers in melee, it can immediately make a touch attack with one of its tongues (attack bonus +9). If the touch attack succeeds, the victim takes 1 point of Constitution damage and becomes vulnerable to the rot reaver's animate dead ability. Creatures immune to ability damage are immune to this special attack.

Drain Unlife (Su) Any time a rot reaver damages an undead creature with one of its cleaver attacks, the rot reaver heals a number of hit points equal to the damage dealt.

Animate Dead (Su) As a standard action, a rot reaver can animate any dead creature within 60 feet that was affected by its wound rot ability within the last 24 hours. Creatures animated by these particular rot reavers rise as Strahd zombies (otherwise, regular zombies). Normal rules for animating dead apply.

Rebuke Undead (Su) A rot reaver can rebuke undead as an evil cleric of 10th level. The creature can control any undead of 5 Hit Dice or less when it successfully affects the undead with its rebuke ability, and it can command up to 10 Hit Dice worth of undead at any one time.

Cleaver Mastery (Ex) A rot reaver's cleavers are identical in appearance to +1 handaxes—except that in a reaver's hands, these cleavers deal quadruple damage on a critical hit.

Skills A rot reaver has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always take 10 on Climb checks, even if threatened.

All turning checks receive a –4 penalty (while rebuke checks gain a +4 profane bonus).

Finally, the room is treated as if protected by a *magic circle against good*, which grants all evil creatures in the room a +2 deflection bonus to AC and a +2 bonus on saves (both figured into the monster statistics).

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the threats are overcome in this area, the Necromancer prepares her defenses in K78.

If the PCs leave this area after cleaning it out but don't deal with the Necromancer first, in three days' time, she has replenished the spectre and the zombies, but replaced the rot reavers with boneclaws.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Water: The floor of the torture room is covered by 3 feet of water. Medium and smaller creatures treat these water-covered squares as difficult terrain (3 squares of movement to enter). Tumble checks made in the hallway have their DCs increased by 4. The water is dark and murky.

Balcony (K77): The balcony overlooking the torture room is 7 feet above the floor and requires a DC 15 Climb check (and 4 squares of movement) to move from K76 to K77. Characters who make a successful DC 20 Climb check take only 2 squares of movement to ascend to the balcony.

A fall from the balcony into 3 feet of water doesn't deal any damage, but a DC 15 Balance check is required to avoid landing prone in the dark water.

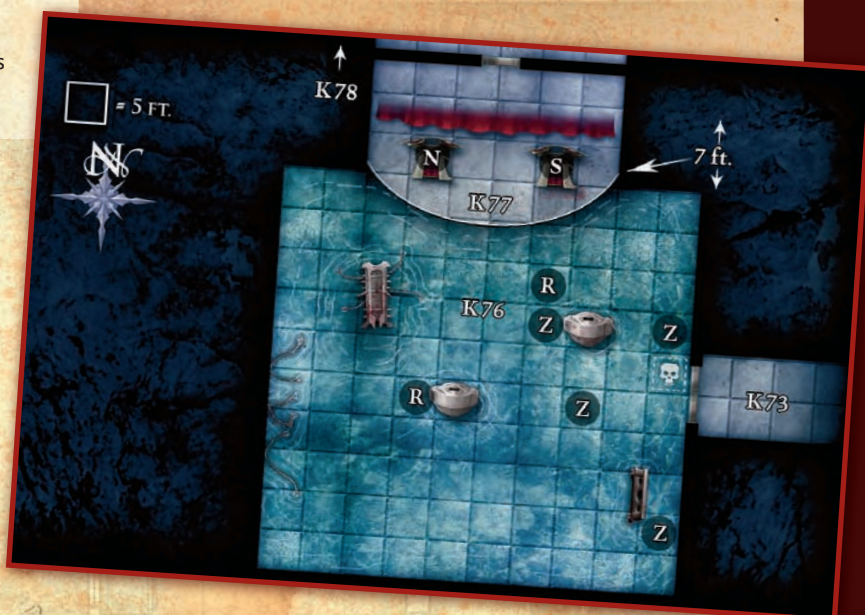
Necromancer's Sanctum (K78): The ironbound door to this chamber locks automatically when the Necromancer closes it. When this encounter begins, the door is open. When closed and locked, it requires a DC 35 Open Lock check to disengage the lock. The door has hardness 10, 60 hit points, and requires a DC 28 Strength check to burst.

TELEPORT TRAP

The square in front of the doors to K73 contains a teleport trap (marked with a skull icon on the map). If any Medium creature or smaller steps into this square and fails a DC 20 Reflex save, it is immediately teleported to one of the cells in K75. (See page 172 for details.)

UNHALLOW EFFECT

An *unhallow* effect covers the entire room and the balcony (K77). Each PC must make a successful DC 13 Will save or become the center of a *silence* effect (20-foot radius) that moves with him or her for three minutes.



NECROMANCER'S SANCTUM

Encounter Level 13

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 116

How the player characters interact with this encounter depends on how they approach it.

If the PCs enter this area from one of the stairs in the northern part of the room, the sanctum initially contains two bloodhulk giants (marked as **B** on the map) and a deathreap ooze (**D**). The Necromancer (**N**) enters from K77 1 round after combat begins.

If the PCs first encountered area K76, then they are following the Necromancer in order to finish the battle. In this case, the Necromancer has time to prepare. She activates her *ghost hood* so that she can see *invisible* foes, and she casts *sanctuary* on herself. The rest of this encounter is presented using this as the initial set up of the situation.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

THE NECROMANCER

CR 11

HP 47

Female human necromancer 3/cleric 3/true necromancer 5
NE Medium Humanoid

Init 0; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4

Languages Common, Abyssal, Infernal

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17

HD 11; **DR** 5/silver and magic

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +16

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee death touch +4 touch (3d6 hp threshold or foe dies)
1/day

Ranged enervation +5 touch (1d4 negative levels) 2/day

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +4

Special Actions death touch domain ability, rebuke undead
8/day (+3, 2d6+12, 11th)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 7th):

4th—*cure critical wounds*, *summon monster IV*, *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 19), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds*, *death knell* (DC 18), *hold person* (DC 16), *silence* (DC 16)

1st—*bless*, *cure light wounds* (2), *protection from good*, *sanctuary*†, *shield of faith*

0—*detect magic* (2), *light* (2), *read magic* (2)

† Already cast

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 7th; prohibited schools
abjuration and illusion):

4th—*enervation* (2)

3rd—*fireball* (DC 16), *fly*, *ray of exhaustion* (+5 ranged
touch; DC 18), *vampiric touch*

Necromancer: The Necromancer wears pale leather armor sewn from the skins of her victims, studded with sharp canine teeth and adorned with a voluminous hood. She never uses more words than necessary.

Bloodhulk Giant: This towering, bloated giant looks as if its skin is about to burst. Thick veins fork across its flesh, and its body pulses and shifts as if a great quantity of fluid strains beneath its skin.

Deathreap Ooze: It is not immediately clear that the liquid in the vat is a creature. The pale fluid in the vat occasionally manifests a face twisted in torment, roiling and dying, reeking of death and decay. When it attacks with its amazing reach, it extends an oozing appendage to slam against foes.

TACTICS

The Necromancer takes these actions in combat:

Round 1: *Fireball* at the largest concentration of PCs she can target without hurting her minions; tries to stay out of the reach of PC bruisers.

2nd—*command undead* (DC 17), *darkvision*, *ghoul touch* (2) (+4 melee touch; DC 17), *spider climb*

1st—*cause fear* (DC 16), *charm person* (DC 14), *detect undead*, *magic missile*, *magic weapon*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+5 ranged touch)

0—*acid splash*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *touch of fatigue* (2) (+4 melee touch; DC 15)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 13

SQ necromantic prowess, *create undead* 2/day, zone of desecration

Feats Extra Turning, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Greater Spell Penetration, Scribe Scroll[®], Spell Focus (necromancy), Spell Penetration

Skills Concentration +15, Heal +15, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Search +12, Spellcraft +19, Survival +1 (+3 following tracks)

Possessions combat gear plus vampire hide armor (see page 210), *amulet of natural armor* +1, *ring of protection* +2, *periapt of Wisdom* +2, *headband of intellect* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of parting prevented* (see page 211), *ghost hood* (see page 213), masterwork dagger, 4 keys to 4 doors of K78.

Create Undead (Sp) The Necromancer can use *create undead* twice per day, as the spell of the same name. Caster level 12th.

Zone of Desecration (Su) The Necromancer is continuously surrounded by a 20-foot-radius aura of negative energy, identical to the *desecrate* spell, which inflicts a –3 penalty on all attempts to turn undead in the area, while granting undead in the area a +1 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. An undead creature created within or summoned into the area gains +1 hit point per HD.

BLOODHULK GIANTS (2)

CR 6

HP 196 each
NE Large undead
Init -2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 13, touch 7, flat-footed 13

HD 14

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +9

Weakness fragile

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee slam +17 (2d6+16)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +22

Abilities Str 33, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ blood bloated

Feats —

Skills —

Fragile (Ex) A bloodhulk takes an extra 1d6 points of damage whenever it takes at least 1 point of damage from a piercing or slashing weapon.

Blood Bloated (Ex) A bloodhulk always gains the maximum hit points possible per Hit Die. In addition, it gains 2 bonus hit points per Hit Die.

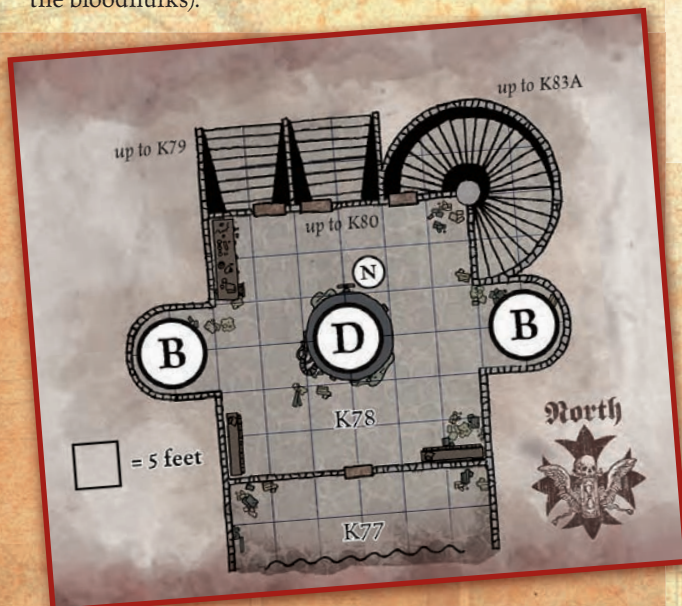
Round 2: Unholy blight at the largest concentration of PCs she can target; tries to stay out of the reach of PC bruisers.

*Round 3: Uses either **enervation** or her **death touch** ability against any PC with 10 hit points or less.*

The Necromancer fights to the death here, seeking to triumph to preserve her sanctum and the deathreap ooze she has been growing.

The bloodhulks emerge and attack the nearest PCs, using their great reach to best advantage. They fight to protect the Necromancer and to kill things that aren't the Necromancer.

The deathreap ooze attacks any PC within 15 feet of its vat with a slam, taking advantage of its 15-foot reach. It never leaves the vat. If two or more living creatures get within 10 feet of the vat, it uses its negative energy burst (which heals the bloodhulks).



DEATHREAP OOZE

CR 7

HP 150

NE Large ooze (evil)

Init +1; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +0

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 12; **Fast healing** 5

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, polymorph, stunning

Resist acid 10, electricity 10, fire 5

Fort +13, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares)

Melee slam +12 (1d8+10 plus 2d6 negative energy)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +20

Atk Options Power Attack, retrieve fallen

Special Actions entropic blood, negative burst

Abilities Str 24, Dex 13, Con 24, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 4

SQ engender undead, ooze traits

Entropic Blood (Ex) A deathreap's body is suffused with negative energy. Any creature that strikes or touches a deathreap ooze with its body, or that grapples a deathreap ooze, automatically takes 2d6 points of negative energy damage. Creatures immune to energy drain or death effects are immune to this damage.

Negative Burst (Su) Once per day a deathreap ooze can activate a negative energy burst as a standard action. Any creature within 10 feet must succeed on a DC 23 Reflex save or take 6d6 points of negative energy damage. A successful save results in half damage. Creatures immune to energy drain or death effects are immune to this damage. Undead are healed 6d6 points.

Retrieve Fallen (Ex) Any time a humanoid living creature is dropped to negative hit points or is killed within the reach of a deathreap ooze, the ooze automatically gathers it up as a free action, which provokes attacks of opportunity. Retrieved creatures are pulled into the ooze. Victims (if still alive) take 2d6 points of negative energy damage each round beginning in the round after they are retrieved. Those killed or already dead are subject to the ooze's engender undead ability.

Engender Undead (Su) If a deathreap ooze flows over a corpse (or a corpse is dropped or pulled into the vat), the ooze's negative-energy-infused tissue produces an undead creature 1 minute later. The ooze randomly produces an undead according to the table. The Necromancer can direct the process, however.

d12	Undead	d12	Undead
1-4	ghast	10	shadow
5-7	mummy	11	wraith
8-9	mohrg	12	spectre

The Necromancer's Bargain

The PCs and the Necromancer might negotiate. In such a case, the Necromancer might offer them a dark bargain, as described on page 116.

PRINCE AUREL

Encounter Level 8

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 119.

This encounter is triggered if the player characters open or otherwise gain entry to Crypt 4. The crypt is haunted by the ghost of Prince Aurel Plesu (marked as **A** on the map), his faithful dog, now a ghost brute (**B**), and Aurel's physical remains which have gained the aerial mobility in undeath the prince sought in life as a horrid skin kite (**K**).

FIRST VIEW

When the crypt is accessed, PCs attempt DC 20 Spot checks. Those that succeed notice that the remains draped across the bier is moving and can take part in the surprise round when the mass of rags and skin (the skin kite) moves toward the nearest PC. Prior to their initiative actions, the prince and ghost brute do not materialize.

SKIN KITE

CR 3

HP 14
NE Small undead
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5
AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 11
HD 4
Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain
Resist turn resistance +2
Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5
Speed fly 40 ft. (8 squares) (average)
Melee touch +8 (1d4 plus meld)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** -4 (+8 when melded)
Atk Options meld
Special Actions steal skin
Abilities Str 10, Dex 19, Con —, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 6
Feats Alertness, Weapon Finesse
Skills Hide +7, Listen +5, Spot +5
Meld (Ex) If a skin kite hits with a touch attack, it melds onto the opponent's body. An attached skin kite is effectively grappling its prey. The skin kite loses its Dexterity bonus to AC, but while melded it is hard to remove.

A melded skin kite can be struck with a weapon or grappled. To remove a melded skin kite through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the skin kite; doing so peels off the creature but also deals 1d6 points of damage to the attached victim.

Steal Skin (Ex) A skin kite steals its foe's skin while melded, dealing 1d4 points of Charisma damage each round. For each point of Charisma stolen, the skin kite gains 1 hit point. This heals lost points or increases the skin kite's maximum hit points (if it is undamaged). These extra hit points last for up to 1 hour.

GHOST BRUTE HOUND

CR 3

HP 13
N Medium undead (incorporeal, augmented animal)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +13, Spot +13
AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 or
AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (against ethereal foes)
HD 2
Immune see Prince Aurel entry
Resist turn resistance +2
Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1
Speed fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (perfect)
Melee incorporeal touch (bite) +3 (1d6 negative energy) or
Melee bite +3 (1d6+3 plus 1d6 negative energy) (against ethereal foes)
Base Atk +1; **Grp** +3 against ethereal foes
Atk Options slavering doom
Abilities Str 15, Dex 15, Con —, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 15
SQ manifestation, rejuvenation
Feats Alertness, Track
Skills Hide +8, Jump +4, Listen +13, Search +8, Spot +13, Swim +3, Survival +1 (+9 tracking by scent)
Slavering Doom (Su) A ghost hound's jaws drip with glowing ectoplasmic drool. The ectoplasm dissipates on contact with nonliving material, but on contact with living flesh, it deals 1d6 points of negative energy damage. This is the damage dealt when a ghost brute makes an incorporeal touch attack, or that is added to its bite damage against ethereal foes.
Manifestation (Su) See Prince Aurel entry.
Rejuvenation (Su) See Prince Aurel entry. If Aurel's ghost is permanently destroyed, the hound also finally dissipates.

When the surprise round begins, read:

The flaccid mass of skin and rags resting atop the bier begins to shake. Suddenly, the mass rises in a flapping motion and wings toward you. The sound of maniacal laughter rings through the catacombs, its source uncertain.

MONSTERS AND TACTICS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Prince Aurel Plesu, Ghost: Aurel appears as a human nobleman, outfitted with heavy armor and a shining shield. His form hazy and translucent, Aurel is happy to take his aggression out on living creatures using the following plan.

Round 1: All living creatures that see Aurel are automatically subject to the ghost's horrific appearance ability.

Round 2: Aurel gives off a frightful moan, potentially affecting all PCs within 30 feet.

Round 3+: Aurel moves in to use his draining touch to drain a PC's Constitution score to 0.

PRINCE AUREL PLESU, GHOST

CR 7

HP 32

Male human fighter 5

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, incorporeal)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages Common

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20 or

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (against ethereal foes)

HD 5

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist turn resistance +4

Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2

Speed fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +6 (1d4 Con drain) or

Melee mwk bastard sword +10 (1d10+3/19–20) (against ethereal foes)

Base Atk +5; Grp +8 (against ethereal foes)

Atk Options draining touch; Cleave, Power Attack

Special Actions frightful moan, horrific appearance

Abilities Str 16, Dex 13, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12

SQ manifestation, rejuvenation

Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

Skills Climb +1, Hide –1, Listen +11, Ride +9, Search +8, Spot +11

Possessions masterwork bastard sword, full plate, heavy shield

Draining Touch (Su) When Aurel hits a living target with his incorporeal touch attack, he drains 1d4 points of Constitution. On each such successful attack, the ghost heals 5 points of damage. Against ethereal opponents, he adds his Strength modifier to attack rolls only. Against nonethereal opponents, he adds his Dexterity modifier to attack rolls only.

Frightful Moan (Su) Aurel can emit a frightful moan as a standard action. All living creatures within a 30-foot

spread must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic necromantic mind-affecting fear effect. A creature that successfully saves against the moan cannot be affected by the same ghost's moan for 24 hours.

Horrific Appearance (Su) Any living creature within 60 feet that views Aurel must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or immediately take 1d4 points of Strength drain, 1d4 points of Dexterity drain, and 1d4 points of Constitution drain. On each such successful attack, the ghost heals 5 points of damage to itself. A creature that successfully saves against this effect cannot be affected by the same ghost's horrific appearance for 24 hours.

Manifestation (Su) Every ghost has this ability. A ghost dwells on the Ethereal Plane and, as an ethereal creature, it cannot affect or be affected by anything in the material world. When a ghost manifests, it partly enters the Material Plane and becomes visible but incorporeal on the Material Plane. A manifested ghost can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, or spells, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. A manifested ghost can pass through solid objects at will, and its own attacks pass through armor. A manifested ghost always moves silently.

A manifested ghost can strike with its touch attack or with a ghost touch weapon. A manifested ghost remains partially on the Ethereal Plane, where is it not incorporeal. A manifested ghost can be attacked by opponents on either the Material Plane or the Ethereal Plane. The ghost's incorporeal nature helps protect it from foes on the Material Plane, but not from foes on the Ethereal Plane.

A ghost has two home planes, the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane. It is not considered extraplanar when on either of these planes.

Rejuvenation (Su) The “destroyed” spirit restores itself in 2d4 days. Even the most powerful spells are usually only temporary solutions. A ghost that would otherwise be destroyed returns to its old haunts with a successful DC 16 level check (1d20 + 5).

Ghost Brute Hound: This hound growls and slavers, its jaws dripping with glowing ectoplasm. Its body is hazy and translucent. This faithful hound served Aurel in life and now hunts with its master through the catacombs beneath Ravenloft. The ghost hound attacks any creature that attacks Aurel.

Skin Kite: This creature is a knot of flapping skin that glides through the air. The skin kite seeks to increase its maximum hit point total for a limited time by feasting on the skin of the PCs. It moves from PC to PC, absorbing skin into itself, until it is destroyed.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Crypts: A heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) seals each crypt. Most crypts have epitaphs inscribed on their doors.

Tomb of Sergei Von Zarovich (K85): The portcullis that blocks the stairs down to this tomb is made of untarnished iron. Lifting the gate or bending the bars requires a DC 28 Strength check. The bars restrict the movement of any Small or larger creature. No locks are apparent on the portcullis, but a DC 30 Disable Device check also opens the gate.



SAINT MARKOVIA

Encounter Level 8

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 119.

This encounter is triggered if the player characters open or otherwise gain entry to Crypt 5, or if they attempt to open Crypt 6.

CRYPT 5

If the PCs open this crypt, they are greeted by a boneclaw (marked as **B** on the map). At the same time, two Strahd zombies (**Z**) rise up out of the earth beside the crypt entrance. In the following round, the air elemental (**A**) appears.

CRYPT 6

If the PCs approach this crypt, they set off the dart trap (see below). This also alerts the guardians—the boneclaw emerges from Crypt 5, the zombies rise out of the dirt, and the air elemental whirls into existence.

Dart Trap

The dart trap is marked by a skull icon on the map. When a PC tries to open the door to Crypt 6, or if a PC fails to disable the trap or unlock the door, a fusillade of darts whines through the air. All creatures standing in one of the marked squares 10-feet in front of the door are subject to a hail of poisoned darts. At the same time, a loud gong rings out, alerting the crypt guardians.

Fusillade of Greenblood Oil Darts: CR 7; mechanical; action trigger (attempting to open or unlock Crypt 6, or failing to open Crypt 6 or disarm the trap); manual reset; Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dart); poison (greenblood oil, Fortitude DC 13 resists, 1 Con/1d2 Con); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area as shown); Search DC 25 to find; Disable Device DC 25 to disengage the trap.

