

TOME OF HORRORS

2020



INSTANT ENCOUNTERS VOLUME ONE

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STAY NEAR THE WALLS

This one-sheet adventure can be inserted into any dungeon, but works best for dungeons that were once the home of mad mages, wizards who dabbled in things best left alone, and similar misguided or insane villains. It is best used with a strong party of Tier 2, but even a weak or lower level party can manage to pass with caution and a little luck.

ROOM OF THE DEMON

The doors to this room are locked (can be picked using thieves' tools and a DC 15 Dexterity check) and decorated with arcane sigils of protection. These sigils are carved in to the doors and inlaid with gold and lapis lazuli, but are not active. Beyond the doors is a small stone walled chamber that contains a workbench and an inlaid summoning circle in the floor, and a very irritated hydrodemon. Upon the workbench is a large leather bound book and a range of arcane implements that would be worth 500 gp to the right buyer. In the middle is a large human skull with a single ruby embedded in its forehead. The ruby is a fake, but a very well done fake.

THE SUMMONING CIRCLE

This room is only fifteen by fifteen feet and its center is a nearly thirteen-foot diameter summoning circle. The circle is off center in the room, leaving space for the small workbench in one corner. Air shimmers with arcane power above the inlaid circle of stone carved arcane designs filled with a viscous red fluid. Behind this shimmering barrier stands a hydrodemon who paces back and forth.

The circle has remained intact and unbroken since the demon was summoned. Arcane power channeled through the sigils prevents the hydrodemon from crossing the barrier as well as summoning in others of its kind as well as using either *dimension door* or *teleport* to

escape. If any creature crosses the threshold created by the summoning circle they are at the demon's mercy, but it still cannot reach across the barrier. Should the sigils be erased or the fluid filling them disturbed by a living hand the circle is broken and the demon is free to vent its wrath before returning to its home plane.

THE DEMON

The demon wants out, it has been stuck in this circle since it was summoned (depending on the dungeon this might be a very long time). It will first try to talk its way out, but will quickly lose its patience and make threats. Crossing a two-foot wide path is difficult, but not impossible. However, when anyone starts across the room the demon will *darkness* to obscure the room. To pass the circle in the dark without interrupting it requires a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Anyone who gets a natural "1" on this roll does more than merely letting a limb cross the barrier, they have disturbed the sigils and thus freed the demon.

HYDRODEMON

This massive frog-like creature stands nearly 10 feet tall. Its flesh is warty and dark green and its eyes are sickly yellow. It has large flaps of skin under its arms that seemingly function as wings.

Hydrodemons are frog-like demons that swim the River Styx. They are the only known creatures in existence that can touch the waters of the Styx without suffering any ill effects.

Hydrodemons are 10 feet tall and weigh about 4,000 pounds. They move by leaping in a manner akin to a frog. Large flaps of skin under their arms allow them seemingly to glide when leaping. The flesh of a hydrodemon is warty and green. Its eyes are a sickly yellow in color.

HYDRODEMON

Large fiend (demon), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (9d10 + 36)

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	8 (–1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +7

Skills Perception +6

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Abyssal

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Amphibious. The hydrodemon can breathe air and water.

Magic Resistance. The hydrodemon has advantage on saving

throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The hydrodemon's weapon attacks are magical.

Innate Spellcasting. The hydrodemon's spellcasting ability is

Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It

can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material

components:

At will: *darkness*, *detect magic*, *water walk*

2/day each: *dimension door*, *teleport*

1/day each: *hallow*

ACTIONS

Multiaction. The hydrodemon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws. The demon can use its Sleep Spittle instead of using its bite.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the demon can't bite another target.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Sleep Spittle. One target within 60 ft. must succeed on a DC 15

Wisdom saving throw or fall unconscious for 1 minute. The sleeping target can be awakened if someone uses an action to shake or slap the sleeper awake, and the target will wake if it takes damage.

Summon (1/day). The demon chooses what to summon and attempts a magical summoning.