TACTICS

The monsters set to guard this crypt have one goal: to keep anyone from gaining possession of the thighbone of the saint.

The air elemental appears in a whirlwind, targeting any creatures that aren't the boneclaw and zombies. When the air elemental appears, it has an entire round of actions available to it. It initially takes a move action to become a whirlwind, then another move action to move over the space where the PCs stand, hoping to spin them aloft.

BONECLAW

CR 5

HP 105

CE Large undead

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +15

Languages Common, Abyssal

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12

HD 10; DR 5/bludgeoning

Immune cold, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist +2 turn resistance

Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +9

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee 2 piercing claws each +9 (2d6+5)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 20 ft.

Base Atk +5; Grp +14

Atk Options reaching claws; Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

Abilities Str 21, Dex 18, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 19

SQ unholy toughness

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Power Attack

Skills Hide +13, Intimidate +17, Listen +15, Move Silently +17, Search +15, Spot +15

Reaching Claws (Ex) A boneclaw can make melee attacks with its bone claws, instantly extending them as part of an attack to a distance of up to 20 feet (thereby allowing the boneclaw to threaten more squares than its Large size would normally allow).

Unholy Toughness (Ex) A boneclaw gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier × its Hit Dice.

STRAHD ZOMBIES (2)

CR 2

HP 40 each

NE Medium undead (humanoid)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

HD 6

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, can't run)

Melee slam +6 (1d6+4)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ hard to kill, plodding

Feats Toughness

Skills —

Hard to Kill (Ex) Whenever a Strahd zombie has taken enough damage to drop it, roll a d20. On any roll of 11 or higher, the zombie ignores the damage that would have dropped it.

Plodding (Ex) Zombies can move and attack, but they cannot move more than their speed (6 squares) on their action, and they cannot charge.

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ENDOROVICH

Encounter Level 8

Use this encounter with the room entries on page 120.

This encounter begins when the PCs bend low to read the epitaph on the fallen door to Crypt 7, move to enter this crypt, or attempt to open Crypt 8.

WRAITHS (2)

CR 5

HP 32 each
LE Medium undead (incorporeal)
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +12, Spot +12
Aura unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)
Languages Common, Infernal

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12
HD 5

Immune nonmagical attacks, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist turn resistance +2

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Weakness daylight powerlessness

Speed fly 60 ft. (good) (12 squares)

Melee incorporeal touch +5 (1d4 plus Constitution drain)

Atk Options Constitution drain (Fort DC 14, 1d6 Con)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** —

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes

Abilities Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness^B, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative^B

Skills Diplomacy +6, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +12

Incorporeal Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See *DMG* 295 for more information.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals can sense the presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that, and panic or forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Daylight Powerlessness (Ex) Wraiths are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it.

Constitution Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 14 Fort save or take 1d6 points of Constitution drain. The wraith gains 5 temporary hit points if this attack succeeds.

GHOSTS (2)

CR 3

HP 29 each

CE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +8

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14

HD 4

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist +2 turn resistance

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +5 (1d8+3 plus disease plus paralysis) and 2 claws +3 each (1d4+1 plus paralysis)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5

Atk Options disease, paralysis, stench

Abilities Str 17, Dex 17, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16

SQ undead traits

Feats Multiattack, Toughness

Skills Balance +8, Climb +9, Hide +9, Jump +9, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Spot +8

Disease (Su) Ghoul fever—bite, Fort DC 15, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. An infected creature that dies from ghoul fever rises as a ghoul on the next midnight. A humanoid with 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast instead.

Paralysis (Ex) 1d4+1 rounds; Fort DC 15 negates. (Elves are not immune.)

Stench (Ex) Sickens living creatures within 10 feet for 1d6+4 minutes; Fort DC 15 negates.

CRYPT 7

Two wraiths (W) lurk in the shadows of Crypt 7. The spectre Endorovich (S) hides in a secret subcrypt, waiting to emerge to destroy any living creatures that disturb the area.

If the PCs disturb this crypt first, the wraiths emerge from the shadows and act in the surprise round. PCs who make a DC 21 Spot check notice the spectral forms and also get to act in the surprise round.

On the second round of combat, Endorovich moves through the wall to attack the PCs. Read:

The fog swirls and a blast of grave-cold air heralds the arrival of something terrible from the depths of the crypt. You hear an otherworldly voice call out, "Slaves, attend me!"

Endorovich waits 1 round so that the PCs become fully invested in the wraith attack. On the second round of combat, he emerges and moves toward any cleric he can see (first choice) or any other obvious spellcaster (second choice). With his energy drain, Endorovich can make enemy spellcasters lose their highest-level spell for each successful negative level he bestows.

The ghosts join the battle in the third round.

SPECTRE ("ENDOROVICH")**CR 7**

HP 45

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14**Aura** unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)**Languages** Common

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13

HD 7

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Resist** incorporeal, turn resistance +2**Fort** +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9**Weakness** sunlight powerlessness**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 40 ft. (perfect)**Melee** incorporeal touch +6 (1d8 plus energy drain 2 levels)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** —**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, energy drain**Abilities** Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15**SQ** create spawn**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative**Skills** Hide +13, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +14, Search +12, Spot +14, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks)**Incorporeal** Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work. See *DMG* 295 for more information.**Energy Drain (Su)** Living creatures hit by a spectre's incorporeal touch attack gain two negative levels. The DC is 15 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed, the spectre heals 5 points of damage to itself.**Create Spawn (Su)** Any humanoid slain by a spectre becomes a spectre in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the spectre that created them and remain enslaved until its death. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.**Unnatural Aura (Su)** Animals, whether wild or domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of a spectre at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.**Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex)** Spectres are powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it. A spectre caught in sunlight cannot attack and can take only a single move action or standard action in a round.**CRYPT 8**

Two ghosts (G) have turned this crypt into their lair. They attack anyone who disturbs this crypt, and they rush to help Endorovich if Crypt 7 is disturbed.

If this encounter starts here, the wraiths come to the aid of the ghosts in the second round of combat. Endorovich arrives in the third round to try to destroy the player characters.

MONSTERS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Wraith: A wraith is an incorporeal creature born of evil and darkness. It appears as a spectral figure with glowing red eyes, robed in darkness and hovering in the night air.**Ghast:** A foul humanoid with mottled, decaying flesh, sharp teeth, and burning eyes. PCs can make DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) checks to recognize this creature as a powerful form of ghoul.**Spectre:** The spectre Endorovich appears as an incorporeal man in dark clothes, with long dark hair, and a haunted expression. His form is luminous and ghostly, and he floats more than walks through any encounter. A feeling of death and dread hangs around the spectre like a cloud of flies.**TACTICAL MAP DETAILS**

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Crypts: A heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) seals each crypt. Most crypts have epitaphs inscribed on their doors.**Crypt 7 Door:** The door of this crypt is off its iron hinges and lies upon the fog-swirled catacomb floor.**Secret Door:** This secret door at the rear of Crypt 7 requires a DC 28 Search check to find. It opens onto a cold, vacant chamber where Endorovich spends eternity in mourning. The spectre does not open this door to emerge; rather, he passes through the solid stone.**Tunnel (K81):** The door between the tunnel and the catacombs is a heavy crypt door not designed to easily open. A DC 20 Strength check is required to push it open (or close it). Fog flows down this long, low tunnel. The tunnel's damp walls are rough and scored.

KING TOMESCU

Encounter Level 9

Use this encounter with the entries on page 120.

The PCs trigger this encounter when they open the door to Crypt 12 (either with the portal key, page 215, or by forcing the door).

The heavy stone door requires a DC 30 Strength check to open, a DC 40 Open Lock check to unlock, or the use of the portal key.

FIRST VIEW

When the PCs open the door to the crypt, read:

A great stone ring stands on its end against the west wall of the crypt. Disturbing glyphs and pictograms decorate the stone ring, which frames a shimmering curtain of green mist full of shifting stars, flashes of light, and blossoms of dark clouds. As one flash of light bursts through an expanding cloud of darkness, a terrible creature steps out of the ring and fills the crypt with its hulking form.

VOOR

CR 4

HP 37

NE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar, yugoloth)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 120 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages Abyssal, Infernal

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 15

HD 5; **DR** 5/good

Immune fire, gaze attacks, poison

Resist cold 5; **SR** 15

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); climb 20 ft.

Melee 4 tentacles +10 each (1d6+6)
and 2 claws +8 each (1d6+3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (tentacles up to 20 ft.)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +15

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, rend 2d6+9

Abilities Str 22, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 8, Cha 7

SQ outsider traits, scentless, yugoloth traits

Feats Combat Reflexes, Multiattack

Skills Climb +22, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +7, Spot +11

Rend (Ex) A voor that hits with both claw attacks latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an extra 2d6+9 points of damage.

Scentless (Ex) A voor exudes no natural smell, and so is usually undetectable by scent. A voor that has been in combat within the past hour stinks of the blood of its foes, and so can be detected by scent, but only at half the normal range.

IMP

CR 2

HP 15

LE Tiny outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +7, Spot +7

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17

HD 3; **Fast healing** 2; **DR** 5/good or silver

Immune poison

Resist fire 5

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee bite +8 (1d4 plus poison)

Space 2 1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +3; **Grp** -5

Atk Options poison

Special Actions Spell-like abilities

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

At will—*detect good, detect magic, invisibility* (self only)
1/day—*suggestion* (DC 15)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14

SQ alternate form

Feats Dodge, Weapon Finesse (bite)

Skills Diplomacy +8, Hide +17, Knowledge (local) +6,
Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Search +6, Spellcraft +6,
Spot +7, Survival +1 (+3 following tracks)

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial damage 1d4
Dex, secondary damage 2d4 Dex. Save DC Constitution-
based (includes +2 racial bonus).

Alternate Form (Su) Assume the form of cat or an imp as a
standard action. Statistics do not change between
forms (except bite attack becomes sting attack), nor are
hit points gained when form is switched.

MONSTERS AND TACTICS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Voor: This hulking yugoloth (marked as **V** on the map) has an eyeless, armored face, stubby legs, and powerful clawed arms. Writhing, talon-tipped tentacles whip from its fingertips and back to lash enemies at a distance. Opening the crypt door calls forth this guardian creature. It uses a move action to step out of the portal and fill the crypt. Then it attacks any PCs it can with its long reach, remaining in place for the rest of the battle.

Erinyes: This stunningly beautiful devil (**E** on the map) lives behind the secret door at the back of the crypt. She appears as a statuesque woman with flawless skin, glowing eyes, and large, feathery wings. She alternates between short trips through the castle in search of food, sleeping, and admiring herself before her mirror while imagining herself taking Khyristrix's place in Strahd's castle. After the voor appears, the erinyes attempts to dispatch the PCs using the following plan:

Round 1: The erinyes delays until the imp opens the secret door. Then she moves to peer out and use her *charm monster* ability on any PC she can see and commands that PC to run through the portal thinking of the open air above Ravenloft, about 1,000 feet up.

ERINYES

CR 8

HP 85

LE Medium outsider (baatezu, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, true seeing (constant); Listen +16, Spot +16

Languages Infernal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18

HD 9; DR 5/good

Immune fire, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10; SR 20

Fort +11, Ref +11, Will +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. (good)

Melee longsword +14/+9 (1d8+5/19–20) or

Melee rope +4 (entangle)

Ranged +1 flaming composite longbow +15/+10 (1d8+6/×3 plus 1d6 fire)

Base Atk +9; Grp +14

Atk Options entangle; Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run

Special Actions *summon baatezu*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th):

At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 lb.), *charm monster* (DC 10), *minor image* (DC 17), *unholy blight* DC 19)

Abilities Str 23, Dex 21, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10

Feats Dodge^B, Mobility^B, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run

Skills Concentration +17, Diplomacy +7, Escape Artist +17, Hide +17, Knowledge (any two) +14, Listen +16, Move Silently +17, Search +14, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16, Survival +4 (+6 following tracks), Use Rope +5 (+7 with bindings)

Possessions longsword, rope, +1 flaming composite longbow (+5 Str bonus)

Entangle (Ex) Each erinyes carries a stout rope some 50 feet long that entangles opponents of any size as an *animate rope* spell (caster level 16th). An erinyes can hurl its rope 30 feet with no range penalty. Typically, an erinyes entangles a foe, lifts it into the air, and drops it from a great height.

Summon Baatezu (Sp) Once per day an erinyes can attempt to summon 2d10 lemures, or 1d4 bearded devils with a 50% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

True Seeing (Su) Erinyes continuously use true seeing, as the spell (caster level 14th).

Round 2: She uses *greater teleport* to appear to the east of Crypt 13.

Round 3+: She peers around Crypt 13 and fires her longbow at the PCs' flank.

Imp: This tiny humanoid (I) with leathery bat-wings, a barbed tail, and sharp, twisted horns flutters at eye level, winking into and out of sight. The imp leads off by opening the secret door, and then follows that with *suggestion*, telling a fighter-type PC to jump through the portal while thinking about the Negative Energy Plane. Then it goes after the PC with the apparently lowest AC, attempting to use its poison to bring him or her down. If successful, the imp moves on to the next PC, and so on. The imps fight to the death.

Secret Door

The secret door opens onto a strangely well-appointed bedroom. A delicate hammock woven of human hair hangs in the northwest corner of the room. A mirror, its frame composed of fused human fingerbones, hangs on the south wall. The erinyes claims this chamber as her home. When she's not foraging, she spends her time sleeping, abusing the imp, or admiring her image in the mirror.

Portal to Anywhere

This 10-foot-diameter stone ring is an in-dungeon magical location that sends any creature that walks through it to any desired location—but not without risk. (See pages 120–121 for a full description of the portal's capricious ways.)

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the PCs defeat the threat here, they can move on or search the crypt for valuables. The mirror framed in fingerbones in the secret chamber off Crypt 12 contains a fingerbone that's actually an artifact. More interesting by far is the actual portal, which can be used for travel to far places, with some attendant risk. See page 215 for details on both items.



TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Crypts: A heavy stone door (Strength DC 20 to open) seals each crypt. Most crypts have an epitaph inscribed on their doors.

Crypt 12 Door: This heavy stone door requires a DC 30 Strength check to open, a DC 40 Open Lock check to unlock, or the use of the silver portal key.

SHUHUL ISHAI-BAL

Encounter Level Variable

Use this encounter with the room entry on page 122.

This encounter is triggered if PCs descend into the shaft that completely fills Crypt 14 and enter the larger vault below, or if a PC is transposed with a wight through the actions of the trap in front of K86.

FIRST VIEW: VAULT

If PCs enter this vault by way of the shaft from Crypt 14, read the following aloud when they reach the bottom:

This dank, dripping vault is awkwardly shaped, low, and smells of rotted meat. A dozen or more stone coffins cover the floor of the vault, each neatly, somehow ominously, arranged so that the top of each coffin faces north.

When a PC opens a coffin and reveals one of the undead resting here, combat rounds begin.

SHADOW

CR 3

HP 19

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Listen +7, Spot +7

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11

HD 3

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist turn resistance +2

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

Speed fly 40 ft. (8 squares) (good)

Melee incorporeal touch +3 (1d6 Strength)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** —

Atk Options Dodge, Strength drain

Abilities Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13

SQ create spawn, skills

Feats Alertness, Dodge

Skills Hide +8*, Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7

Strength Damage (Su) The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 rounds.

Skills Shadows have a +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks and a +4 racial bonus on Search checks.

*A shadow gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In brightly lit areas, it takes a –4 penalty on Hide checks.

WRAITH

CR 5

HP 32

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Listen +12, Spot +12

Aura unnatural aura (30 ft., animals panic)

Languages Common, Infernal

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12

HD 5

Immune nonmagical attacks, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion

Resist turn resistance +2

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Weakness daylight powerlessness

Speed fly 60 ft. (good) (12 squares)

Melee incorporeal touch +5 (1d4 plus Constitution drain)

Atk Options Constitution drain (Fort DC 14, 1d6 Con)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** —

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes

Abilities Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness^B, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative^B

Skills Diplomacy +6, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +12

Incorporeal Immune to nonmagical attacks; 50% chance to ignore any damage from corporeal source (except positive energy, force, ghost touch). Attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shield, but deflection bonus and force effects work.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals can sense the presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that, and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Daylight Powerlessness (Ex) Wraiths are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it.

Constitution Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 14 Fort save or take 1d6 points of Constitution drain. The wraith gains 5 temporary hit points if this attack succeeds.

FIRST VIEW: A COLD, DARK PLACE

If a PC teleports into a coffin by way of the trap in K86, read the following aloud to that player:

A flash of light explodes around you, and then you are plunged into absolute darkness. You find yourself lying in a confined space wearing tattered rags that smell like rotting meat.

The PC's sudden appearance initiates combat.

WIGHTS (13)

CR 3

HP 26 each

NE Medium undead (humanoid)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Blind-Fight; Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

HD 4

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee slam +3 (1d4+1 plus energy drain)

Base Atk +2; Grp +3

Atk Options energy drain

Abilities Str 12, Dex 12, Con —, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 15

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight

Skills Hide +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +16, Spot +7

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid slain by a wight becomes a wight in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the wight that created them and remain enslaved until its death. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a wight's slam attack gain one negative level. The DC is 14 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed, the wight heals 5 points of damage to itself.

Skills Wights have a +8 racial bonus on Move Silently checks.

escape. The wraith continues to attack and chase the PCs until it is destroyed.

TACTICS: A COLD, DARK PLACE

If a PC is transported into a coffin due to the trap in K86, randomly place that PC in any coffin with a wight. The wight appears in the PC's place in K86 and immediately attacks the rest of the party.

The sudden arrival of life in the chamber causes the undead to arise and swarm. The wights become active as described above (1d4+1 per round until all thirteen are active), moving toward the PC's coffin to attack and feast on the unfortunate victim.

The shadow and the wraith behave as described above, targeting the newly arrived PC.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Coffins: These stone coffins have heavy lids. A living creature that finds itself suddenly inside a closed coffin must succeed on a DC 20 Strength check to slide the lid open. The undead can automatically open the lids from the inside.

From the outside, all creatures (PCs and undead) need to make a DC 10 Strength check to slide the lid off a coffin. Undead are happy to assist a PC inside a coffin so that they can more readily attack.

A PC within a coffin who screams loudly gives companions (presumably standing somewhere near K86) a chance to hear: DC 35 Listen check to hear the faint screams coming from somewhere to the north.

The two squares each coffin occupies counts as difficult terrain, which costs 2 squares of movement to enter. PCs can't run or charge across difficult terrain.

Shaft: This 10-foot square shaft rises 40 feet. The top of the shaft is a hole in the floor of Crypt 14.

MONSTERS AND TACTICS: VAULT

The monsters in this chamber start out in the stone coffins spread out across the room. There are one shadow (S), one wraith (Wr), and thirteen wights (W) in this area.

If the PCs enter the vault by descending from the shaft, combat begins when a PC opens a coffin. The undead in the coffin rises and attacks.

In the following round, 1d4+1 wights become active, rising from their coffins to join in the battle against the PCs. Repeat this every round until all thirteen wights have emerged. The wights chase and attack any PCs who remain in the vault. They will not leave the chamber.

The shadow emerges from its coffin as soon as it gets to act. It moves toward the nearest PC and tries to sap that PC's Strength until the target drops or the shadow is destroyed. If the shadow succeeds, it moves on to the nearest PC to repeat the process.

The wraith emerges on its action in a spectral rage, ready to extinguish the life from the intruding PCs. It hunts down each PC in turn, even following them out of the chamber if the PCs try to



SASHA IVLISKOVA

Encounter Level 9

Use this encounter with the room entries on pages 123.

This encounter begins when PCs prepare to open the door to this crypt, or if they open Crypt 16. Whichever event triggers the encounter, the vampire residing here summons a celestial dire lion to defend her. Read:

A massive gold lion appears behind you. Its roar sounds strained and deeply sad, but it charges toward you nonetheless.

MONSTERS AND TACTICS

The following creatures are active in this area:

Sasha Ivlskova, Vampire: Crypt 20 is the home of a vampire (V) named Sasha. Flawless, porcelain-white skin and rose-red hair wasn't enough for this beautiful woman to stir Strahd's lusts for more than a decade. Now this vampire, still in thrall to Strahd, but furious, is imprisoned here until intruders give her a chance to escape. She'd prefer

to fight to the death than win, but she is commanded to kill all intruders, so fight she must.

Before combat, upon hearing the approach of the PCs, Sasha casts *blur* and *mage armor* upon herself. Then she slips out the secret door to use a scroll to summon a celestial dire lion as soon as the PCs attempt to enter either Crypt 16 or 20.

The next round, Sasha attempts to dominate a male PC with a high Charisma to fight on her side.

In subsequent rounds, she attempts to flank one or more PCs with either her vampire spawn or the dire lion to better make use of her claw attacks. She fights to the death. If the PCs return to her bier (where she re-forms) and stake her, she thanks them as she turns to dust.

Vampire Spawn: Two vampire spawn (S) reside in Crypt 16. They emerge to fight on the first round of combat, one opening the door, the other moving and attacking. The vampire spawn work to attack flat-footed characters first, and they seek to set up flanks whenever possible. They serve Sasha and fight to the death to protect her.

SASHA IVLISKOVA, VAMPIRE

CR 7

HP 78

Female undead human sorcerer 5

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Blind-Fight; Listen +5, Spot +7

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16

HD 5; **Fast healing** 5; **DR** 10/silver and magic

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain

Resist turn resistance +4, cold 10, electricity 10

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

Weakness vampire weaknesses

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee claw +6 (1d6+3 plus energy drain)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5

Special Actions domination, gaseous form, spider climb

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 5th):

2nd (6/day)—*blur*, *flaming sphere* (DC 15)

1st (7/day)—*cause fear* (DC 14), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *sleep* (DC 14)

0 (5/day; DC 13)—*daze* (DC 13), *ghost sound* (DC 13), *mage hand*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

Abilities Str +16, Dex +14, Con —, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 16

SQ children of the night, create spawn

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Bluff +14, Concentration +7, Hide +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Search +4, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7, Spellcraft +4

Blood Drain (Ex) If a vampire pins its foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round. On each such successful drain attack, the vampire heals 5 points of damage to itself.

Domination (Su) If a vampire expends a standard action, a single target must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or fall instantly under the vampire's influence as if by a *dominate person* spell from a 5th-level caster. The ability has a range of 30 feet.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a vampire's slam attack gain one negative level. For each such negative level bestowed, the vampire heals 5 points of damage to itself.

Fast Healing (Ex) A vampire heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes gaseous form.

Gaseous Form (Su) As a standard action, a vampire can assume gaseous form at will, as the spell (caster level 6th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet.

Spider Climb (Ex) A vampire can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, a vampire can call forth a pack of 4d8 dire rats, a swarm of 10d10 bats, or a pack of 3d6 wolves as a standard action. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the vampire for up to one hour.

Create Spawn (Su) A humanoid or monstrous humanoid slain by a vampire's energy drain rises as a vampire spawn 1d4 days after burial.

VAMPIRE SPAWN (2)

CR 4

HP 34 each
NE Medium undead
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +11, Spot +11
AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13
HD 4; **Fast healing** 2; **DR** 5/silver
Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain
Resist turn resistance +2, cold 10, electricity 10
Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5
Weaknesses see Vampire Characteristics, page 8
Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee slam +5 (1d6+4 plus energy drain)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5
Atk Options blood drain, energy drain
Special Actions domination, gaseous form, spider climb, undead traits
Abilities Str +16, Dex +14, Con —, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14
Feats Alertness^B, Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Toughness (2)
Skills Bluff +6, Climb +8, Craft or Profession (any one) +4, Diplomacy +4, Hide +10, Jump +8, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11
Blood Drain (Ex) If a vampire spawn pins a foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round. On each such successful drain attack, the vampire spawn heals 5 points of damage to itself.
Domination (Su) If the spawn uses a standard action, a single target must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or fall instantly under the vampire's influence as if by a *dominate person* spell from a 5th-level caster. The ability has a range of 30 feet. The save DC is Charisma-based.
Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by a vampire spawn's slam attack gain one negative level. The DC is 14 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed, the vampire spawn heals 5 points of damage to itself.
Fast Healing (Ex) A vampire spawn heals 2 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes gaseous form and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in 2 hours.) Once at rest in its coffin, it is helpless. It regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of 2 hit points per round.
Gaseous Form (Su) As a standard action, a vampire spawn can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (caster level 6th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.
Spider Climb (Ex) A vampire spawn can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Celestial Dire Lion: Sasha summons this creature (L) to help her destroy the intruders. Despite its good nature, the creature must obey the one who summoned it. It fights the PCs, though its heart breaks with every wound it inflicts upon them. It pounces on the nearest PC and tries its best to disembowel that character. It leaves the castle as soon as Sasha falls.

CELESTIAL DIRE LION

CR 7

HP 60
NG Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +7, Spot +7
AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13
HD 8; **DR** 5/magic
Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10
Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7
Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee 2 claws each +13 (1d6+7) and bite +7 (1d8+3)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +17
Atk Options improved grab, pounce, rake 1d6+3, smite evil
Abilities Str 25, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Feats Alertness, Run, Weapon Focus (claw)
Skills Hide +2*, Listen +7, Move Silently +5*, Spot +7
Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a dire lion must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.
Pounce (Ex) If a dire lion charges, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.
Rake (Ex) Attack bonus +12 melee, damage 1d6+3.
Skills Dire lions have a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. *In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the Hide bonus improves to +8.
Smite Evil (Su) Once per day a celestial dire lion can make a normal melee attack to deal an extra 8 points of damage against an evil foe.

TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Secret Door: The secret door in Crypt 20 requires a DC 28 Search check to find. Sasha uses the secret door to quietly exit her crypt if she believes tomb robbers are closing in on her.

Landing (K87): A landing 10-feet down a grand stair is bisected by a curtain of blue light. The light is suspended between two 30-foot-tall bronze statues holding spears. More steps are dimly visible beyond the curtain.

All creatures that pass the curtain and are not lawful good are teleported back to the top of the stairs west of the curtain.

Lawful good creatures can descend into the safety of area K88.



TOMB OF SERGEI VON ZAROVICH

Encounter Level 15

Use this tactical encounter with the room entry on page 125.

Use this encounter if the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate an encounter with Strahd occurs in Sergei's tomb. If this tomb is used as tactical encounter, Strahd (S) is here. One of the statues is a "Guardian of the Tomb," a stone giant (G) in stasis, ready to awaken at Strahd's command.

When the PCs reach the entryway, provide the read-aloud from page 125 and then read:

An imposing figure draped in a black cape lined with red velvet sprawls across the white marble slab. He appears to be weeping.

Strahd ignores the PCs, continuing to mourn for another hour before using *dimension door* to travel to area K15. No

question, insult, or entreaty causes Strahd to acknowledge the PCs in any way.

The encounter is triggered if the PCs get past the iron bars or attack them in any way. When this occurs, read:

The figure raises his head, suddenly staring at you with intense hatred as he opens his mouth to speak.

TACTICS

Strahd becomes enraged if he is attacked here. He takes risks he would normally retreat from, at least until things become so desperate he's forced to flee.

If any player characters are secretly dominated by Strahd or one of Strahd's minions, Strahd uses a free action to tell that character, "Serve your Master now! Kill these who oppose me!" Otherwise Strahd uses his free action to proclaim, "Guardian of the Tomb, protect my brother Sergei's

COUNT STRAHD VON ZAROVICH

CR 15

(See page 6 for Strahd's full statistics)

HP 65

Male vampire (human) necromancer 10

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Infernal

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 24; **Dodge**

HD 10; **Fast healing** 5; **DR** 10/silver and magic

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to ability scores, fatigue, exhaustion

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, positive energy 10, sonic 10; turn resistance +4; *ring of counterspells* (dispel magic), nondetection

Fort +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Weakness sunlight, running water, wooden stake

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee slam +9 (1d6+4 plus energy drain 2 levels)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Special Actions alternate form, blood drain (1d4 Con per round), children of the night, dominate (30 ft., Will DC 18), gaseous form

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th; prohibited schools abjuration and illusion):

5th—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *fell draining lightning bolt* (DC 18; creatures that take damage also gain one negative level), *mind fog* (DC 20), *waves of fatigue*

4th—*dimension door*, *enervation* (+8 ranged touch), *fear* (DC 19), *enervated scorching ray* (+8 ranged touch, +50% damage to living creatures, half damage to unliving), *scrying* (DC 19)

3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 18), *fireball* (DC 18), *haste*, *fell draining magic missile* (creatures that take damage

also gain one negative level), *ray of exhaustion* (+8 ranged touch, DC 18)

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *false life*, *fog cloud*, *scorching ray* (+8 ranged touch), *see invisibility*, *spectral hand*

1st—*chill touch* (+9 melee touch, DC 16), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor* (2), *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+8 ranged touch), *true strike*

0—*detect magic* (2), *ghost sound* (DC 15), *message*, *touch of fatigue* (+9 melee touch, DC 15)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16

SQ create spawn

Fast Healing (Ex) If reduced to 0 hp, Strahd assumes gaseous form and heads toward his crypt (K86). Additional damage while in this form has no effect.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by Strahd's slam attack gain two negative levels, losing 10 hit points and taking a –2 penalty on skill checks, ability checks, saving throws, and effective level. At the same time, Strahd gains 10 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on skill checks, ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for 1 hour.

Blood Drain (Ex) Strahd can suck blood from a living victim with his fangs by making a successful grapple check. If he pins the foe, he drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, Strahd gains 5 temporary hit points.

Dominate (Su) Strahd can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack with a range of 30 feet, except that Strahd must use a standard action and choose a single target—those merely looking at him are unaffected. Strahd's target must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or fall instantly under Strahd's influence as if by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th).

STONE GIANT

CR 8

HP 119

N Large giant (earth)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +12

Languages Common, Giant

AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 23

HD 14

Fort +13, Ref +6, Will +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee greatclub +17/+12 (2d8+12)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +10; Grp +22

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

Special Actions rock throwing

Abilities Str 27, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 11

SQ rock catching

Feats Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot

Skills Climb +11, Hide +6*, Jump +11, Spot +12

Rock Throwing (Ex) The range increment is 180 feet for a stone giant's thrown rocks. It uses both hands when throwing a rock. There are no rocks to throw here in the tomb, and it won't pick up the slab on which Sergei's coffin rests to throw it.

Rock Catching (Ex) A stone giant gains a +4 racial bonus on its Reflex save when attempting to catch a thrown rock.

place of final rest!" The giant awakens from stasis on the following round.

Strahd then uses a standard action to attempt to dominate one new PC. If the PCs are protected against evil, he casts *cloudkill*. Then he moves out of sight to the east or west side of the tomb.

In the second round, the giant leaves stasis and acts immediately. If Strahd didn't summon it forth last round, he uses his free action this round to command it into action. Then he moves into position to cast *lighting bolt*.

In the third and subsequent rounds, if Strahd has taken damage that equals half or more of his hit points, he uses *dimension door* to reach area K15. Otherwise he stays here and fights until such time as he has taken that much damage.

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the PCs defeat Strahd by chasing him away, they are free to investigate the contents of the coffin. If they defeat Strahd by ultimately destroying him, refer to the conclusion of this adventure (though PCs might still be interested in exploring other portions of the castle).

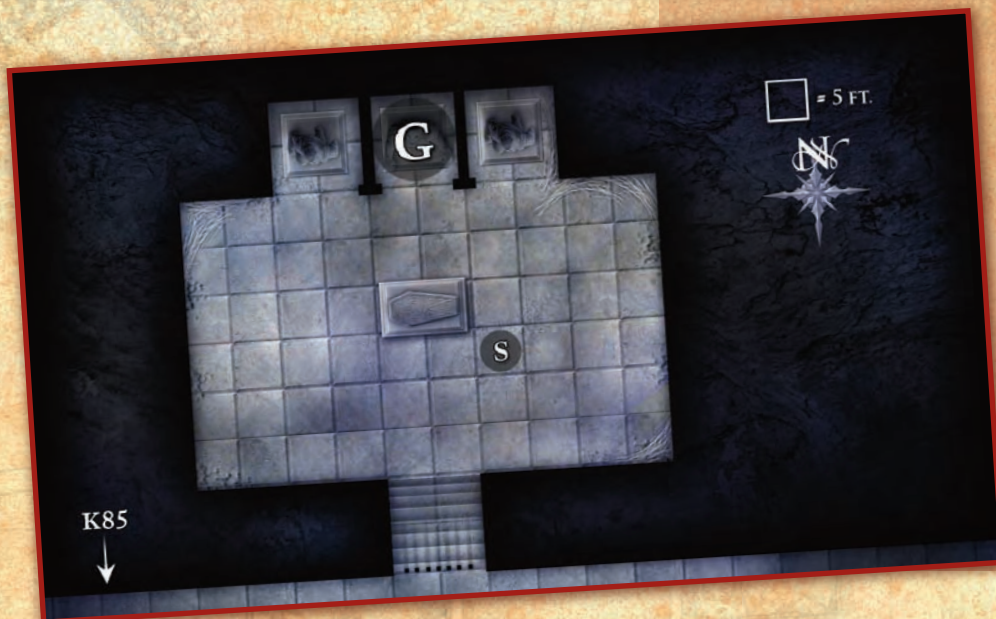
TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Statues: The statues appear to be regal marble figures of kings of old, each standing about 10-feet tall. If the PCs make a concerted effort to examine the statues more closely, a DC 15 Intelligence check allows a PC to notice that the statue in the center alcove is different from the others. It appears cruder, less regal, and its royal accoutrements seem to fit poorly. It holds its rod of rulership more like a club than an instrument of authority, for example. That's because this statue is really a stone giant, held in stasis and awaiting Strahd's command to step out of the alcove and attack. It moves first to PCs closest to the marble slab, and it attacks until it is killed. If it is not killed and the encounter ends, it returns to its alcove and reenters stasis. After 24 hours, it is again ready for Strahd's command, at full health and ready to attack.

Coffin on Marble Slab: The marble slab holds a long coffin of polished and waxed wood, inlaid with silver, and finished with brass settings. The slab and coffin count as difficult terrain, costing 2 squares of movement to enter. The coffin bears a brass plate that reads "Sergei Von Zarovich." The coffin is not locked. It holds a mummified body that wears a shining set of +2 *spell resistance* (13) *full plate* and potentially another item (depending on the results of the *Fortunes of Ravenloft*).

The Catacombs (K84): The arched ceiling of this space sags over squat crypts, forming a vast catacomb. Thick fog clings to the floor at knee level. Cobwebs hang limp in the musty air. Something terrible haunts the narrow ways between the crypts.



TOMB OF STRAHD

Encounter Level 15

Use this tactical encounter with the room entry on page 126.

Use this encounter if the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate an encounter with Strahd occurs in Strahd's tomb, or if Strahd's corporeal form has been destroyed and his body is reforming in his coffin.

If this location is used as a tactical encounter, Strahd (S) is here. A special guardian keyed to protect Strahd stands in the central alcove on the south wall—a curse-scribed golem (C). If Strahd is not here, the curse-scribed golem doesn't move unless attacked.

THE ENCOUNTER

To reach Strahd's tomb, the PCs must first get past the trap at the top of the stairs. If a PC steps into any of the

squares marked with a skull icon, that PC immediately switches places with a wight from area Crypt 14 (pages 188–189).

Transposition Trap: CR 10; magical (Strong conjuration; CL 15th); location trigger; automatic reset; DC 20 Will save avoids; transposes (by teleportation) living flesh with undead flesh in Crypt 14 (see full explanation on page 122); multiple targets (anyone who enters the trapped areas); Search DC 25 to find; this trap can't be disabled.

If the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate that the PCs encounter Strahd in this location, the vampire is resting in his coffin. He waits until the PCs open his coffin to surprise them and attack.

If the PCs reach this location while Strahd is helpless and regenerating, the vampire can only offer to make a deal for his continued existence. He promises anything, offers everything, to convince the PCs to leave him alone.

COUNT STRAHD VON ZAROVICH

CR 15

(See page 6 for Strahd's full statistics)

HP 65

Male vampire (human) necromancer 10

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Infernal

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 24; **Dodge**

HD 10; **Fast healing** 5; **DR** 10/silver and magic

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to ability scores, fatigue, exhaustion

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, positive energy 10, sonic 10; turn resistance +4; *ring of counterspells* (dispel magic), nondetection

Fort +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Weakness sunlight, running water, wooden stake

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee slam +9 (1d6+4 plus energy drain 2 levels)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Special Actions alternate form, blood drain (1d4 Con per round), children of the night, dominate (30 ft., Will DC 18), gaseous form

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th; prohibited schools abjuration and illusion):

5th—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *fell draining lightning bolt* (DC 18; creatures that take damage also gain one negative level), *mind fog* (DC 20), *waves of fatigue*

4th—*dimension door*, *enervation* (+8 ranged touch), *fear* (DC 19), *enervated scorching ray* (+8 ranged touch, +50% damage to living creatures, half damage to unliving), *screy* (DC 19)

3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 18), *fireball* (DC 18), *haste*, *fell draining magic missile* (creatures that take damage also gain one negative level), *ray of exhaustion* (+8 ranged touch, DC 18)

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *false life*, *fog cloud*, *scorching ray* (+8 ranged touch), *see invisibility*, *spectral hand*

1st—*chill touch* (+9 melee touch, DC 16), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor* (2), *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+8 ranged touch), *true strike*

0—*detect magic* (2), *ghost sound* (DC 15), *message*, *touch of fatigue* (+9 melee touch, DC 15)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16
SQ create spawn

Fast Healing (Ex) If reduced to 0 hp, Strahd assumes gaseous form and heads toward his crypt (K86). Additional damage while in this form has no effect.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by Strahd's slam attack gain two negative levels, losing 10 hit points and taking a –2 penalty on skill checks, ability checks, saving throws, and effective level. At the same time, Strahd gains 10 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on skill checks, ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for 1 hour.

Blood Drain (Ex) Strahd can suck blood from a living victim with his fangs by making a successful grapple check. If he pins the foe, he drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, Strahd gains 5 temporary hit points.

Dominate (Su) Strahd can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack with a range of 30 feet, except that Strahd must use a standard action and choose a single target—those merely looking at him are unaffected. Strahd's target must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or fall instantly under Strahd's influence as if by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th).

CURSE-SCRIBED GOLEM

CR 11

HP 107

N Large construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26

HD 14; DR 10/adamantine

Immune magic, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain**Fort** +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4**Weakness** *transmute rock to mud*, *stone to flesh***Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Melee** 2 slams +18 (2d10+9)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +23**Atk Options** accursed strike**Abilities** Str 29, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1**SQ** immunity to magic**Feats** —**Skills** —

Accursed Strike (Su) A curse-scribed golem can use a bestow curse effect as part of an attack action once every 2 rounds. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Will save to negate. Those affected have a 50% chance to act normally each turn; otherwise, they take no action. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A curse-scribed golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allow spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A *transmute rock to mud* spell slows the golem (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds.

A *stone to flesh* spell does not actually change the golem's structure but negates its damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 full round.

FIRST VIEW

If PCs open the black coffin and see Strahd, read:

An imposing man lies within the black coffin, dressed in noble finery, with a black cape lined in red velvet. His eyes immediately pop open, and a hellish sneer twists his expression.

TACTICS

If he can, Strahd attacks the PCs with everything he has. He shows no mercy. On the other hand, if the PCs approach while Strahd is helpless, the vampire pleads for his existence, offering wealth, secrets, his service for a year—anything. He can renege later.

The golem emerges to defend Strahd as soon as the PCs open the coffin. Otherwise, it remains inactive until the PCs attack it.

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the PCs defeat Strahd by chasing him away, they are free to investigate the contents of the coffin. (The curse-scribed golem must also be defeated.) If they defeat Strahd by ultimately destroying him, refer to the conclusion of this adventure (though PCs might still be interested in exploring other portions of the castle).

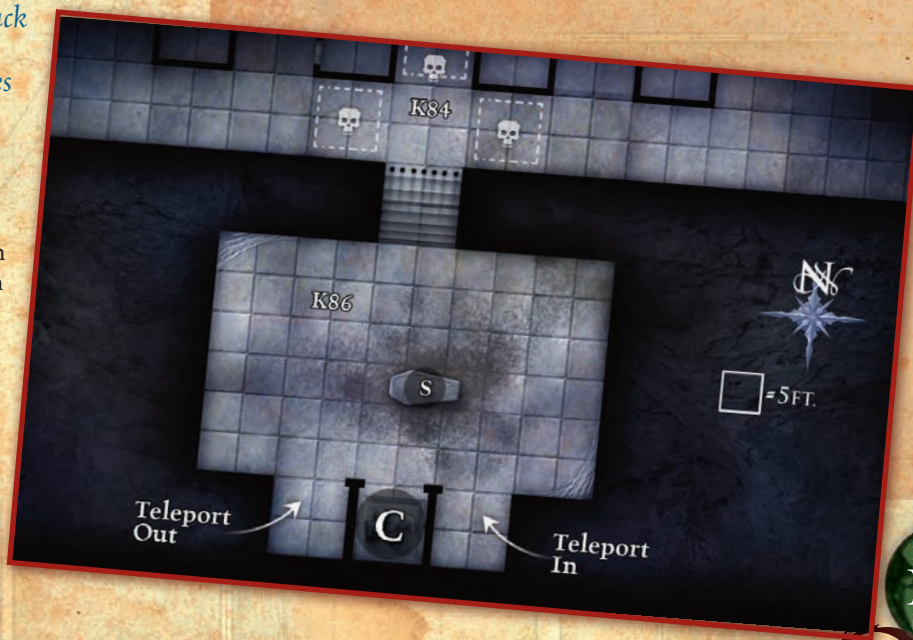
TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

The Catacombs (K84): The arched ceiling of this space sags over squat crypts, forming a vast catacomb. Thick fog clings to the floor at knee level. Cobwebs hang limp in the musty air. Something terrible haunts the narrow ways between the crypts. The spaces at the top of the stairs to this area, marked with a skull icon, show the location of the transposition trap that replaces a PC with a wight from location Crypt 14. The wight immediately attacks the rest of the party, while the PC is teleported to a coffin in the vault beneath Crypt 14 (see page 122).

Loose Soil: A swath of loose soil around the black coffin in area K86 is treated as difficult terrain. Each square containing loose soil cost 2 squares of movement to enter. The stone floor has been dug up here, and rich, dark soil has been poured thickly over the bedrock.

Alcove Portals: Anyone who enters the western alcove in K86 immediately appears in Crypt 32 in the catacombs. Alternatively, anything that enters Crypt 32 that hasn't entered by teleportation appears in the eastern portal of this room.



TOMB OF BAROV AND RAVENOVIA

Encounter Level 15

Use this tactical encounter with the room entry on page 127.

Use this encounter if the Fortunes of Ravenloft indicate an encounter with Strahd occurs in this tomb.

If this tomb is used as tactical encounter, Strahd (S) is here in the form of a dire wolf. He is accompanied by a contingent composed of two vampire spawn (V) and a wraith (W). (Statistics for the wraith can be found on page 188.) The spawn have followed Strahd into the tomb in gaseous form, and remain discreetly incorporeal while Strahd rages. Likewise, the wraith is submerged in the floor.

Read:

The 20-foot wide, 10-foot deep grand stair opens on a tomb. A great slaving wolflike beast, as large as a horse, howling and clawing at the floor, rages here as if in the depths of despair. Great stained-glass windows filter dim light across the monstrous beast, as well as across two ornate stone coffins on each side of the tomb.