A hydrodemon has a 30% chance of summoning one hydrodemon.

A summoned demon appears in an unoccupied space within 60 feet of its summoner, acts as an ally of its summoner, and can't summon other demons. It remains for 1 minute, until it or its summoner dies, or until its summoner dismisses it as an action.



COME BACK JOHNNY!

This one-sheet adventure is designed for a party of 2-6 characters of Tier 2, though some powerful or clever Tier 1 adventures might be able to succeed where others would fail. There should be some characters with wilderness skills, and social skills might prove useful.

JOHNNY!

While traveling in desert lands such as those found in the Caliphate, the characters are approached by a dusty but obviously well off traveler. This stranger introduces herself as Nishan Meryem Saat, the local lord. She had been out riding her newly purchased tame salt drake named, exotically to her, Johnny. The beast grew unruly and threw her off, thankfully she landed safely, but as Johnny is a very expensive purchase she wants him back. The beast's trained was to obey commands in Common, perhaps the characters would be able to help? She can offer up to 5,000 gp and her thanks, as well as a stay at her estate

JOHNNY'S ROOST

The salt drake is not completely trained; the merchant who sold him to the Nishan exaggerated more than a bit. Johnny has landed on a nearby pillar of rock at the edge of a low ridge. His roost is in a cave near the top of a long and difficult climb. It is 135 feet to the roost and climb up requires two successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) checks; a failed check leaves the character stranded on the pillar unable to climb up or down, but may try again with disadvantage and risk a fall.

The roost itself was once the cave of an ascetic anchorite. The ascetic's naturally mummified remains lay on the floor amid a tumble of debris. A few scrolls are tucked in to niches in the walls (*bless, gentle repose, healing word*). The bones and debris are dry and crackly, anyone moving around inside the small cave needs to succeed at a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or cause a cloud of dust and a loud noise that scares off Johnny.

Johnny can be clamed with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, but it will require a second check to allow him to accept a rider. Failure spooks Johnny. Even once a rider is in the saddle a new check must be made every round to keep him clam so that he does not buck, and it is 360 feet back to the Nishan.

If he is spooked Johnny will attempt to flee to another pillar of stone (there are several and he will go back and forth as needed). If prevented from flying away or blocked he will attack. It might take several tries to get him calm enough to be ridden back to the Nishan.

SALT DRAKE

This powerful creature resembles a blue dragon with mottled black wings and crimson eyes. Its ears are frilled and swept back against its head.

Salt drakes are found in warm, and climates such as deserts or salt flats.

Salt drakes are omnivorous creatures and very territorial, even fighting among themselves to protect their domains. Most encounters are with a solitary drake. Only in the midsummer months is it common to find a mated pair or family. A salt drake's scales range from dull blue to midnight blue, and it is often mistaken for a young blue dragon. Salt drakes range from 8 feet to 30 feet long. Though difficult to train, salt drakes are favored as mounts by goblins, gnolls, and hobgoblins.

A salt drake's primary diet consists of large quantities of salt. This diet enables the drake to spew salt at its opponents. A salt drake opens combat from the air using its salt spray breath weapon. If unable to utilize its breath weapon, it relies on its claws and bite to finish off any remaining opponents.

TRAINING A SALT DRAKE

A salt drake requires training before it can bear a rider in combat. To be trained, a salt drake must have a friendly attitude toward the trainer. Training a friendly salt drake requires ten weeks of work and a successful DC 30 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check. Riding a salt drake requires an exotic saddle.

Salt drake eggs are worth 6,000 gp apiece on the open market, while young are worth 12,000 gp each. Professional trainers charge 2,000 gp to rear or train a dragonnel.

Carrying Capacity: A salt drake is considered unencumbered up to 516 pounds; encumbered between 517–1,038 pounds, and heavily encumbered between 1,039–1,560 pounds. It cannot carry more than 1,560 pounds.