TACTICS

Strahd in his dire wolf form attacks the PCs according to the following plan.

Round 1: Strahd immediately charges the closest PC and bites.

Round 2: Strahd decides to separate the fools from the chaff—he runs at his full movement from the tomb as if afraid, taking advantage of the blue curtain transporting him an extra 10 feet up the last set of stairs into the catacombs. He moves to the northwestern portion of the catacombs and waits, hoping to draw at least one PC after him and separating him from the others.

Round 3: Strahd returns to his normal form (see the statistics on page 194) and waits for a lone PC. If presented with a lone PC, he attempts to dominate that PC if the PC is not protected against evil; otherwise he casts a *cloudkill* spell.

COUNT STRAHD (DIRE WOLF FORM)

CR 15

(See page 6 for Strahd's full statistics)

HP 65

Male vampire (human) necromancer 10

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 18; **Dodge**

HD 10; **Fast healing** 5; **DR** 10/silver and magic

Immune mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to ability scores, fatigue, exhaustion

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, positive energy 10, sonic 10; turn resistance +4; nondetection

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10

Weakness sunlight, running water, wooden stake

Speed 50 ft. (8 squares), spider climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d8+10 plus trip, energy drain 2 levels)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Special Actions alternate form, children of the night, gaseous form

Abilities Str 25, Dex 15, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16

SQ create spawn

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting (or Touch of Taint), Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Enervate Spell^{†B}, Fell Drain^{†B}, Improved Energy Drain[†], Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Positive Energy Resistance[†], Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Drain[†].

Skills Bluff +17, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +3 (+13 to disguise as dire wolf), Hide +8, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +13, Move Silently +16, Search +13, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +20, Spot +13

Alternate Form In his dire wolf form, Strahd cannot cast spells, and he loses access to his dominate and blood drain abilities.

Round 4: Strahd uses *dimension door* to teleport to K15 and out of the conflict.

The vampire spawn become corporeal and attack the PCs. Their first priority is to protect Strahd. Thus, they intercede in attacks meant for Strahd and block the PCs who attempt to chase Strahd in his dire wolf form if Strahd runs. They follow the PCs and attack them until they are destroyed.

The wraith rises from the floor to attack the PCs. It isn't necessarily helping Strahd so much as it is attacking any living creatures that have entered the tomb. It does not chase the PCs if they leave the area.

VAMPIRE SPAWN (2)**CR 4**

HP 29 each

CE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +11, Spot +11**Languages** Common**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13**HD** 4; **Fast healing** 2; **DR** 5/silver**Immune** mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical ability scores, fatigue and exhaustion**Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; turn resistance +2**Fort** +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5**Weaknesses** see Vampire Characteristics, page 8**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), spider climb 20 ft.**Melee** slam +5 (1d6+4 plus energy drain 1 negative level)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +5**Atk Options****Special Actions** blood drain (1d4 Con per round), domination (30 ft., Will DC 14), gaseous form**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14**Feats** Alertness, Improved Energy Drain*, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness*Feat described in *Libris Mortis*. Its effects are described in the Energy Drain entry below.**Skills** Bluff +6, Climb +8, Diplomacy +4, Hide +10, Jump +8, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11**Fast Healing (Ex)** If reduced to 0 hp in combat, a vampire spawn automatically and immediately assumes gaseous form and makes its way toward the catacombs (K84), which it must reach within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. Any additional damage it takes in gaseous form has no effect.**Spider Climb (Ex)** A vampire spawn can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.**Energy Drain (Su)** Living creatures hit by a vampire spawn's slam attack gain two negative levels, losing 10 hit points and taking a –2 penalty on skill checks, ability checks, saving throws, and effective level. At the same time, the spawn gains 10 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on skill checks, ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for 1 hour. (This bonus derives from its Improved Energy Drain feat, which is described in *Libris Mortis*.) If the victim is a spellcaster, she loses access to two spells as if she had cast her two highest-level, currently available spells. See DMG 293 for more information about energy drain and negative levels.**Blood Drain (Ex)** A vampire spawn can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the spawn gains 5 temporary hit points that last for up to 1 hour. This ability does not affect elementals, plants, or creatures that lack a Constitution score.**Domination (Su)** A vampire spawn can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack with a range of 30 feet, except that the spawn must use a standard action and choose a single target—those merely looking at him are unaffected. The vampire's target must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or fall instantly under the spawn's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th).**Gaseous Form (Su)** As a standard action, a vampire spawn can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (CL 5th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability. Its Armor Class in gaseous form is 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10.**TACTICAL MAP DETAILS**

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Ravenovia's Final Rest: The north coffin is chiseled from marble, inlaid with silver and finished with brass settings. The squares that the coffin occupies count as difficult terrain; entering one of these squares costs 2 squares of movement.The coffin bears a brass plate that reads, "Ravenovia Von Zarovich." It is not locked. If decreed by the Fortunes of Ravenloft, an item might lie openly on top of the coffin. Within is a mummified body swaddled in *Saint Ecaterina's burial shroud* (a new item described on page 215).**Barov's Final Rest:** The south coffin is chiseled from marble, inlaid with silver and finished with brass settings. The squares that the coffin occupies count as difficult terrain; entering one of these squares costs 2 squares of movement.The coffin bears a brass plate that reads, "Barov Von Zarovich." It is not locked. Within is a mummified body that wears a green ring—a *band of spell enhancement* (see page 211).**Stained Glass Windows:** These three stained glass windows are translucent but not transparent. The one on the north details a wise-looking queen, and the one on the south a regal king. The central stained glass window details two men—one older and dressed as a warrior, the other younger and dressed as a prince, though both look to be of noble birth.

The windows are leaded and 3 inches thick (hardness 2 and 3 hit points per inch). If one is

broken, an unobstructed view of a 1,000-foot-drop along the pillarstone of Ravenloft is revealed, as well as the town of Barovia and the surrounding lands.

Landing (K87): A landing 10-feet down a grand stair is bisected by a curtain of blue light. The light is suspended between two 30-foot-tall bronze statues holding spears. More steps are dimly visible beyond the curtain.

All creatures that pass the curtain who are not lawful good are teleported back to the top of the stairs west of the curtain.

Lawful good creatures can descend into the safety of area K88.



SUBCATACOMBS

Encounter Level Variable

Use this tactical encounter with the room entry on page 127.

Use this encounter if the PCs enter the ancient sub-catacomb, a primitive temple infested by a colony of giant ants.

ENCOUNTER

When the encounter begins, seven giant soldier ants (**As**) and two giant worker ants (**Aw**) scurry throughout the ruins of the primitive temple. These numbers can change as more ants enter the chamber. The chamber also contains a guardian idol, called a rogue eidolon (**E**), near the slab and the megalith.

If the player characters set foot on the floor of the cavern, read:

The placidly moving giant ants jerk, and as if suddenly electrified, and all simultaneously enter a murderous, swarming frenzy.

TACTICS

The ants attack the PCs on the first round in which a PC steps into the chamber. On the following round, an additional 1d4+1 soldier ants emerge from the hole in the floor (southwest corner) to join the attack. This continues each round until a total of 20 soldier ants (including the original seven) have appeared.

The worker ants defend themselves if attacked, but their goal is to escape down to the nest under the floor of this chamber.

The rogue eidolon stands as if a statue, until such time as any ant or PC wanders across the slab it stands adjacent to. If this occurs, it begins attacking all creatures in the cave, starting with creatures (ant or PC) closest to it and working outward.

STONE SLAB

The *Slab of Sacrifice* is a 10-foot cube of black granite, partly buried in the surrounding rock. The portion emerging from the rock creates a daislike platform that rises 3 feet above the floor of the chamber. Pictograms run around the visible lip of the slab.

ROGUE EIDOLON

CR 9

HP 85

CN Large construct

Init ; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21

HD 10; **DR** 5/magic and bludgeoning

Immune magic, mind-affecting, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain

SR 19

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, can't run)

Melee 2 slams +13 (2d8+7 plus *confusion*)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +18

Atk Options *confusion*

Special Actions blood spray

Abilities Str 24, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 6, Cha 13

Confusion (Sp) Any creature struck by a rogue eidolon must make a DC 16 Will save or become confused for 10 rounds. The effect is identical to that of the *confusion* spell (PH 212). Caster level 10th. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Blood Spray (Su) As a free action it can use once every 1d4 rounds, a rogue eidolon can spew a gout of thick blood from the seeping symbol at a single target within 30 feet. Any creature struck by the blood must make a DC 15 Will save or be afflicted with a terrible madness that causes it to see all its friends as hated enemies. An affected creature immediately attacks its closest ally, using the best tactics and items at its disposal, including the use of spells. The blood madness lasts 2d4 rounds. Once a creature is affected, it cannot be affected by the same rogue eidolon's blood spray for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

If magically translated (no living creature uses the language of the pictograms), the pictograms read:

"Spill your life to the Blood God. The Blood God repays total sacrifice."

This magical location is described on page 220.

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the PCs defeat or drive off the giant ants, and if they defeat the rogue eidolon, they can freely experiment with the *Slab of Sacrifice* if they so desire.

GIANT ANTS, SOLDIER (7)

CR 2

HP 11
N Medium Vermin
Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +0, Spot +0
AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17
HD 2
Immune mind-affecting
Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +1

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), climb 20 ft.
Melee bite +3 (2d4+3)
Base Atk +1; Grp +3
Atk Options improved grab
Special Actions acid sting
Abilities Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 11
Feats Track⁸
Skills Climb +10

Acid Sting (Ex) A giant soldier ant has a stinger and an acid-producing gland in its abdomen. If it successfully grabs an opponent, it can attempt to sting each round using its full attack bonus. A hit with the sting attack deals 1d4+1 points of piercing damage and 1d4 points of acid damage.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a giant ant must hit with its bite attack. A giant soldier ant that wins the ensuing grapple check establishes a hold and can sting.

Skills Giant ants have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

GIANT ANTS, WORKER (2)

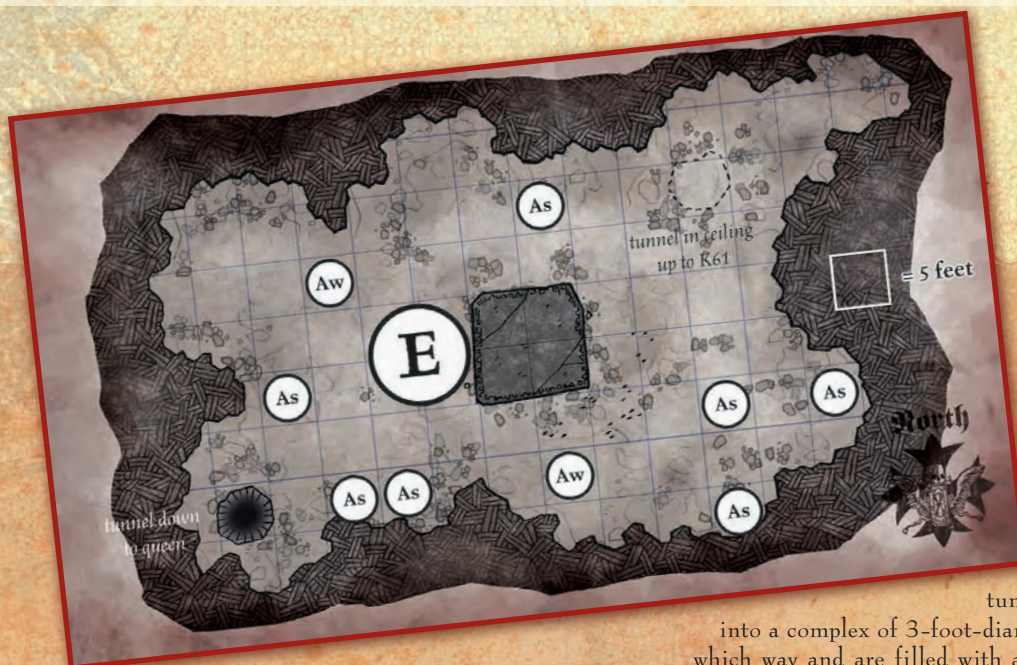
CR 1

HP 9
N Medium vermin
Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +0, Spot +0
AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17
HD 2
Immune mind-affecting
Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), climb 20 ft.
Melee bite +1 (1d6)
Base Atk +1; Grp +1
Atk Options improved grab
Abilities Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 9
Feats Track⁸
Skills Climb +8

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a giant ant must hit with its bite attack.

Skills Giant ants have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.



ascends another 70 feet past Crypt 24 to the secret room off area K61.

Tunnel in Floor: The 5 foot-diameter tunnel is essentially vertical, but is so roughly burrowed through the stone that a DC 10 Climb check is sufficient to ascend or descend the tunnel. The tunnel drops 30 feet

into a complex of 3-foot-diameter tunnels that lead every which way and are filled with a bustle of giant worker ants (100+) and, somewhere, the queen ant.

If a determined PC were to map out all the tunnels over the course of a couple of long days, he or she would eventually discover an entrance to the outside world, some 500 feet north of the base of the pillarstone, among a jumble of boulders in the trees.

Rogue Eidolon: This 12-foot tall humanoid statue is carved of purplish stone, but its hands are black as pitch. Weathered remnants of horns and vestigial limbs remain partly visible. In place of a face is a primitive pictogram that is stained, as if in the past it leaked some reddish fluid.

This statue was empowered millennia past by worshipers of the "Blood God," and it yet sits vigil over this last sacred place to the forgotten proto-deity.

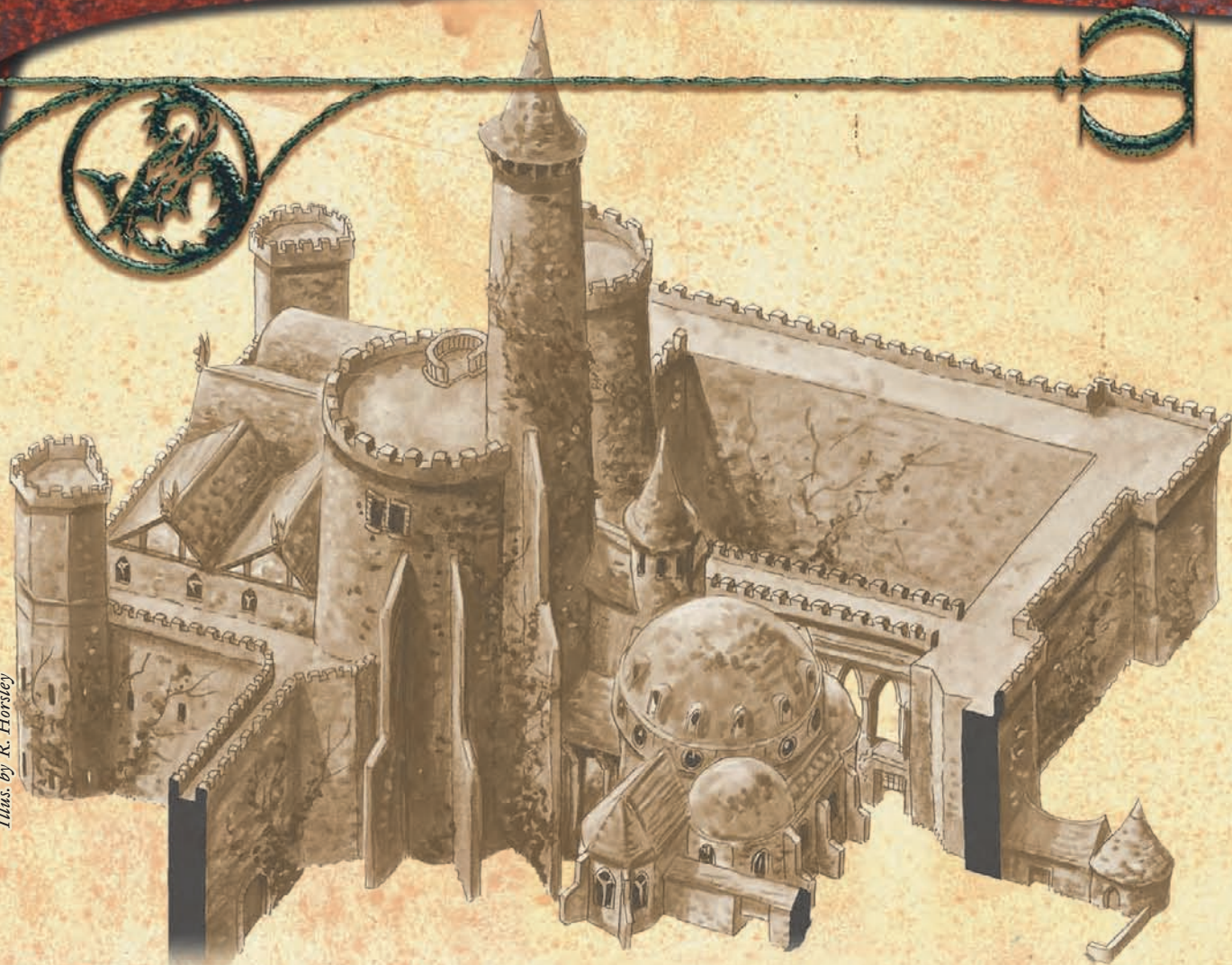
TACTICAL MAP DETAILS

Details on the tactical map are described below.

Megalith: One large stone, vaguely rectangular, is parked on top of two similar stones that stand 10 feet tall, creating a 10-foot-by-10-foot space beneath. The megalith stands before a square slab that emerges from the floor of the cavern.

Tunnel in Ceiling: The 5 foot-diameter tunnel is essentially vertical, but is so roughly burrowed through the stone that a DC 10 Climb check is sufficient to ascend or descend the tunnel. The tunnel rises 40 feet to pass the thin wall separating it from the back of Crypt 24—masonry bricks are visible on this side of the otherwise naturally burrowed tunnel. The tunnel

Illus. by R. Horsley



The material in this appendix, in contrast to the rest of the adventure, is intended for player consumption. As Dungeon Master, you are encouraged to make feats, spells, and prestige classes available to your players when they meet the prerequisites. This appendix also contains new magic items, a new player organization (the Lightbringers), and handouts for the different letters that involve the PCs in the adventure.

FEATS

The following two feats originally appeared in *Libris Mortis: The Book of Undead*. They are included here because the knight of the raven prestige class grants them as bonus feats, but they could be useful for any characters adventuring in Barovia and Castle Ravenloft.

ENDURING LIFE

You can ignore the effect of negative levels for a short time.

Benefit: Whenever you would gain a negative level, you can ignore the penalties and other ill effects associated with that negative level for a number of minutes equal to your Constitution bonus (if any). For example, if Tordek (Con 15) is struck by a wight, he gains one negative level. However, he can ignore the -1 pen-

alty on attack rolls, saves, ability checks, and skill checks associated with that negative level for 2 minutes, since his Constitution bonus is +2. (If Tordek were a spellcaster, he would also avoid losing a spell slot for 2 minutes.)

You also gain a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves to remove negative levels.

LASTING LIFE

You can shed negative levels with an act of will.

Prerequisites: Endurance, Enduring Life.

Benefit: Once per round as a standard action, you can attempt to remove a negative level from yourself by attempting a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 attacker's HD + attacker's Cha modifier). If the saving throw succeeds, the negative level goes away. You make a separate saving throw for each negative level you have gained. If the save fails, you retain the negative level, but you can try again next round to remove it.

KNIGHT OF THE RAVEN

"The raven is not a god—it's a symbol. A symbol of virtue, of light in the darkness, of life and vitality in the face of death."

—Lady Vey Rallen, Knight of the Raven

Before evil descended on the land of Barovia, it was home to an order of virtuous champions, the Knights of the Raven. United under the symbol of the raven, they set aside differences of religion and political allegiance in their quest to

fight evil wherever it appeared. They prospered for centuries before the appearance of Strahd in their land, but now they are practically extinct. Despite the order's fierce opposition to the undead, one knight of the raven yet lingers as a benign spirit in the halls of Castle Ravenloft, while rumors persist in the village of Barovia that at least one knight still hides in the Svalich Woods or the steep slopes of the Balinok Mountains.

BECOMING A KNIGHT OF THE RAVEN

Meeting the prerequisites to become a knight of the raven is not difficult for a cleric, paladin, or other divine spellcaster. (Druid knights are rare, though, because the features of the prestige class do not complement those of the druid class.) However, in order to join the remnants of the order, a candidate must first learn of its existence and find another member. Then he or she must pray overnight in the chapel of Ravenloft within the castle (area K15), wherein still rests the ancient *Icon of Ravenloft* (see page 214). During the order's heyday, the only danger of this vigil was that the knight might fall asleep rather than praying through the night. Now, there are far more significant dangers to body and soul within the walls of Castle Ravenloft.

In the course of this adventure, PCs can encounter Sir Urik (tactical encounter F on page 74) or the ghost of Lady Vey Rallen (tactical encounter K45 on page 146), both of whom can induct interested characters into the prestige class.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Any good.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast 1st-level divine spells.

Special: Must meet an existing knight on friendly terms and then spend an overnight prayer vigil in the chapel of Ravenloft.

CLASS FEATURES

Knights of the Raven are devoted to battling the undead, and they gain a number of abilities to help them in that quest. They also have a unique sort of animal companion, a celestial raven trained to harry foes and interfere in combat to the knight's advantage.

Spellcasting: At each level above 1st, you gain new spells per day and an increase in caster level (and spells known, if applicable) as if you had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class to which you belonged before adding the prestige class level. You do not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If you had more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a knight of the raven, you must decide to which class to add each level for the purpose of determining spells per day, caster level, and spells known.

Raven Harrier (Ex): At 1st level, you call a celestial raven into your service. This creature aids you in combat by distracting foes, and it gains additional abilities as you advance in level. Its statistics are normal for a raven (MM 278) with the celestial template (MM 31), except as noted here. Your raven's hit point total equals one-half of your full normal hit points. For the purpose of effects related to number of Hit Dice (including the benefits of the celestial template), use your HD total. The raven uses your base saving throw bonuses plus its ability score modifiers (Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +2). It has an Intelligence score of 3.

The raven is incredibly agile. It never provokes attacks of opportunity for moving into an opponent's square or for leaving a threatened area. If it is killed, a replacement appears at the next dawn. You suffer no special penalties should your raven fall in battle.

Your raven harrier has the following special abilities.

Harry (Ex): As a swift action, you can command your raven harrier to distract a single opponent within 30 feet of you. The raven enters that opponent's space. The target must then make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 your class level + your Cha modifier). If the save fails, that opponent takes a –2 penalty to its AC for 1 round.

Baffle (Su): When you reach 3rd level, you can command your raven harrier to prevent an opponent from taking advantage of lapses in your defenses. If at the start of your opponent's turn the raven is in its space, the opponent must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 your class level + your Cha modifier). If the save fails, that opponent cannot make attacks of opportunity for 1 round.

Falter (Su): At 5th level, you can command your raven harrier to keep an opponent off balance against enemies. If your

TABLE A–1: THE KNIGHT OF THE RAVEN HIT DIE: D8

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Raven harrier (harry), speak with ravens	—
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Smite undead 1/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Turn undead, Sun domain, raven harrier (baffle)	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Light focus, smite undead 2/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Raven harrier (falter), Enduring Life*	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
6th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Smite undead 3/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Raven harrier (channel spell)	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8th	+8	+6	+2	+6	Lasting Life*, smite undead 4/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Raven harrier (sight link)	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Burst of vitality, smite undead 5/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

*New feats described on page 200.

Class Skills (2 + Int modifier per level): Concentration, Gather Information, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (religion), Spot, Survival.

raven occupies its space, that opponent provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening foes even when it takes a 5-foot step. Your raven harrier automatically follows a target that makes a 5-foot step.

Channel Spell (Su): When you reach 7th level, you can channel spells through your raven harrier, as long as you have line of sight to it. Channeling a spell requires you to lengthen its casting time: A spell that normally requires a free, move, swift, or immediate action now takes a standard action, while one that requires a standard action takes a full-round action. Other spells remain unchanged. A channeled spell is treated as though the raven were the caster for the purpose of range. Thus, you can channel a spell with a range of touch through the raven to cast the spell on a creature the raven touches. If the target is not willing, the raven must hit with a melee touch attack using its own attack bonus to successfully deliver the spell.

Sight Link (Su): At 9th level, you gain the ability to see briefly through your raven's eyes. Using this ability is a full-round action, and you can see through the raven's eyes only for the round in which you perform this action. At the end of the round, you are fatigued. You can use this ability at will, although if you use it while you are already fatigued, you become exhausted. While seeing through your raven's eyes, you cannot see through your own eyes. Your raven can be at any distance from you, but it must be on the same plane of existence as you are.

Speak with Ravens (Su): You have the ability to speak with ravens, including raven familiars and your own raven harrier. If a raven has an Intelligence above 2, you can communicate with it as you would with a (rather stupid) human, using a language you both share. If the raven has animal intelligence (Int 1 or 2), you can communicate with it if you were using the *Speak with Animals* spell, though this ability does not have a duration.

Smite Undead (Su): When you reach 2nd level, you gain the ability to channel holy radiance into a single melee attack against an undead creature. You add your Charisma bonus (if any) to your attack roll and add your knight of the raven class level to your damage roll. If you roll a natural 20 on your smite attack, your bonus damage is doubled. This is not a critical hit, and no confirmation roll is necessary.

You must declare that you are using your smite undead ability before you make your attack roll; if the attack misses (or you attack a creature that is not actually undead), your smite is used for the day. If you use this ability against an incorporeal undead creature but your attack fails due to its incorporeality, you can reroll the miss chance once, taking the better result.

For every two levels you advance beyond 2nd, you gain one additional daily use of this ability (2/day at 4th level, 3/day at 6th level, and so on).

Turn Undead (Su): At 3rd level, you gain the ability to turn undead as a cleric of two levels lower. If you can already turn undead, add your effective cleric level from this class for the purpose of turning to that from other classes.

Sun Domain: At 3rd level, you gain access to the Sun domain. If you have cleric levels and do not already have access to the Sun domain, you gain the domain's granted power (greater turning once per day) and can choose domain

spells from the Sun spell list as well as from those of your other domains. If you already have access to the Sun domain, you can use its granted power twice per day.

If you do not have cleric levels, then you can use the granted power of the Sun domain normally. Add the Sun domain's spells to your class's spell list. If you are a spontaneous caster such as a favored soul or sorcerer, then you can select a Sun domain spell whenever you have the option to choose a new known spell. Once you know the domain spell, you can cast it freely.

Light Focus: When you reach 4th level, you become adept at casting spells with the light descriptor. Any time you cast such a spell, you can choose one of the following effects to enhance the spell.

- Double the radius of illumination, and treat the spell as one level higher for the purpose of countering or dispelling a spell with the darkness descriptor.
- Increase its saving throw DC by 2.
- Increase your effective caster level by one; for example, a *daylight* spell lasts an additional round, or a *sunbeam* spell deals an extra 1d6 of damage to undead.

Enduring Life: At 5th level, you gain Enduring Life (see page 200) as a bonus feat.

Lasting Life: At 8th level, you gain Lasting Life (see page 200) as a bonus feat, even if you do not meet the prerequisites.

Burst of Vitality (Su): At 10th level, you gain the ability to remove negative levels by channeling positive energy. As a standard action, spend a turning attempt and make a turning check. You can remove a number of negative levels from yourself and allies within 30 feet equal to the maximum Hit Dice of undead you could affect (PH 159). For example, if you are a cleric 6/knight of the raven 10 (effective cleric level 14th) and roll an 18 on your turning check, you could affect undead with up to 16 Hit Dice. Thus, you can remove up to sixteen negative levels from yourself and your allies, distributed however you choose.

PLAYING A KNIGHT OF THE RAVEN

The knights of the raven are a righteous remnant—a tiny number of holy champions in a land ruled by evil. The gift of membership in the order is a great honor, and you should treat it as one. You, Sir Urik, and any companion who adopts this class are all that remain of an order that once bravely fought any evil that arose in Barovia. If you can survive long enough to rid the land of Strahd forever, then you will have that much more cause for pride. Don't hesitate to express that pride, but never let it get in the way of your larger purpose—to stay vigilant against evil, and particularly against the undead, wherever they might plague the land again.

Combat

Your raven harrier is a great asset in a fight, distracting your foes and (at higher levels) channeling your power through its Tiny form. You are primarily a melee combatant, armed with smites as well as spells. Don't hesitate to wade right into the front lines of battle, sending your raven ahead of you to disrupt your enemies' concentration.

Advancement

To become a knight of the raven, you had to meet one of the two knights—one living, one deathless—that still inhabit

the valley of Barovia. Only after learning about the order from them, then keeping a harrowing vigil in the chapel of Castle Ravenloft, did you become a full-fledged knight.

As a result, you have little access to training but must find your own way in the order. You might be responsible for forging new traditions and growing its membership, particularly if you wish to help Barovia recover from its centuries of oppression under the vampire Strahd.

Resources

The Knights of the Raven have no resources you can draw on, other than whatever members survive. Sir Urik gives you all the help he possibly can, but he's just one man with his own responsibilities—and not much wealth. You are on your own, but with time and ingenuity, perhaps you can rebuild the knights into an organization that does have resources to share among its members.



The raven symbolizes the light that shines in the darkness

KNIGHTS OF THE RAVEN IN THE WORLD

"There is a crazy man who tries to fight them, you know. Some kind of knight, he says. Well, he's still alive—that certainly counts for something."

—Ismark the Lesser, acting burgomaster of Barovia



As champions against evil and the undead, the Knights of the Raven have a clear role in the world—or at least in Barovia. PCs who adopt this prestige class have a solid reason to remain in Barovia even after the death of Strahd: to help the valley rebuild and recover from centuries under his iron-fisted rule. Countless spies and agents of Strahd still survive, jockeying for power in his absence. Ismark, the old burgomaster's son, might not be a strong enough leader to usher the village into a new age of peace and prosperity. In the days after Strahd, Barovia needs the Knights of the Raven as never before.

NPC Reactions

Most Barovians think that Sir Urik is crazy for daring to fight against the evil that is so prominent in their lives. Still, they admire the fact that he has been doing it for so long, and that he is still alive. A PC who adopts the knight of the raven prestige class is likely to have the same reaction—at least until she manages to destroy Strahd.

At that point, all of Barovia's inhabitants connect any knight of the raven to that earth-shaking event. They regard the knights as heroes, greeting them with helpful attitudes. Meanwhile, the former servants of Strahd have marked the knights as dangerous foes who threaten their rise to power. Any evil creature in Barovia is automatically hostile to a knight of the raven after Strahd's death.

Beyond Barovia, the order still has a vaguely positive reputation. Most people in the immediately surrounding area are friendly to PCs who introduce themselves as knights of the raven and explain that the order has emerged from obscurity.

KNIGHTS OF THE RAVEN LORE

Characters with ranks in Knowledge (nobility and royalty) can research the knights of the raven to learn more about them. When a character makes a successful skill check, read or paraphrase the following, including the information from lower DCs.

DC 10: The Knights of the Raven were an ancient holy order of knight protectors, but they're long gone now.

DC 15: The knights were dedicated to fighting the undead, and they had celestial ravens as companions.

DC 20: The Knights of the Raven were something like paladins or clerics, devoted to the ideal of good itself as symbolized by the raven. They believed that good could flourish only in the face of great evil, when it stood against that evil and fought it.

DC 30: Sir Urik claims to be a knight of the raven, perhaps the last survivor. You can often find him around the crossroads.

KNIGHTS OF THE RAVEN IN THE GAME

The mechanical prerequisites for this prestige class are intentionally easy to meet, to encourage one or more PCs to adopt the class over the course of this adventure. Induction into the order makes a good reward for a player who is immersed in the setting and invested in the party's success. The requirement of keeping a vigil in the castle's chapel provides further adventure opportunity for all the players.

The prestige class is best suited to a cleric or paladin. Players who enjoy the role of the noble knight and dedicated champion will enjoy this class. Its new take on an animal companion (the raven harrier) might interest those who often play druids or rangers, or players who don't normally have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of such a creature.

Sample Encounters

Two knights of the raven appear in this adventure. The spirit of Lady Vey Rallen haunts the Hall of Heroes (K45) in Castle Ravenloft, while the still-living Sir Urik might be encountered near the crossroads southwest of the village of Barovia (area F). See those encounter entries for further information, including these characters' game statistics.

THE LIGHTBRINGERS

The Lightbringers are an expansive guild of undead hunters that readily hands out charter memberships to anyone who wants to stamp out undead. The Lightbringers have no central headquarters. Generally affiliated good-aligned temples in large cities set aside meeting rooms for those who sign the guild's charter. Pelor's temples are best known for hosting Lightbringers—believers and nonbelievers alike.

For more about guilds, see page 223 of *Dungeon Master's Guide II*.

Symbol: The Lightbringers' symbol is a stylized half-sun, half-moon disc.

Credo: "Suffer no false life."

LIGHTBRINGERS ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

As a guild, the Lightbringers organization requires a prospective member to have at least 4 ranks in an associated skill. The guild accepts all classes, so no minimum level requirement exists. Entry and annual dues are required, and the guild imposes minimum service.

Associated Classes: Any.

Associated Skills: Concentration, Gather Information, Heal, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (religion).

Dues: The initiation fee is a one-time payment of 100 gp, donated to the affiliated temple housing the local Lightbringers chapter. Annual dues are also 100 gp, but the real cost of membership is a commitment to destroy a minimum number of undead each year. Each member sets his or her own limit, and is accountable only to the local chapter.

LIGHTBRINGERS BENEFITS

All guilds provide basic services to their members, including food and lodging, a 10% subsidy on the cost of basic supplies and guild-related services, emergency loans, and other aid. Guild members gain a contact within the organization who can help with specific tasks. For more about guild benefits, see Guild Benefits on page 225 of *Dungeon Master's Guide II*.

In addition, the Lightbringers guild provide the following benefits to members.

- A guild member gains access to alternative class abilities associated with the guild (see below). On joining the Lightbringers, a character can choose to retroactively apply Lightbringer alternative abilities to class levels he or she has already gained. The guild doesn't require that the member take any alternative abilities; it merely offers the option.
- A guild member is guaranteed one free casting of *restoration* per week at an affiliated temple, as long as the condition requiring the spell was caused by undead.
- Lightbringers respect each other. A guild member receives a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy or Gather Information checks made while talking to a fellow Lightbringer.
- A guild member who finds an undead enclave too tough to handle alone can travel to the nearest affiliated temple and petition the Lightbringers for aid. Such a request requires a DC 20 Diplomacy check, with a cumulative –2 penalty for each previous call for aid that member has made. On a successful check, the member gains the aid of one guild member whose level is equal to the petitioner's – 2 (minimum 1st); determine the class randomly.
- Every guild member gains a useful contact (see the example below).
- Guild members qualify for the Active Guild Member feat described in the sidebar and qualify for its associated benefit. The guild doesn't require that the member take the feat; it merely offers the option.

Favored in Guild Benefit: The guild further subsidizes a member's purchase of equipment useful in combating undead, including stakes, holy water, alchemical flares, alchemical stakes, alchemical vampire repellent, silvered weapons, and so on. This subsidy reduces the usual cost of supplies by an additional 5% (maximum 1,000 gp/year).

Sample Contact: Ashlyn, 5th-level paladin. As a contact within the guild, Ashlyn is generally helpful. One time only, she will accompany the member on an adventure whose primary purpose is hunting undead.

THE LIGHTBRINGERS IN THE WORLD

The Lightbringers provide a ready-made opportunity for adventure. Undead plague every lightless corner of the world, and PC guild members can always find rumors of such monsters to hunt down. (Having an annual quota also provides an ongoing incentive.) Alternatively, the guild might hire out members for specific missions to exterminate undead. A PC might even be the "backup" requested by another member to fight a challenge too great to handle alone.

Structure: The Lightbringers are not strictly organized and have no central offices. Rather, they exist as numerous roving groups. Each individual chapter has its "headquarters" at the temple offering the membership charter, consisting of basic living quarters. The affiliated temple can also provide

healing and other spellcasting services, as detailed in the membership benefits.

Leadership: The diffuse nature of the organization means that no central leadership exists. An individual or group who has signed the membership charter has complete authority to manage its own responsibilities. Individual members are answerable only to themselves, though they report to the local chapter on progress toward their yearly goals.

Some Lightbringers, seeking a figure of authority, tracked down the original elf family that initiated the guild. The organization accords the honorary title “Leading Light” to Merquo Lightbringer, the great-grandfather of Auro’s older brother. This title is purely a sign of respect. Merquo is an active member of the guild, and certainly inspires the others, though he’d never presume to give orders.

LIGHTBRINGERS LORE

Most people generally know something about the Lightbringers or can guess, though few can claim complete knowledge.

Characters with ranks in Gather Information, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), or Knowledge (religion) can research the Lightbringers guild to learn more about them. When a character makes a skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. A character with at least 5 ranks in one of the guild’s associated skills gets a +2 synergy bonus on this check.

DC Result

- | | |
|----|---|
| 10 | The Lightbringers are pledged to fight undead wherever they exist, and to track it down if necessary. |
| 15 | Most large cities have temples affiliated with the Lightbringers. |
| 25 | The Lightbringers Guild, as it was originally called, was started in memory of an elf child named Auro Lightbringer. At the age of only fourteen years, she was stolen away by ghouls and consumed. Her siblings and others founded the Lightbringers in an oath of vengeance. |
| 35 | Slight evidence exists that Auro wasn’t consumed by the ghouls that stole her, but rather embraced. The slightest intimation that the “patron saint” of the Lightbringers might be a ghoul would rock the guild to its core. Thus the leadership suppress this knowledge and hotly deny any such claim. |

LIGHTBRINGER ALTERNATIVE CLASS FEATURES

Alternative class features replace class features found in the original class description. If you have already reached or passed the level at which you can take the feature, you can

use the retraining option described below to gain an alternative class feature in place of the normal feature gained at that level.

Lightbringer alternative class abilities help members improve in their quest to destroy all undead. However, any character interested in slaying undead could qualify for these alternative abilities, even if the Lightbringers guild does not exist in your campaign. (In that case, rename them “hunter alternative class abilities.”)

Each set of alternative class abilities presents variants for selected standard classes based on the concept of hunting undead. The DM can add more Lightbringer alternative class abilities (such as for a barbarian or a fighter) as desired, using the ones presented here as guidelines.

A character need not take all the alternative class abilities provided for a class. For instance, a lightbringer paladin might decide to take only the detect undead alternative class ability at 1st level, ignoring those available at other levels.

The format for alternative class features is summarized below.

Alternative Class Feature Name

A general description of the ability and why you might want to consider it.

Level: You can select the alternative class feature only at this level (unless you are using the retraining option).

Replaces: This line identifies the ability that you must sacrifice to gain the alternative class feature.

Benefit: This section describes the mechanical effects of the new ability.

Class Feature Retraining

Retraining is adjusting a decision you made earlier in your character’s career by selecting a different legal option. This technique represents the character’s practicing new talents in lieu of honing older ones. In a way, the process is similar to attaining a new level. In keeping with that concept, the retraining option can be chosen only during level advancement.

Each time your character attains a new level, you can choose to retrain. This decision must be implemented before any benefits of the newly attained level are applied. For example, if a 5th-level rogue wants to trade her trap sense feature for the penetrating strike alternative class feature (see page 208), she can do so immediately upon attaining 6th level, before she gains any of the benefits for that level (such as additional hit points, skill points, and so on).

Class feature retraining allows you to swap out one character option at a given level for another. The character remains

NEW FEAT: FAVORED IN GUILD

You are an active and valued member of your guild.

Prerequisites: Membership in a guild (including 2 ranks in two of the guild’s associated skills, and at least 1 rank in another two of the guild’s associated skills).

Benefit: As an active and necessary member of your guild, select one of your guild’s associated skills. As long as you

remain a member of the guild, you gain a +2 competence bonus on all checks made with that skill.

An active guild member in the Lightbringers also gains an additional fringe benefit, as noted in the Lightbringers organization description.

Normal: In order to receive benefits from a guild, you must pay yearly dues. You do not gain any guild fringe benefits.

basically the same, since his class levels haven't changed, but he's now highlighting a different aspect of his class. Such retraining also allows a character to adopt an alternative class feature, such as those presented in this section.

To choose an alternative class feature, substitute it for one class feature available at that level. The new feature must represent a choice that you could have made at the same level as you made the original choice. Also, the new choice can't make any of your later choices illegal—though it might automatically change class features acquired later if they are based on the initial choice.

LIGHTBRINGER BARD

Bards who are most excited by the music of the dirge, the funeral march, or the requiem are those most strongly drawn to be lightbringers. The lightbringer bard brings hope and courage to those oppressed by the depredations of unlife, and he uses tricks, music, and magic to thwart the conspiracies of undead masterminds.

Undead Bardic Knowledge

A lightbringer bard has special interest in events, items, and persons that are important to undead. Your focused, careful studies allow you to identify such creatures and effects commonly associated with them.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain bardic knowledge.

Benefit: You can tap into some of your specialized knowledge of the undead. You make a check just as though using the standard bardic knowledge ability, but your insights concern only the undead. You gain a +5 circumstance bonus on this check. You can attempt this check in addition to a Knowledge (religion) check to learn about an undead creature or some other bit of undead lore, such as an item used to destroy a legendary undead or a plague caused by undead.

Inspire Turning

You use your knowledge of religious hymns and divine song to lend greater energy to an ally's turn undead attempt.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain the inspire competence bardic music ability.

Benefit: You can expend one daily use of your bardic music to help an ally who attempts to turn undead (or destroy undead, if a lightbringer cleric). The ally must be within 30 feet and able to see and hear you. You must also be able to see the ally. The ally is treated as being two levels higher than his actual level for the purpose of turning undead as long as he or she continues to hear your performance. The effect lasts as long as you concentrate, up to a maximum of 2 minutes. You can't use inspire turning on yourself. This is a supernatural, mind-affecting ability.

Repel Domination

Your study of the undead allows you to fortify your mind against their attacks.

Level: 6th.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain the *suggestion* bardic music ability.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting spells or abilities from undead creatures. Furthermore, whenever you succeed on such a saving throw, the undead creature that produced the effect is shaken for the remainder of the encounter.

LIGHTBRINGER CLERIC

Lightbringer clerics are those clerics who focus first and foremost on their ability to turn undead. They know that the positive energy they bring to bear against undead is the single most important aspect of their class. The negative energy of undeath must be opposed everywhere and always with the positive energy of light.

Destroy Undead

You can channel positive energy to destroy undead creatures.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: Turn undead.

Benefit: Instead of the cleric's normal ability to turn or rebuke undead, a lightbringer cleric can channel positive energy to destroy undead. Thus, a lightbringer cleric con-

VARIANT RULE: SUBSTITUTING SUBSTITUTION LEVELS

Substitution levels are presented such that only characters rolling up new characters or characters making the transition to the required level are capable of taking a substitution level. However, this restriction might only serve to ensure that the useful class features in a given substitution level never see the light of day.

Optionally, the DM might decide to allow the character to pick up a substitution level even after a character has already leveled up beyond the requisite level. The DM can accomplish this in a number of different ways. The guiding principle should be that it not seem too simple, lest its value seem diminished to the player.

One method is to require the player to undergo a class-specific rite whose cost is equal to the level to be substituted times 100, which lasts a number of hours equal to the level to be sub-

stituted. For instance, if a bard wished to substitute his regular 3rd level class features for the inspire turning class features of a lightbringer bard, she would pay 300 gold pieces and spend 3 hours undergoing a music-filled rite. If he had more than one substitution level he wanted to exchange at the same time, the costs and time would be added together.