SALT DRAKE

Large dragon, neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (9d10 + 36)

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	4 (–3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5, Survival +4

Damage Immunities acid

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Draconic

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Nictitating Membranes. Salt drakes have advantage on saving throws against being blinded.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The salt drake makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (3d4) acid damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Salt Spray (Recharge 5–6). The salt drake releases a spray of razor-sharp salt crystals in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the target takes 22 (5d8) acid damage plus 22 (5d8) slashing damage, or half as much damage on a successful saving throw. In addition, if a creature takes any damage from the salt spray, it is poisoned until it takes a short or long rest.



THE THING IN THE BARROW

The **Thing in the Barrow** can be played by a party of 2-6 Tier 2 characters. It is set in the Northlands, but can be moved to anywhere in the Lost Lands where surface burials are covered by earthen mounds. Any mix of characters is suitable.

THE LEGEND OF THE MONSTER BENEATH THE HILL

Local legends speak of a horrible creature that sleeps beneath a hill in the woods. When roused to anger, which can be caused by anything ranging from young lovers trysting in the woods to a hunter failing to follow a wounded deer, the monster goes on a rampage throughout the area. This invariably causes the death of the offender. The same legends also say that the hill the monster sleeps beneath is filled with treasures taken from those it has slain.

All this is true, to a degree, as are most myths and legends. There is a monster in the woods, but it sleeps in its burial mound and not a simple hill. This barrow is one from the long dead Andovan people who once dwelled in the Northlands. Usually the sword wight within dreams its undying dreams and is content, but form time to time someone does something foolish and disturbs the mound. That those instances are frozen in local memory and linked with some transgression is sheer happenstance.

The characters either hear these legends and seek the barrow out or word reaches that several people have been killed in the woods outside the bounds of the jarl's holdings. Either way, they must travel through the woods past the areas normally frequented by Northlanders. This should present some interesting encounters with dangerous wildlife, fey, and other forest dwellers.



THE BARROW

The barrow itself is not a very impressive one, just a single eight foot long stone chamber covered over with heaps of dirt that have long since grown grass, shrubs, and a lone tree. That tree, a large oak, open up the stones sealing the barrow and have allowed the wight to leave, though it usually prefers to rest in its burial chamber. Most likely it will make a stand outside of its barrow, using darkness and foliage to hide before launching an attack. It prefers to simply slay its foes, saving its *life drain* ability for when a foe looks close to death or the wight feels it has won the battle and can take the time to plan an army for the next one. At any time it is encountered the wight will have 1d4-2 zombies with it.

The grave goods buried with the wight were of great wealth when it was alive, but few today care for verdigris covered bronze and copper ewers, plates, and urns. Among these are a few items of note, a single ear spindle of gold (40 gp), an ornately decorated bronze gorget (prying the jewels off yields 135 gp worth of semi-precious stones), and a cloak pin of silver and onyx worth 45 gp. Anyone who takes these grave goods and leaves the wight undead will be hunted down by it without mercy.

WIGHT, SWORD

These wicked and depraved creatures lived and died by the sword, and now, their dark taint passes through their weapons to tear at your soul.

Much like the standard wight, these undead abominations are warped and twisted caricatures of their former selves. The sword wight bears a massive greatsword, and the cold touch of the grave courses through the creature, through the weapon, into the hapless target.

SWORD WIGHT

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (chainmail)

Hit Points 66 (12d8+12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons that are not silvered

Damage immunities poison

Condition immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Improved Critical. Greatsword attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

Magical Weapons. Attacks by the sword wight using its weapons are considered to be magical.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the sword wight has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Weapon Master. When using its greatsword attack, a sword wight may reroll any 1 on damage dice, keeping the second result.

ACTIONS

Multiaction. The sword wight makes two greatsword attacks or two longbow attacks. It can use its life drain in place of one greatsword attack.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) slashing.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:*

4 (1d6 + 1) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The sword wight adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the sword wight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.



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ALWAYS ROLL A 20 ON YOUR CHARISMA (GAMEMASTER) SAVING THROWS!