Alternatively, characters who join the Lightbringers can choose at the time of their acceptance into the organization to retroactively apply the effect of any lightbringer substitution levels for class levels he or she has already gained.

Substituting back to the original class features shouldn't be so easy, or even possible at all. If the DM does allow it, the character must at least wait until they've gained a new level, at which point they can do a reverse rite to regain their original class features (or substitute the features of some other substitution level for 3rd level).

tributes to the destruction of undead in a fashion that interacts well with the other characters in the party such as the fighter and wizard. Lightbringer clerics want to destroy undead; thus, they despise seeing turned undead run away never seen again. At other times, a standard turning effect has no effect whatsoever, much to the chagrin of the lightbringer cleric.

Destroying undead is a standard action that deals 1d6 points of damage per cleric level to all undead within 30 feet of the cleric. The affected undead get a Will save (DC 10+ cleric level + Cha modifier) for half damage.

Undead with turn resistance can subtract that number from the damage that they take from each turn attempt. For example, a vampire with turn resistance +4 takes 4 fewer points of damage each time he takes turning damage.

When using this ability against incorporeal creatures, the lightbringer cleric does not have to roll a 50% miss chance; turning hits them automatically.

Destroy undead still counts as turn undead for the purpose of meeting prerequisites for feats, prestige classes, and so forth. A lightbringer cleric can use this ability the same number of times per day that he could turn undead. If a feat requires the expenditure of one or more uses of turn undead, it instead consumes uses of this ability. Any ability that grants a bonus to turning checks instead grants an equal bonus to this ability's save DC. This is a supernatural ability.



Lightbringer clerics are among the greatest foes of the undead

True Daylight

Lightbringer clerics, as befits their name, are capable of channeling divine energy in the form of pure sunlight.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: One domain granted power.

Benefit: A lightbringer cleric can use up one of his turn undead uses for the day to empower a *daylight* spell he casts with positive energy. The resulting daylight effect has a smaller radiance radius and a shorter, inconstant duration; however, the daylight created is the equivalent of daylight for the purpose of its effect on creatures that are damaged or destroyed by bright light (such as vampires).

The effect created by this ability sheds true daylight in a 10-foot radius and has a duration of 1d4 rounds (roll to determine each time this ability is used). This is an extraordinary ability.

Positive Healing

By imparting a portion of the divine energies he commands into an ally, the lightbringer cleric sustains his friend against injuries.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: One domain granted power.

Benefit: A lightbringer cleric can use one of his turn undead uses for the day to internalize the influx of positive energy and so gains fast healing 2 for 5 rounds. This is a supernatural ability.

LIGHTBRINGER PALADIN

Lightbringer paladins are little different from standard paladins, and share the same compassion to pursue good, the will to uphold law, and the power to defeat evil. However, the lightbringer paladin has made it her specialization to seek out and destroy undead, seeing them as the penultimate manifestation of evil in the world.

Detect Undead

Level: 1st.

Replaces: Detect evil.

Benefit: A lightbringer paladin can use this ability at will. This is a divination effect similar to a *detect evil* spell, except that it finds undead only (of any alignment). Unlike with *detect evil*, the lightbringer paladin doesn't need to concentrate to know all relevant information. At the moment the paladin uses the ability, she knows if there are any undead within a chosen 60-degree arc, knows the exact number, and knows their exact location. This ability is the equivalent of a 2nd-level spell. It is a spell-like ability.

Pelor's Blessing

A lightbringer paladin excels at slaying the undead. When he channels energy to smite his foes, the power he summons proves doubly effective against the living dead.

Level: 3rd.

Replaces: Divine health.

Benefit: A lightbringer paladin who uses his smite evil ability against undead gains an additional +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1 point of damage per two paladin levels. For example, a 13th-level lightbringer paladin armed with a longsword would deal 1d8+19 points of damage when using her smite evil ability against an undead, plus any additional bonuses for high Strength or magical effects that would normally apply. This is an extraordinary ability.

Warded Special Mount

The lightbringer paladin is a special, favored warrior of light. The gods protect his special mount so that the powers of darkness cannot easily defeat him.

Level: 6th.

Replaces: One weekly use of *remove disease*.

Benefit: In addition to the standard qualities of a special mount, a lightbringer paladin's mount is immune to all death spells, magical death effects, energy drain, and any negative energy effects (such as from *inflict* spells or *chill touch*).

LIGHTBRINGER ROGUE

While most rogues are loners from day one, the lightbringer rogue has decided to throw in with others who share her fundamental disgust and rancor toward undead. The lightbringer rogue has taken extra trouble to research dusty tomes and tombs to learn about undead habits, undead physiology, and most importantly, undead weaknesses. The lightbringer rogue desires to bring all undead to their penultimate ends.

Penetrating Strike

Creatures immune to sneak attack reduction are a bane to rogues everywhere. Particularly in ancient tombs where undead are common, rogues must rely on their wits to

survive. You have spent significant time studying this problem and have learned ways to strike harm even these resilient opponents.

Level: 3rd.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain trap sense.

Benefit: Whenever you flank a creature that is immune to sneak attack damage, you still gain half of your sneak attack dice as bonus damage. Note that this benefit does not extend to creatures that ignore your sneak attack damage because you cannot flank them. In addition, you still cannot gain sneak attack damage against such foes if they are flat-footed. You must flank a creature that is immune to sneak attack damage in order to use this ability.

NEW ALCHEMICAL ITEMS

Undead hunters can choose from a number of alchemical substances and tools to defend against their prey. Undead creatures and their masters also have access to substances that enhance their abilities.

Alchemical Flare Bolt: The head of this alchemically prepared crossbow bolt contains a blend of phosphorus, silver particles, garlic, and other alchemical substances to ignite desiccated flesh. An alchemical flare bolt that hits a corporeal undead deals an extra 1d6 points of fire damage.

A living creature struck by a flare bolt takes normal bolt damage with no extra fire damage.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 20.

Weight: 1 lb. (10 bolts).

Price: 150 gp (10 bolts).

Alchemical Flare Stakes: Treat this alchemically prepared wooden stake as a dagger for the purpose of proficiency with such a weapon. However, it is destroyed after one successful attack.

Like alchemical flare bolts, alchemical flare stakes contain a blend of phosphorus, silver particles, garlic, and other alchemical substances to ignite desiccated flesh. An alchemical flare stake that hits a corporeal undead deals an additional 1d6 points of fire damage and lodges within the creature's body. Each embedded stake deals 1d6 points of fire damage per round to the undead creature, which can remove all embedded stakes as a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity.

A living creature struck by a flare stake takes normal dagger damage with no additional fire damage.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 20.

Weight: 1 lb. (10 stakes).

Price: 150 gp (10 stakes).

Alchemical Sun Flash: This sealed flask contains a blend of alchemical ingredients that mimics sunlight when set aflame, as well as phosphorus to ignite the mixture when the flask is broken.

A flask of alchemical sun flash can be thrown as a splash weapon (PH 158). Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet. A direct hit deals 1d6 points of fire damage, and 1 point of splash damage to creatures in adjacent squares. In addition, the ignited mixture releases a flash of brilliance akin to pure daylight for 1 second. The

flash illuminates a 10-foot radius around the point of impact; it provides bright light to a distance of 100 feet.

Creatures with light sensitivity, aversion to daylight, or light blindness within the area of the flash are dazzled for 1 round. Vampires and creatures that are powerless in sunlight can take only single move actions or standard actions on their next turn if they are caught in the flash.

Multiple flashes over subsequent rounds can prolong these effects described. However, two successive flashes do not destroy vampires as natural sunlight would, but merely hold them to single actions for 2 rounds.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 25.

Weight: 1 lb.

Price: 50 gp.

Alchemical Vampire Repellent: This vial resembles a bottle of premium cologne; however, it contains an alchemical distillation of garlic essence, silver particles, and holy water. As a standard action, a user sprays the contents of a vial over himself as though applying perfume. Ordinary vampires and vampire spawn recoil from the user, exactly as they would from a mirror or holy symbol. Vampires must stay at least 5 feet away from the user and cannot touch or make melee attacks against him. The effect lasts 10 rounds.

If alchemical repellent is applied to an object, a vampire cannot touch or handle that object for 10 rounds. The substance can be sprayed into the air and is sufficient to repel a vampire from a 5-foot-cube volume for 10 rounds.

A user can instead spray the contents of a vial on a vampire as a standard action. The affected vampire takes a –2 circumstance penalty on attack rolls and saving throws for 10 rounds.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 25.

Weight: —.

Price: 125 gp.

Embalming Fire: This bitter-smelling liquid must be poured over a corpse and allowed to soak for at least 1 minute before the corpse is animated as a zombie. Once animated, if the zombie takes even a single point of damage, it bursts into blue flame for 1 minute. This fire deals no damage to it, but the zombie's attacks during that time each deal an extra 1d6 points of fire damage.

Spreading embalming fire over a creature's body requires a full-round action. A single flask of the substance is sufficient for a single creature of Medium size or smaller. A Large creature requires two flasks, a Huge creature four flasks, a Gargantuan creature eight flasks, and a Colossal creature sixteen flasks.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 20.

Weight: 8 oz.

Price: 20 gp.

Ghost Touch Oil: This clear oil has a slight tint of gray, and strange, wispy forms seem to swirl through it. When applied to a weapon, ghost touch oil allows it to affect incorporeal creatures normally for the next 1 minute.

Applying ghost touch oil to a weapon of any size is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. One flask of ghost touch oil contains enough liquid to coat one weapon of Medium size or smaller. A Large weapon requires two flasks, a Huge creature four flasks, a Gargantuan weapon eight flasks, and a Colossal weapon sixteen flasks.

This item is a modified version of ghostoil, which originally appeared in *Libris Mortis*.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 25.

Weight: 1 lb.

Price: 500 gp.

Ipecac: This syrupy alchemical concoction is derived from the ipecacuanha plant. Ipecac is a powerful emetic that can counter the effects of ingested poisons. The substance is also useful for expelling other unwanted objects from the drinker's stomach.

Drinking a dose of ipecac induces immediate vomiting—the drinker is nauseated for 1d4 rounds. A character who drinks a dose of ipecac within 1 minute of ingesting a poison gets a +5 bonus on the second saving throw against the effects of the poison.

A vial contains 10 doses.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 25.

Weight: —.

Price: 50 gp.

Lichbane: Lichbane is a bone-white unguent distilled from holy water and laced with positive energy. It affects only undead creatures.

Lichbane is applied to a weapon like contact poison. An undead creature struck by a treated weapon must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude saving throw or take 1 point each of permanent Intelligence drain, Wisdom drain, and Charisma drain. One minute later, the undead creature must succeed on a second DC 17 Fortitude saving throw or take an additional 1d4 points each of Intelligence damage, Wisdom damage, and Charisma damage. This damage cannot reduce any ability score below 1.

Applying lichbane to a weapon of any size is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. One flask of lichbane contains enough of the substance to coat one weapon of Medium size or smaller. A Large weapon requires two flasks, a Huge creature four flasks, a Gargantuan weapon eight flasks, and a Colossal weapon sixteen flasks.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 25.

Weight: 1 lb.

Price: 650 gp.

Liquid Night: This dark, sticky fluid provides a daylight-sensitive undead creature with temporary protection from the sun's deadly rays. It allows the creature to ignore any vulnerability to sunlight for a full hour. If subjected to a spell or magical effect that would cause extra damage to an undead creature that is vulnerable to sunlight, the creature is treated as not having that vulnerability (however, this also burns away the liquid night, ending the protection against either mundane or magical sunlight). Liquid night has a distinct musky odor of moonflower (one of its ingredients).

Spreading liquid night over a creature's body requires a full-round action. A single flask of the substance is sufficient for a single creature of Medium size or smaller. A Large creature requires two flasks, a Huge creature four flasks, a Gargantuan creature eight flasks, and a Colossal creature sixteen flasks.

Craft (alchemy) Check DC: 25.

Weight: 1/2 lb.

Price: 150 gp.

NEW SPELL

DAMNING DARKNESS

Evocation [Darkness, Evil]

Level: Cleric 4, Darkness 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Object touched

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Light dies, and evil blossoms in the tenebrous heart of nothing.

This spell is similar to *darkness* (PH 217), except that those within its area also take damage. Creatures of good alignment take 2d6 points of damage per round while in the spell's area, and creatures that are neither good nor evil take 1d6 points of damage per round. Like *darkness*, the area of *damning darkness* has a radius of 20 feet. If the spell is cast on a small object, its effect (including damage) can be blocked by concealing the object within a lightproof covering.

Damning darkness counters or dispels any light spell of equal or lower spell level.

Arcane Material Component: A dollop of pitch with a tiny needle hidden inside it.

NEW MAGIC ARMOR

Characters might obtain a suit of unusual armor by vanquishing the Necromancer (see tactical encounter K78 on page 178).

VAMPIRE HIDE

Vampire hide grants its wearer the physical protection of magic studded leather as well as the damage resistance possessed by vampires.

Description: Prepared from a single layer of tanned vampire skin, this looks like studded leather armor whose studs resemble sharp incisor teeth. Necromantic residue remaining in the *vampire hide* keeps the armor pliant and responsive.

Lore: Characters can learn the following information about *vampire hide* by making Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) checks at the appropriate DCs, as listed below.

DC 18 (arcana): *Vampire hide* is a form of corporeal undead armor (*Libris Mortis* 76), which is magically crafted from the essence of various types of undead. Such armor possesses special qualities, such as damage reduction or more exotic abilities, depending on the type of undead creature from which it was crafted.

DC 18 (religion): Necromantic residue of the undead from which the armor was crafted remains present in the armor. However, not enough residue remains for the armor to be treated as an actual undead creature (so, for instance, undead armor can't be turned).

Activation: The armor continually grants its benefits to its wearer while worn. Anyone can wear undead armor, although those with the appropriate armor proficiency gain the most benefit.

Effect: In addition to providing the protective qualities of +3 *studded leather*, a suit of *vampire hide* grants the wearer damage reduction 5/silver and magic.

Aura/Caster Level: Strong necromancy; CL 12th.

Construction: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, caster level 12th, Knowledge (religion) 5 ranks, *create undead*, 8,000 gp, 640 XP, 16 days.

Weight: 20 lb.

Price: 63,325 gp.

NEW MAGIC WEAPON

One of the legendary items that can defeat Strahd, the *Sunsword* lies hidden somewhere in Barovia.

SUNSWORD

This legendary blade, when whole, is the bane of undead—especially vampires.

Description: The *Sunsword* is a magic bastard sword whose blade is a crystalline form of glassteel, while the hilt and guard are forged of platinum. The blade glows with a dim blue light until it is brought within 30 feet of undead, increasing its radiance to a brilliant sapphire.

The weapon's blade and hilt were sundered long ago. While separated from its hilt, the blade of the *Sunsword* resembles an ordinary longsword.

Lore: Characters can learn the following information about the *Sunsword* by making Gather Information or Knowledge (history) checks at the appropriate DCs, as listed below.

DC 15 (history): The *Sunsword* is a unique form of the *sun blade* whose powers are unlocked through a special bonding ritual. In later centuries, more costly and powerful *sun blades* were created that need not be bonded to the wielder.

DC 18 (history) or Gather Information: Ages ago, Strahd employed a powerful wizard to destroy the *Sunsword*. The process involved separating the hilt and the blade, which were to be destroyed simultaneously. However, before the second step could be completed, the wizard's assistant stole the blade and attempted to flee from Barovia. The assistant's body was later found in the woods, but not the blade.

DC 20 (history): Since the assistant's treachery, Strahd has lived in fear that the blade might be found. A special ceremony is needed to fashion a new hilt. A character can undertake the bonding ritual only after succeeding on this check (and thus, those of lower DCs).

Activation: The effects of the unbonded weapon apply whenever the blade is wielded. Its full benefits are available only to a wielder who successfully completes the bonding ritual.

Effect: The *Sunsword* is a +1 *bastard sword* that can be wielded by someone who has proficiency with the short sword. It appears to be a bastard sword, and deals damage appropriate to that weapon, but can be wielded by a character proficient with either a bastard sword or short sword.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate transmutation; CL 8th.

Construction: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Profession (weaponsmithing) 8 ranks, 1,500 gp, 120 XP, 3 days.

Weight: 6 lb.

Price: 3,000 gp.

SUNSWORD BONDING RITUAL

When you perform this ritual, you forge a bond with the *Sunsword*, allowing you to channel its more powerful abilities.

Prerequisite: Character level 9th, expenditure of 11,000 gp.

Task: The mundane-looking blade of the separated *Sunsword* must be found.

Ceremony: You must spend 8 hours praying to a good deity with the blade of the *Sunsword* in one hand, and the prerequisite amount of precious items (preferably in platinum) also at hand. When the ceremony ends, the blade jumps onto a newly fashioned platinum guard and hilt, and the *Sunsword* is born anew, bonded to you.

Benefit: Performing this ritual grants you additional powers while wielding the *Sunsword*, but also inflicts personal costs on you. First, the blade is treated as a +2 *bastard sword* that can be wielded as a short sword.

Against evil creatures the weapon is a +4 *bastard sword* that can be wielded as a short sword. Against Negative Energy Plane creatures or undead creatures, the sword is treated as if silvered and deals double damage (and $\times 3$ on a hit instead of the normal $\times 2$).

Once per day you can swing the *Sunsword* vigorously above your head while speaking the command words "Feel the fires of day!" The *Sunsword* then begins shining in a 10-foot radius around you and extends outward at 4 feet per round for 10 rounds thereafter, to create a globe of light with a 60-foot radius equal to natural sunlight (similar to the *daylight* effect). When you stop swinging, the radiance fades to a dim glow that persists for another minute before disappearing entirely.

The *Sunsword* is good-aligned, and any evil creature attempting to wield it gains one negative level. The negative level remains so long as the sword is in hand and disappears once the sword is dropped.

Personal Costs: On any day the bonded wielder draws the *Sunsword*, you forfeit 8 hit points and accrue a skill check penalty of -2 for that day. These costs fade 24 hours later, unless you again draw the *Sunsword*.

NEW RINGS

The four items described below confer ongoing benefits to their wearers.

BAND OF SPELL ENHANCEMENT

This ring gives one spell cast per day a boost in caster level and DC.

Description: This green band is an iron ring coated with brilliant green enamel, through which a delicate tracery of red lines run.

When activated, the red lines flare with magical light, which insinuate themselves into the visual display of the boosted spell cast next, if any, then fade.

Lore: The wizard Tenambulum, renowned as a demon catcher in his day, was also something of a spell smith. He delighted in utilizing various items and implements designed to leverage his already impressive spellcasting abilities. (Knowledge [arcana] DC 20)

Tenambulum wasn't so much a court wizard to the displaced Zarovich nobility as a wizardly advisor. When the

Zaroviches were displaced from their hereditary lands, it was through Tenambulum's timely aid that the royal family survived. (Knowledge [history] DC 30)

Activation: The wearer can spend a swift action once per day immediately prior to casting a spell to gain the ring's effect.

Effect: When activated, the ring enhances the next spell you cast, making it more difficult for targets to resist. The next spell you cast this round is cast at +2 caster level and its save DC increases by 1.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate transmutation. CL 7th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, Rary's mnemonic enhancer, 5,050 gp, 404 XP, 11 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 10,080 gp.

MOONFRIEND

Moonfriend is a ring that boosts the turning ability of its wearer.

Description: This ring is a silver band only slightly thicker than hair, but thick enough to hold the small inscription on the interior of the band in Elven that reads "Moonfriend."

When activated, the ring sparks as if discharging an electrical charge.

Activation: If you wear the ring, it automatically activates each time you attempt to turn undead.

Effect: If you attempt to turn undead while wearing the ring, you are treated as if three levels higher than your actual level for the purpose of the turning. This effect is not granted on rebuke attempts.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate necromancy. CL 10th.

Construction: Forge Ring, class ability to turn undead, 4,500 gp, 360 XP, 9 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 9,000 gp.

RING OF PARTING PREVENTED

This ring keeps the wearer safe from death effects once per day for a limited period.

Description: This band is carved of bone. Inscribed on the interior of the band in Infernal are the words "*Flesh's last bulwark*." The exterior of the band is carved to resemble a swarm of humanoid skeletons interlocked in a circle.

On the round the ring is activated, horrifying screams peal forth, as if each of the dozen or so tiny skeletons on the band have uttered their final death shriek.

Activation: If the ring is worn, it automatically activates the first time in any given 24 hour period that the wearer is subject to a death effect, energy drain, or any negative energy effect. The ring activates quickly enough that the wearer enjoys the ring's effect (an immediate action that counts against the wearer's free actions for the round). The ring activates only 1/day.

Effect: As the *death ward* spell, when a *ring of parting prevented* is activated, the wearer enjoys 7 minutes of immunity to all death effects, energy drain, and negative energy effects (such as from *inflict* spells or *chill touch*). The 7 minutes of immunity cannot be used in smaller chunks—once the ring is activated, its protection runs through to the effect's duration.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate necromancy. CL 7th.

Construction: Forge Ring, *death ward*, 5,040 gp, 404 XP, 11 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 10,080 gp.

RING OF THE RIGHTEOUS

This ring suffuses the wearer with positive energy.

Description: This wide band is completely white, as if forged of snow as hard as iron.

While activated, the ring glows with a golden, reddish radiance, which extends to the wearer in a halo-like aura.

Activation: If you spend a standard action, the ring's effect becomes active once per day for a period of 5 minutes.

Effect: Once activated, you charge yourself with positive energy. This gives you 25 temporary hit points and a +4 sacred bonus to Strength. The temporary hit points (or what remain of them) fade along with the sacred bonus to Strength.

Aura/Caster Level: Faint transmutation. CL 5th.

Construction: Forge Ring, *righteous might*, 2,700 gp, 216 XP, 6 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 5,400 gp.

NEW WONDROUS ITEMS

Some of the magic items described below play a significant part in the *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft* adventure.

CODEX ADVOCARE

Codex Advocare is a tome that gives benefits to warlocks who can use invocations.

Description: The book, 1 foot by 1 foot and about 1 inch thick, is bound in red leather. The title is stamped in silver foil in Infernal on the cover, and the interior is scribed with the descriptions for all manner of invocations, also written in infernal.

The book doesn't look any different when it is providing its benefit to whoever claims it.

Lore: Evidence about the book's creation is sparse, but stories trace it to the mad warlock Ricardus Bakari, the famed "First Warlock." (Knowledge [history] DC 25)

Activation: The book must be formally claimed in order to gain its benefit. Instructions for claiming the book are printed clearly on the flyleaf in Trina's spidery hand. The book can only have one claimant at any one time—the most recent claimant becomes the sole claimant. To claim the book, you must read the invocation descriptions from beginning to end (a task of some 8 hours) and then verbally claim the book. Once it is claimed, the book always provides its benefit to its owner, as long as the book is part of the owner's equipment.

Effect: You know one more least invocation than normal (you must be able to use least invocations in order to be able to utilize this ability).

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate necromancy. CL 11th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, class ability to use invocations, 10,000 gp, 800 XP, 20 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 20,000 gp.

DAYHEART

The Dayheart is a singular in-dungeon feature that grants vampires linked to it immunity to the effects of sunlight.

Description: This item appears as a nearly 10-foot-diameter heart carved of crystal.

When any living creature moves to within 20 feet of it, it flares ruby red, then begins to pulse redly like the last, fluttering beats of a heart spiked with some hellish drug.

The Dayheart possesses a magically enhanced hardness of 30 as long as the *hellheart locket* remains whole (the *hellheart locket* is in Khyristrix's possession) and 200 hit points. If the *hellheart locket* is destroyed, the Dayheart's hardness drops to 5.

Activation: The main effect of the Dayheart is always active.

Effect: The Dayheart provides immunity to linked vampires from daylight.

Linked vampires currently include: Strahd, one vampire spawn from room K60B, four vampire spawn in K60A, Rafail in K60A, Sasha Ivlskova in crypt 20 of K86, the two vampire spawn in crypt 16 of K86, plus any other vampires or spawn Strahd converts during the course of the adventure.

Note that the Dayheart relies on the *hellheart locket* to channel energy from the Devil's Garden (K57). If the locket is smashed, the Dayheart's ability to pass on this immunity to linked vampires fades in 1 month's time. If the Devil's Garden is completely hacked down, the immunity offered by the Dayheart fades immediately.

Aura/Caster Level: Strong conjuration. CL 20th.

Construction: Unique.

Weight: Immovable.

Price: Priceless.

FANG OF INHABITATION

A *fang of inhabitation* serves as a special replacement focus for those capable of casting or using *magic jar*. If a *fang of inhabitation* is used as the focus of the effect, the chance of success is enhanced, but the effects of the inhabitation are different.

Description: This fang-shaped ruby is affixed to an iron chain.

The *fang* radiates a strong aura of evil if it is the target of a detect magic spell.

Activation: The *fang of inhabitation* automatically activates whenever it is used in conjunction with a *magic jar* effect. A *fang of inhabitation* can only be used twice before it loses all efficacy.

Effect: The *fang of inhabitation* does not function against creatures whose HD is equal to or higher than the possessor's HD. If hopeful possessor uses a *fang of inhabitation* in conjunction with *magic jar* in order to take control of a victim, the DC the victim must resist against is +2 and the possessor gets a +2 bonus to penetrate spell resistance, if any.

Unlike a standard *magic jar* effect, the possessor successfully leaps from the *fang of inhabitation* to the body of the victim, the victim's soul doesn't enter the fang—it remains in its body, but is completely suppressed and subjugated to the possessor. This means that the possessed victim (the "body") retains all the attributes of the victim, physical and mental, class abilities and supernatural powers, if any. On the other hand, the possessor loses access to all its abilities, including purely mental abilities, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities. However, the possessor can make

attacks, skill checks, and use all the special abilities of its victim as it chooses.

Finally, the duration of a *magic jar* enabled by a *fang of inhabitation* is permanent (unless the possessor freely returns to the fang), and can't be dispelled by *dispel magic*, *dispel evil*, or other dispelling methods, nor can it be suppressed by *protection from evil* or similar means. The only way to expel the possessor is to kill the victim's body.

If the *fang of inhabitation* moves out of *magic jar* range of fused possessor and victim, the possessor is expelled and its spirit dies, while the victim regains control of itself. Otherwise, the rules for determining what happens under various circumstances are as described in the *magic jar* spell text on page 250 of the *Players' Handbook*.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate necromancy (evil). CL 9th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *magic jar*, *permanency*, 9,000 gp, 720 XP, 18 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 18,000 gp.

GHOST HOOD

This detachable hood allows its wearer to see invisible and ethereal creatures once per day.

Description: This black, voluminous hood fully covers the head, and casts deep shadows on the wearer's features.

When activated, the shadows are partly dispelled as the wearer's eyes begin to shine with a discerning, ghostly luminance, though the rest of the face remains difficult to discern in anything but full daylight.

Activation: If the wearer spends a standard action, the hood's effects become active once per day for a period of 30 minutes.

Effect: Once activated, the wearer enjoys the effects of a *see invisibility* spell, allowing her to see any objects or beings invisible within her range of visions, as well as any that are ethereal, as if normally visible. The wearer can discern the difference between visible, invisible, and ethereal creatures she sees.

Aura/Caster Level: Faint divination. CL 3rd.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *see invisibility*, 1,080 gp, 87 XP, 3 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 2,160 gp.

HEART TALISMAN OF THE RED DRAGON

This petrified heart of the red dragon briefly lends its wearer the fire subtype.

Description: This blackened, fibrous mass of hardened tissue looks organic, but is as hard as stone. It resembles a shriveled, shrunken heart, which has been affixed to a silver chain, allowing it to be worn as an amulet.

When activated, the heart talisman burns as if with fire (no heat is produced), producing light equivalent to a torch.

Activation: If the wearer spends a standard action, the heart's effects become active once per day for a period of 7 minutes.

Effect: Once activated, the owner gains immunity to fire and takes half again as much (+50%) damage from cold for 7 minutes. In truth, the wearer is treated as if he had temporarily gained the fire subtype.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate transmutation. CL 7th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *polymorph*, 5,050 gp, 404 XP, 11 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 10,080 gp.

HELLHEART LOCKET

The *hellheart locket* channels energy to the Dayheart from Khyristrix's devil's garden. If smashed, it releases a devil who briefly answers your bidding.

Description: The locket is a blood red locket in the shape of heart, on a gold chain. If opened, the locket reveals the picture of a bearded devil.

If the locket is smashed (destroying it), a bearded devil springs up in a flash of hellfire.

Activation: The main effect of the locket (transforming energy from the devil's garden to the Dayheart) is always active as long as a single devil's tree and the locket exists. If the locket is smashed, the secondary effect is activated.

Effect: The *hellheart locket*, forged specially by Khyristrix in Hell, invisibly but constantly transforms the ambient soul-anguish of the transformed devil's trees (that were once people) into fuel utilized by Strahd's Dayheart.

However, if the locket is smashed, the Dayheart loses its ability to protect those linked with it against the effects of daylight. Simultaneously, a bearded devil is summoned as if by a conjuration spell, and serves you for 11 rounds before returning to Hell. This permanently destroys the locket.

Note that an enchantment on the Dayheart that links it to the locket provides the Dayheart with great resistance versus harm. If the locket is smashed, that conjoined resistance is lost.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate conjuration. CL 11th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, you must be a baatezu, 1,125 gp, 90 XP, 3 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 2,500 gp.

HOLY SYMBOL OF RAVENKIND

Originally the holy symbol of the High Priest in Barovia, this platinum holy symbol is a powerful icon of good.

Description: The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* is a platinum amulet shaped like the sun, with a large crystal embedded in its center. Around the crystal are inscribed symbols of light and truth.



The Holy Symbol of Ravenkind

Lore: The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* is a unique holy symbol sacred to the good-hearted faithful of Barovia. It possesses powers that can only be accessed after the item is specially bonded to its wielder. (Knowledge [religion] DC 15)

The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* actually predates the establishment of any church in Barovia, and its existence is thought to be a reason for the prevalence of the raven symbol in that land. It was first used by a paladin named Lugdana, who was among the earliest settlers of the valley. (Knowledge [history or religion] DC 18; this check and the previous check are necessary to undertake the bonding ritual)

According to legend, a giant celestial raven—or an angel in the form of a raven—delivered the *Holy Symbol* to Lugdana so she could use it to root out a nest of vampires. To this day, vampires have a powerful loathing for the symbol and all it represents. (Knowledge [religion] or bardic knowledge DC 20)

Activation: The benefits of the holy symbol apply whenever it is worn by a good character.

Effect: When worn by a good character, the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* acts as a *phylactery of faithfulness*. When the wearer of the *Holy Symbol* attempts to turn undead, the crystal at its center flares with a bright light, illuminating the area as a light spell for 1 full round.

Aura/Caster Level: Faint divination; CL 1st.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *detect evil*, 1,000 gp, 40 XP, 2 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 1,500 gp.

Holy Symbol of Ravenkind Bonding Ritual

When you perform this ritual, you forge a bond with the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, allowing you to channel its more powerful abilities to combat the undead.

Prerequisite: Character level 9th, expenditure of 1,500 gp.

Task: You must utterly destroy a vampire or vampire spawn while wearing the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*.

Ceremony: You must spend 8 hours praying to a good deity (or to a raven intercessor) while holding the *Holy Symbol*. You must make offerings worth at least 1,500 gp.

Upon completing the ceremony, the character immediately loses 4 hit points. This loss reduces the character's maximum hit point total as long as the *Holy Symbol* remains bound to him. In addition, the character takes a –2 penalty on Fortitude saves and a –1 penalty on attack rolls until the *Holy Symbol* leaves his possession permanently.

Benefit: Performing this ritual grants you three additional powers you can use while you are wearing the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*. First, you can use *dancing lights*, *flare*, or *light* at will as the spells, by speaking a command word. The save DC is 10, or 10 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher. The caster level of this ability is 5th.

Second, while wearing the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, you can detect undead creatures within 60 feet by concentrating as a standard action. In addition, your attacks bypass any damage reduction of undead creatures as long as you wear the *Holy Symbol*. The caster level of this ability is 5th.

Finally, two times per day, you can use *halt undead* as the spell. When you do so, the *Holy Symbol* flares with bright white light equivalent to a *daylight* spell centered on you. The

light persists only for the duration of the *halt undead* effect. The caster level of this ability is 10th, and the save DC is either 14, or 13 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher.

ICON OF RAVENLOFT

A fixture in the chapel of Castle Ravenloft, the *Icon of Ravenloft* retains its holy power despite the pollution of the Devil Strahd.

Description: The *Icon of Ravenloft* is a small carving of a raven made from the purest silver. It stands about 12 inches tall, 6 inches wide, and 1/4 inch thick.

Lore: The faithful of Barovia have long revered the raven as a symbol of all that is good, and of good struggling against evil. The prefects of the church crafted this icon to aid in that struggle. (Knowledge [religion] DC 22)

Activation: The *Icon* can be used as a holy symbol to turn undead, in which case its power is use-activated. Activating its healing power requires speaking a command word (a standard action), *doloshvinya*.

Effect: When used as a holy symbol, the *Icon of Ravenloft* allows the wielder to turn undead as if his class level were four levels higher than it actually is. (It does not grant the ability to turn undead to a character who does not already have that ability.)

In addition, once per day, a good character capable of casting divine spells can use the *Icon* to cast *cure serious wounds*, healing 3d8+10 hit points to the creature touched.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate necromancy and conjuration (good); CL 10th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *cure serious wounds*, 10th-level cleric, 9,000 gp, 720 XP.

Weight: 5 lb.

Price: 18,000 gp.

LIBER BLASPHEME FRAGMENT (NECROMANCER'S FRAGMENT)

This fragment of the tome *Liber Blaspeme* provides instructions on the creation of a flesh golem.

Description: This tome is tattered and missing major portions of its content. It is written in Infernal, and contains many detailed drawings of humanoid anatomy.

Activation: Reading the information and following the directions provided grants the effect.

Effect: This fragment of the *Liber Blaspeme* is functionally equivalent to the *flesh golem manual* described on page 258 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The book contains *animate dead*, *bull's strength*, *geas/quest*, and *limited wish* which can be used towards a flesh golem's creation. The reader may treat her caster level as one level higher than normal for the purpose of creating a flesh golem. The book supplies 780 XP for the creation of a flesh golem. If the instructions in the book are followed, they grant a +5 competence bonus on skill checks made to craft the golem's body.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate enchantment, necromancy (evil), and transmutation. CL 8th.

Construction: Craft Construct, creator must be caster level 8th, *animate dead*, *bull's strength*, *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, 4,000 gp, 320 XP, 8 days.

Weight: 5 lb.

Price: 8,000 gp.

OATHSTONE (NICORAMUS)

Each *oathstone* is keyed to a particular troll stalker (of which only a few remain), and serves as the physical manifestation of the obedience the troll stalker must give to an authorized bearer of the *oathstone*.

Description: A 3-inch cube of onyx holds an inset translucent white stone. Inscribed below the translucent circular stone is the name Nicoramus in Abyssal.

Activation: The main effect of the stone is always active as long as the stone exists. If the stone is smashed, the troll stalker Nicoramus, if still alive, might agree to take up one task for the destroyer out of gratitude; see K61 on page 162, though it is not in any way compelled to do so.

Effect: The *oathstone*, forged specially by long-dead mages for a war no one remembers, binds the duly authorized holder of the stone to the troll stalker Nicoramus. The authorized holder of the stone can expect perfect obedience from Nicoramus.

However, no one left alive has the authority to transfer authorization to hold the stone. Thus, Lucian will be the last one capable of wielding Nicoramus as a weapon.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate conjuration. CL 11th.

Construction: Unique.

Weight: —.

Price: 500 gp (Priced as a curiosity, since authorization can't be transferred.)

PENDANT OF GOOD HEALTH

A *pendant of good health* preserves you against disease, even supernatural disease (such as the necromantic infection).

Description: The pendant is a silver charm in the shape of a maple leaf, on a thin silver chain.

When activated, a silvery sheen spreads from the amulet over the wearer's skin, then dissipates an instant later.

Activation: The pendant functions up to one time per day, automatically removing any disease you would otherwise contract. If you suffer from a pre-existing disease, the pendant removes it (or randomly removes one, if suffering from more than one).

Effect: You are cured of up to one disease per day if you are wearing the pendant (and if no one else has benefited from its effect on the same day).

Aura/Caster Level: Faint conjuration (Healing). CL 5th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *remove disease*, 3,000 gp, 240 XP, 6 days.

Weight: —

Price: 6,000 gp.

PORTAL KEY

The *Portal Key* opens a specific crypt (crypt 12) in the catacombs below Ravenloft (area K84). In addition to its mundane usage, it improves the odds for those who use the key to access the vault to safely come out the other side.

Description: When first found, the key is in two parts. If joined, the key becomes a fused whole. The key is large, untarnished, and the words "Portal Key" are etched into the metal along the side when the key is whole. (When the key is in two halves, one half reads "Portal," the other half "Key.")

Activation: The beneficial protective effect is activated with the mundane effect, when the key is used in the lock of vault 12 in room K84.

Effect: In addition to unlocking vault 12, the key improves your odds by +25% of avoiding a bad outcome when the portal moves you to a new location. See vault 12 in room K84 for additional information.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate divination. CL 7th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *divination*, 5,040 gp, 404 XP, 11 days.

Weight: —.

Price: 10,080 gp.

PREFECT'S VESTMENTS

Formerly worn by the head of the church in Barovia, *prefect's vestments* are ecclesiastical garb that enable clerics to turn undead more frequently.

Description: *Prefect's vestments* consist of a long white chasuble—a circular outer robe with a hole in the center for the head, designed to be worn over clothing, armor, or another robe. The front of the garment is embroidered with white thread, forming holy symbols of good deities interspersed with white ravens.

Lore: *Prefect's vestments* were a common badge of faith for the spiritual leaders of the knights of the raven. (Knowledge [religion] DC 20)

Activation: *Prefect's vestments* are use-activated.

Effect: When a character who can turn undead wears *prefect's vestments*, he can turn undead 1/day without counting against his maximum allowed turn attempts that day.

When a character who can smite evil wears the *vestments*, he can use his smite ability 1 once per day without counting against his maximum allowed smite attempts that day.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate conjuration (good); CL 4th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *holy smite*, 3,000 gp, 240 XP.

Weight: 1 lb.

Price: 6,000 gp.

SAINT ECATERINA'S BURIAL SHROUD (ARTIFACT)

This shroud was laid across Ecaterina when she was laid to rest. Ecaterina's holy deeds in life passed partly into her shroud as her body decomposed and it thus became an artifact capable of healing disease in good-hearted folks.

Description: This fine linen cloth still bears the image of a woman faintly limned on its surface.

When the effect is activated, the entire cloth glows with a white, cleansing light for a moment.

Lore: When Ecaterina was seventeen, she sought to martyr herself in a hopeless fight against orc barbarians so she could see Pelor, but she triumphed instead. Victorious, she founded several Ecaterine convents. (Knowledge [history] DC 25 or Knowledge [religion] DC 15)

When she was thirty-seven, Ecaterine decided to establish one of her convents near Barovia. Despite being nightly accosted by vicious wolves, haunts, and the occasional undead avenger, Ecaterine managed to accomplish her goal. After making certain that the convent, located in a well-defended tower, was secure against the kind of threats she

had come to expect, she left to report her success. When she returned a month later, she found the tower a burnt out shell with nothing inhabiting it but the ghosts of slain sisters. Ecaterine is said to have gone mad, and none ever saw her alive again, though it was whispered she was captured and buried alive in a prison below Castle Ravenloft. (Gather Information DC 30, or Knowledge [religion] DC 20, or Knowledge [local] DC 20)

Activation: The shroud is activated whenever it is touched or laid upon a creature.

Effect: A good character touched by the shroud is instantly healed of all diseases. An evil creature who touches it must make a successful DC 14 Fortitude save or contract a supernatural disease called eternal torpor. Eternal torpor has an incubation period of 1 day and deals 1d6 points of Dexterity damage on each day the victim fails a DC 14 Fortitude save. While afflicted with eternal torpor, creatures cannot charge or run.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate conjuration (healing). CL 11th.

Construction: Unique.

Weight: —.

Market Equivalent: 3,000 gp.

SAINT MARKOVIA'S THIGHBONE (ARTIFACT)

Markovia's exalted deeds in life passed partly into her bones as the rest of her decomposed. Her remaining thighbone is an artifact whose touch inflicts great harm on vampires.

Description: This thick thighbone is scribed lightly with holy symbols of various faiths.

Lore: As a youth, Markovia followed her heart and became a priest in the church soon after her eighteenth birthday. She proved a charismatic proselytizer and consequently rose quickly in reputation. By her late twenties she had been priest, and had gained a reputation that no evil could stand before her. (Gather Information DC 25, or Knowledge [religion] DC 15, or Knowledge [local] DC 15)

One day, the vampire Strahd heard townspeople make the boasts that Markovia could probably defeat even the Master of the Castle himself, she was so holy. Enraged by this comparison and besmirchment of his power, he sent a passel of vampire spawn the church that very midnight. They confronted Markovia in her sanctum and were destroyed to a one. (Gather Information DC 27, or Knowledge [religion] DC 17, or Knowledge [local] DC 17)

Suffused with righteous victory after defeating a force of vampire spawn, Markovia advanced on Castle Ravenloft that very night. A great battle raged from the highest catacomb to the lowest parapet, but in the end, Markovia never returned to Barovia, and the Master of the Castle long walked with a limp and a grimace of pain. It is said he trapped Markovia in a crypt beneath his castle, and her remains linger there yet. (Gather Information DC 30, or Knowledge [religion] DC 20, or Knowledge [local] DC 20)

Activation: The thighbone activates if it is used in melee (as if a light mace) against any vampire or vampiric creature. Once used in a fight against a vampire where the thighbone scored at least one hit in the melee, the thighbone crumbles into so much shining dust after the fight concludes.

Effect: This powerful artifact acts as a +3 *holy disruption light mace* when used against a vampire or vampiric creature for the duration of a single combat.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate abjuration. CL 11th.

Construction: Unique.

Weight: —.

Market Equivalent: 2,000 gp.

SAINT BOGDAN'S FINGERBONE (ARTIFACT)

Bogdan's exalted deeds in life passed partly into his bones as the rest of him decomposed. His remaining fingerbone became an artifact capable of offering protection to those who carry it.

Description: This fingerbone's three segments are connected at each joint with threads of pale silver, and the joint is wrapped with hammered gold.

Lore: Before he was born, St. Bogdan was consecrated to Pelor because it seemed his mother might die of disease before he could be born. The consecration seemed to do the trick—his mother recovered, and he was born healthy. Throughout his long life, his very presence seemed to bring good luck to his friends and ill luck to his foes. In the end, St. Bogdan died of natural causes at the ripe old age of 104. (Knowledge [history] DC 25 or Knowledge [religion] DC 15)

Activation: The fingerbone's effect is active whenever it is carried.

Effect: This fingerbone charm grants the character carrying it a +1 resistance bonus on all saving throws.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate abjuration. CL 11th.

Construction: Unique.

Weight: —.

Market Equivalent: 2,000 gp.

STIFLED SKULL

This skull can muffle sound, until it is asked to scream its deadly scream. . . .

Description: This skull is of a female elf. The name "Dysania" is burned into its crown. Affixed around the skull's lower face is an iron gag—like a bandana except made of rusting iron, and holding an iron box securely in the skull's mouth. A tiny hole pierces the box and the mask in front.

When its *silence* effect is activated, the skull's eyes glimmer as with points of hellfire. When the skull's last scream is unstifled, the sound emitted is a dirgelike roar so potent it snuffs out life.

Lore: The skull belonged to an elf called Dysania who led a group of undead killers against Strahd. Dysania and her band were finally and fully defeated, and the unlucky adventurers were put to death through torture. The skull was infused with the malignancy of those last dark, silent nights in the crypt. (Knowledge [local], DC 25 or ask Cyrus [see encounter area K62, page 162])

Activation: If you spend a standard action and hold your finger in front of the small hole in the front of the mask, the skull's *silence* effect is activated once per day.

If you spend a standard action removing the iron gag, the skull's scream effect is activated, an effect usable but once; when the scream effect is activated, the skull crumbles and all magic fades.

Effect: When the *silence* effect is activated, *silence* (PH 279) descends in the selected 20-foot-radius area up to 520 feet away, and lasts for 3 minutes.

When the scream effect is activated, the skull unleashes a *wail of the banshee*, which kills up to 17 living creatures within 75 feet of the skull that fail a DC 23 Fortitude save; creatures closest to the skull are affected first. When this effect is used, the skull falls into dust.

Aura/Caster Level: Strong necromancy and faint illusion. CL 17th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *silence*, *wail of the banshee*, 5,000 gp, 400 XP, 10 days.

Weight: 3 lb.

Price: 10,000 gp.

LEGACY ITEMS

The *Sunsword* and the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* are presented in this adventure as magic items that gain additional power if the PCs complete rituals related to them. If you are familiar with the *Weapons of Legacy* sourcebook, you might recognize these rituals as similar to the legacy rituals presented in that book. This section presents full statistics for these two items as legacy items, allowing PCs who acquire them to continue to improve their powers as they gain levels beyond the scope of this adventure.

HOLY SYMBOL OF RAVENKIND

The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* is a platinum amulet shaped like the sun, with a large crystal embedded in its center. Around the crystal are inscribed symbols of light and truth.

Nonlegacy Game Statistics: Platinum holy symbol; Cost 1,500 gp. When worn by a good character, the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* acts as a *phylactery of faithfulness*.

Omen: When the wearer of the *Holy Symbol* attempts to turn undead, the crystal at its center flares with a bright light, illuminating the area as a *light* spell for 1 full round.

History

The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* is a unique holy symbol sacred to the good-hearted faithful of Barovia. It possesses powers that can only be accessed after the item is specially bonded to its wielder. (Knowledge [religion] DC 15)

The *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* actually predates the establishment of any church in Barovia, and its existence is thought to be a reason for the prevalence of the raven symbol in that land. It was first used by a paladin named Lugdana, who was among the earliest settlers of the valley. (Knowledge [history or religion] DC 18; Ritual of Bonding)

According to legend, a giant celestial raven—or an angel in the form of a raven—delivered the *Holy Symbol* to Lugdana so she could use it to root out a nest of vampires. To this day, vampires have a powerful loathing for the symbol and all it represents. (Knowledge [religion] or bardic knowledge DC 20; Ritual of the Pilgrim)

Lugdana finally met her end when she came into conflict with a band of witches at Lysaga Hill. The demon prince these witches worshiped, a fiend named Chernovog, stepped through a portal and battled the paladin for days, ranging all through the valley. Lugdana fell, but drove Chernovog back to the Abyss before dying. The *Holy Symbol* was lost for decades

after that. (Knowledge [religion or the planes] DC 31; Ritual of the Raven)

Legacy Rituals

Three rituals are required to unlock all the abilities of the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*.

Ritual of Bonding: You must spend 8 hours praying to a good deity (or to a raven intercessor) while holding the *Holy Symbol*. Cost: 1,500 gp. *Feat Granted:* Least Legacy (*Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*).

Ritual of the Pilgrim: You must travel to a new country where you have never been, discover a great evil that the people there face, and help to overcome that evil. When that is done, you must repeat the ritual of bonding, with more precious offerings. Cost: 13,000 gp. *Feat Granted:* Lesser Legacy (*Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*).

Ritual of the Raven: You must defeat a demon whose Challenge Rating is at least 2 higher than your level, although you need not do so alone. You must feed the demon's heart to the ravens, after preparing and anointing it with a mixture of very expensive oils and spices. Cost: 40,000 gp. *Feat Granted:* Greater Legacy (*Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*).

Wielder Requirements

Only good clerics and paladins can use the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind* to full effect.

HOLY SYMBOL OF RAVENKIND WIELDER REQUIREMENTS

Ability to turn undead
Any good alignment
Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks

Legacy Item Abilities

All of the following are legacy item abilities of the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*.

Personal Costs: Beginning at 6th level, a character who has performed the least legacy ritual for the *Holy Symbol* must pay some personal costs, in the form of permanent penalties to her attack rolls, Fortitude saves, and hit points. These costs are shown on the accompanying table. The hit point loss shown is cumulative—a character loses 2 hit points at 7th level, and then 2 more at 8th level, for example. The attack and save penalties are not cumulative: at 12th level, the character has a –2 penalty on both.

If a character reaches 12th level and has not performed the lesser legacy ritual, he does not pay the personal cost for 12th level or any subsequent levels until he does perform the lesser legacy ritual. Of course, he also does not gain any of the abilities granted by the *Holy Symbol* for 11th level and above. The same applies when the character reaches 17th level.

Lightbringer (Su): If you are at least 5th level and have performed the least legacy ritual for the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, you can use *dancing lights*, *flare*, or *light* at will as the spells, by speaking a command word. The save DC is 10, or 10 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher. The caster level of this ability is 5th.

Undead Detection (Su): At 6th level, while wearing the *Holy Symbol of Ravenkind*, you can detect undead creatures within 60 feet by concentrating as a standard action. In addition, your attacks bypass any damage reduction of undead

creatures as long as you wear the *Holy Symbol*. The caster level of this ability is 5th.

Halt Undead (Sp): Two times per day, if you are at least 9th level, you can use *halt undead* as the spell. When you do so, the *Holy Symbol* flares with bright white light equivalent to a *daylight* spell centered on you. The light persists only for the duration of the *halt undead* effect. The caster level of this ability is 10th, and the save DC is either 14 or 13 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher.

Cure Light Wounds (Sp): Three times per day, if you are at least 10th level, you can use *cure light wounds* as the spell (caster level 5th) by touching the *Holy Symbol* to the creature to be healed and speaking a command word. This ability can instead deal damage to undead creatures. The save DC is either 11, or 11 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher.

Improved Turning (Su): When you reach 11th level, if you have performed the lesser legacy ritual, you can use the *Holy Symbol* to turn undead as if your effective cleric level were four levels higher than it actually is. The *Holy Symbol* does not grant you the ability to turn undead if you don't already possess it.

Daylight (Sp): When you reach 12th level, you can cause the *Holy Symbol* to shed *daylight* as the spell, at will on command. The caster level of this ability is 10th.

Death Ward (Sp): When you reach 14th level, you can bestow a *death ward* on a creature you touch with the *Holy Symbol* once per day (caster level 11th).

Break Enchantment (Sp): At 16th level, once per day when you issue the command word and gesture with the *Holy Symbol*, you can free subjects from enchantments, transmutations, and curses, as with the *break enchantment* spell (caster level 11th).

Wisdom Enhancement (Su): When you reach 17th level and perform the greater legacy ritual, the *Holy Symbol* grants you a +6 enhancement bonus to your Wisdom score while you wear it.

Mass Heal (Sp): When you reach 20th level, you can use *mass heal* as the spell, three times per day on command (caster level 20th). This ability can instead deal damage to undead creatures. The save DC is either 23, or 19 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher.

HOLY SYMBOL OF RAVENKIND

———Personal Costs———				
Wielder Level	Attack Penalty	Fort Save Penalty	Hit Point Loss	Abilities
5th	—	—	—	Lightbringer
6th	-1	—	—	Undead detection
7th	—	-1	2	—
8th	—	—	2	—
9th	—	-2	—	<i>Halt undead</i>
10th	—	—	2	<i>Cure light wounds</i>
11th	—	—	—	Improved turning
12th	-2	—	—	<i>Daylight</i>
13th	—	—	—	—
14th	—	—	2	<i>Death ward</i>
15th	—	-3	—	—
16th	—	—	2	<i>Break enchantment</i>
17th	—	—	—	Wisdom enhancement
18th	-3	—	—	—
19th	—	—	—	—
20th	—	-4	—	<i>Mass heal</i>

SUNSWORD

The *Sunsword* is a bastard sword whose blade is formed of crystal glassteel, while the hilt and guard are forged of platinum.

Nonlegacy Game Statistics: +1 bastard sword; Cost 3,000 gp. When wielded by a good character, the blade can be wielded as if a short sword with respect to weight and ease of use. (In other words, the weapon appears to all viewers to be a bastard sword, and deals bastard sword damage, but an individual proficient with either the bastard sword or the short sword can use the *Sunsword* with equal proficiency.)

Omen: The blade glows with a dim blue light, unless within 30 feet of undead, in which case its radiance swells to a brilliant sapphire.

History

The *Sunsword* is a unique blade that once opposed Strahd—its power was the power of Light, and Strahd feared it, though its whereabouts have long since passed from general knowledge. (Knowledge [history] DC 15)

The *Sunsword* is a unique blade that possesses powers accessible through a special bonding ritual. Once the powers were awakened, only the wielder bonded to the blade could call upon the abilities inherent to the weapon, abilities most suited to destroying undead. (Knowledge [history] or Gather Information DC 18; *Sunsword Bonding Ritual*)

Fearing the blade's power, Strahd employed a powerful magician to destroy the *Sunsword*. The first part of the process required the hilt and the blade be separated, then destroyed simultaneously. When the blade was separated from the hilt, the blade took on the appearance of a normal long sword. However, before the hilt and blade were destroyed, the wizard's assistant Gabriela stole the blade and fled Barovia. (Knowledge [history] or Gather Information DC 20; Trial by Flight)

Gabriela's noble flight was successful in that she saved the unattached blade from destruction; however, she didn't succeed in fleeing Barovia before some nameless menace beneath the dark boughs claimed her. Though Gabriela's body was later found in the woods, not so the hilt or the blade of the *Sunsword*. (Knowledge [religion] or bardic knowledge DC 31; Trial by Death)

SUNSWORD

———Personal Costs———			
Wielder Level	Skill Check Penalty	HP Loss	Abilities
5th	—	—	+2 bastard sword
6th	—	2	Good-aligned
7th	-1	—	Silvered
8th	—	2	—
9th	—	2	Fires of day
10th	—	—	Undeath's Bane
11th	—	2	+3 bastard sword
12th	—	2	—
13th	-2	—	+4 bastard sword
14th	—	2	—
15th	—	—	<i>Death ward</i>
16th	—	2	Fires of day, improved
17th	-3	2	+5 keen bastard sword
18th	—	—	—
19th	—	2	<i>Banish undead</i>
20th	—	2	<i>Undeath to death</i>

Legacy Rituals

Three rituals are required to unlock all the abilities of the *Sunsword*.

Sunsword Bonding Ritual: You must spend 8 hours praying to a good deity (or any sun god) while holding the *Sunsword*. Cost: 2,000 gp. *Feat Granted:* Least Legacy (*Sunsword*).

Trial By Flight: You must defeat an evil not by direct force of arms, but through wit, craft, or other stratagem. When that is done, you must repeat the bonding ritual, with more precious offerings. Cost: 13,500 gp. *Feat Granted:* Lesser Legacy (*Sunsword*).

Trial by Death: You must defeat an undead whose Challenge Rating is at least 2 higher than your level, although you need not do so alone. When that is done, you must repeat the bonding ritual, with more precious offerings. Cost: 38,000 gp. *Feat Granted:* Greater Legacy (*Sunsword*).

Wielder Requirements

Any good-aligned creature that can use a sword would be interested in using the *Sunsword*.

SUNSWORD WIELDER REQUIREMENTS

Base attack bonus +2
Any good alignment

Legacy Item Abilities

All of the following are legacy item abilities of the *Sunsword*.

Personal Costs: Beginning at 6th level, a character who has performed the least legacy ritual for the *Sunsword* must pay some personal costs, in the form of permanent penalties to his skill checks and hit points. These costs are shown on the table below. The hit point loss shown is cumulative. The skill check penalties are not cumulative.

If a character reaches 12th level and has not performed the lesser legacy ritual, he does not pay the personal cost for 12th level or any subsequent levels until he does perform the lesser legacy ritual. Of course, he also does not gain any of

the abilities granted by the *Sunsword* for 11th level and above. The same applies when the character reaches 17th level.

Good-Aligned (Su): At 6th level, the *Sunsword* awakes to goodness; any evil creature attempting to wield it gains one negative level. The negative level remains as long as the sword is in hand and disappears once the sword is dropped.

Silvered (Su): Against Negative Energy Plane creatures or undead, the *Sunsword* is treated as if silvered.

Fires of Day (Su): At 9th level, once per day you can swing the *Sunsword* vigorously above your head while speaking the command words "Feel the fires of day!" The *Sunsword* then begins shining in a 10-foot radius around you and extends outward at 4 feet per round for 10 rounds thereafter, to create a globe of light with a 60-foot radius equal to natural sunlight (similar to a *daylight* effect). When you stop swinging, the radiance fades to a dim glow that persists for another minute before disappearing entirely.

Undeath's Bane (Su): Against Negative Energy Plane creatures or undead creatures, the sword deals double damage (and $\times 3$ on a critical hit instead of the normal $\times 2$).

Death Ward (Sp): When you reach 14th level, you can bestow a *death ward* on a creature you touch with the *Sunsword* once per day (caster level 11th).

Fires of Day, Improved (Su): As fires of day, except you can use the ability an unlimited number of times per day.

Banish Undead (Sp): Once per day, when you yell out, "Return to the Dark" while holding the *Sunsword*, you can affect undead similarly a *banishment* spell affects extraplanar creatures. This effect treats all undead as extraplanar whose home plane is the Negative Energy Plane. The undead's save DC is 20 or 17 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher.

Undeath to Death (Sp): When you reach 20th level, you can use *undeath to death* as the spell once per day on command (caster level 20th). This ability can instead deal damage to undead creatures. The save DC is 20 or 17 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher.



The Sunsword

SLAB OF SACRIFICE

The *Slab of Sacrifice* is a unique magical location imbued with the centuries of presentient blood worship to a proto-deity of slaughter. To the ancients, blood was life and death. Thus, the slab holds the power to grant new life to those sacrificed upon its face, and with that new life, a temporary vigor and fast healing ability. The *Slab of Sacrifice* lies beneath Castle Ravenloft, in the foundation pillarstone on which the castle was later built. The builders of the castle had no knowledge of the ancient temple beneath it.

Lore: The *Slab of Sacrifice* is a magical location imbued with the power of life and death. (Knowledge [arcana] DC 30 or Knowledge [history] DC 30)

Creatures sacrificed on the slab return to life with a temporary vigor and healing ability unmatched by mortals. (Knowledge [arcana] DC 33 or Knowledge [nature] DC 33)

It is possible that the reason Strahd's pact with death turned him into a vampire was partly due to the influence of the nearby *Slab of Sacrifice*. (Knowledge [arcana] DC 25 or Knowledge [religion] DC 25)

Description: The slab is located in a subterranean cavern that is partially overrun with giant ants. The slab is flanked by a megalith and a sometimes animate crudely carved stone idol (a rogue eidolon). The *Slab of Sacrifice* is a 10-foot-by-10-foot-by-10-foot chunk of black granite, partly buried in surrounding rock (creating a daislike platform 3 feet above the regular floor). Pictograms run around the visible lip of the slab. If magically translated (no living creature uses the "alphabet" of the pictograms), they read, "Spill your life to the Blood God. The Blood God repays total sacrifice."

Prerequisite: In order to be affected by the *Slab of Sacrifice*, a living creature must stand or lie upon the slab.

Location Activation and Effect: The *Slab of Sacrifice* grants its special ability to one creature in each 24-hour period. That creature must die upon the altar.

Special Ability Activation and Effect (Sp): A creature that dies upon the slab returns to life in the following round with no level loss, no Constitution loss, no loss of spells, and at full hit points. Furthermore, the creature possesses unnatural health, in the form of fast healing 5 for a period of 24 hours.

A creature can gain this ability only once. If a creature attempts to activate the effect a second time, it is not returned to life upon the altar, but simply dead.

If multiple creatures attempt to gain the effect simultaneously, only one of those on the slab is affected; the rest are simply dead.

The slab grants its benefit to a total of three different creatures each year.

Aura: Strong necromancy.

Ability Value: 4,000 gp.

PLAYER HANDOUTS

LETTER A

Hail to thee of might and valor:

I, a lowly servant of the township of Barovia, send honor to thee. We plead for thy so desperately needed assistance within our community.

The love of my life, Ireena Kolyana, has been cursed by the witches of Lysaga Hill, and even the good people of our town are powerless to free her from this enchantment. She wastes away under the witches' curse and I would have her saved from this menace.

There is much wealth in this community. I offer all that might be had to thee and thy fellows if thou shalt but answer my desperate plea.

Come quickly, for her time is at hand! All that I have shall be thine!

Kolyan Indirovich,

Burgomaster of Barovia

LETTER B

Barovia. The worms creep beneath our floors and our streets, they feast on the flesh of our dead. High in the castle, the once lord is no longer, the new lord is not yet, without form, void. All is void and vanity.

Ireena, Ireena, Ireena! Long have I kept you at my side, long will I keep you close to my heart! Save my Ireena!

I am the Burgomaster. The Master! Kolyan am I! Soon the worms will feast on me.

Come! Do not tarry!

LETTER C

Hail to thee of might and valor:

I, a lowly servant of the township of Barovia, send honor to thee. We plead for thy so desperately needed assistance within our community.

The love of my life, Ireena Kolyana, has been afflicted by an evil so deadly that even the good people of our town cannot protect her. She languishes from her wound and I would have her saved from this menace. But I fear the only cure lies within the dreaded walls of the castle, where none may enter without risking their lives.

There is much wealth in this community. I offer all that might be had to thee and thy fellows if thou shalt but answer my desperate plea.

Come quickly, for her time is at hand! All that I have shall be thine!

Kolyan Indirovich,

Burgomaster of Barovia

LETTER D

Hail to thee of might and valor:

I, a lowly servant of the township of Barovia, send honor to thee. We plead for thy so desperately needed assistance within our community.

The legions of Hell itself are at our gates! The dead rise up from their graves and seek to drag us down with them! Not content to slaughter us in our homes, they spread the taint of their horrible curse, so that those they kill join their numbers!

There is much wealth in this community. I offer all that might be had to thee and thy fellows if thou shalt but answer my desperate plea.

Come quickly, for our time is at hand! All that I have shall be thine!

*Kolyan Indirovich,
Burgomaster of Barovia*

LETTER E

Hail to thee of might and valor:

I, a lowly servant of the township of Barovia, send honor to thee. We plead for thy so desperately needed assistance within our community.

Our village is nestled in the Svalich Woods, an ancient forest that has long lay quiet with the weight of ages on its shoulders. But recent nights have brought the howls of wolves to our ears, and the night of the last full moon brought far worse out of the forest. Enormous wolves attacked with unnatural savagery, killing many of us and leaving many more wounded.

The love of my life, Ireena Kolyana, was one of those wounded, and I fear for her. Her injury refuses our healing remedies, and she languishes abed.

There is much wealth in this community. I offer all that might be had to thee and thy fellows if thou shalt but answer my desperate plea.

Come quickly, for I dread the rising of the next full moon! All that I have shall be thine!

*Kolyan Indirovich,
Burgomaster of Barovia*

LETTER F

Hail to thee of might and valor:

I, a lowly servant of the township of Barovia, send honor to thee. We plead for thy so desperately needed assistance within our community.

The love of my life, Ireena Kolyana, has been afflicted by an evil so deadly that even the good people of our town cannot protect her. She languishes from her wound and I would have her saved from this menace.

There is much wealth in this community. I offer all that might be had to thee and thy fellows if thou shalt but answer my desperate plea.

Come quickly, for her time is at hand! All that I have shall be thine!

*Kolyan Indirovich,
Burgomaster of Barovia*

LETTER G

Hail to thee of might and valor:

I, the Burgomaster of Barovia, send you honor—with despair.

My adopted daughter, the fair Ireena, has been these past nights bitten by a creature calling its race “vampyr.” Over four centuries and more, he has drained this land of the life-blood of its people. Now, my dear Ireena suffers from an unholy wound caused by this vile beast. Yet I fear, too, that the creature has some more cunning plan in mind. He has become too powerful to be fought any longer.

So I say to you, give us up for dead and encircle this land with the warding symbols of holiness. Let the holy ones call up on their power that the Devil in our land may be contained within the walls of weeping Barovia. Leave our sorrows to our graves, and save the world from this evil fate of ours.

There is much wealth entrapped in this community. Return for your reward after we are all departed for a better life.

*Kolyan Indirovich,
Burgomaster of Barovia*

*The master of Ravenloft is having
guests for dinner . . . and you are invited.*

A dark shape emerges from the shadow of Castle Ravenloft. A flash of lightning reveals the sneering countenance of Count Strahd von Zarovich. His eyes burn with eternal hunger and contempt for life. From a narrow balcony, he peers out into the drizzling twilight at the few sad lights of the village below and mutters a single name:
"Ireena . . ."

The Expedition to Castle Ravenloft™ campaign adventure updates the original 1st Edition Ravenloft® module, retaining the Gothic flavor and familiar elements while expanding and reimagining some of the locations to create a deeper, richer adventure experience.

This campaign adventure is designed for characters of levels 6–10 and features a new, easy-to-use combat encounter format. This book also presents new magic items, feats, and prestige classes for player characters.

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