

Shadows over
VATHAK

THE SHRINE

of St. Mina of the Dust

5TH EDITION HORROR

An Adventure for Four 1st- 3rd level PCs for
Shadows over Vathak Horror Roleplaying Game

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The Shrine of St. Mina of the Dust

Adventure Primer

Adventure Level: Four 1st- 3rd level PCs

Estimated Duration: 1-3 hours

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For years a small shrine dedicated to *St. Mina of the Dust* has existed peacefully in an obscure, easily forgotten forest. The clerics and worshippers of the saint pilgrimage to the shrine every autumn, each time praying that their sanctuary never be discovered.

Many years ago, when people were still new in the area, a vindari noble family strove to protect the countryside, bringing justice and safety to those who had none. In time, their name faded from memory. With that passing eventually came the passing of the knowledge of the family burial chambers.

Now their long forgotten tomb lies beneath *The Shrine of St. Mina of the Dust*, its once honorable occupants changed into horrible undead creatures, and the clerics have been making sure the tomb remained sealed ever since.

Recently, a small band of **deep ones**, hungry and cranky, stumbled across the shrine. Within hours they had managed to slay or frighten everyone in the shrine, rapidly claiming it as their new home. *After all*, the **deep ones** reasoned, *why shouldn't we settle down someplace nice?* Word spread slowly that the shrine existed and had been overrun and conquered.

ADVENTURE LOCATION

The PCs are traveling near the forest and, at every small village and town within 50 miles of the forest, they hear rumors and hushed stories of the shrine's

capture. They are eventually intrigued enough to investigate, hired to investigate, or ordered by the *Church of the One True God*.

This adventure is ideal in a forested area near water. In **Shadows over Vathak**, we suggest the *Forest of Alder* in **Seleasia**.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The GM is free to contrive any means necessary to get the characters out to investigate the shrine. Some possible ideas include:

- One of the party members is a cleric or paladin ordered to investigate the shrine and, if possible, reclaim it.
- There are rumors of treasures abandoned at the shrine during the retreat.
- A young scholar researching their family's history uncovers information about such a tomb and after some additional research, actually determines its location. They hire the PCs to investigate, not knowing about the *Shrine of Saint Mina of the Dust*.
- It is near one of the PCs' homeland, and they remember stumbling upon the shrine as a youth. They want to return out of loyalty to their hometown.
- The PCs stumble upon *The Shrine of St. Mina of the Dust* while trekking overland, perhaps during a thunderstorm.
- One of the PCs is related to the family resting in the crypt and has discovered knowledge of the location or has been made aware of the burial site.

Shadows over VATHAK

Welcome to the world of Shadows over Vathak, a realm of dwindling hope and despair. As players, your characters fight to survive in a land threatened with destruction by the rise of the ancient and evil Old Ones and their spawn. Your characters may represent points of light in the darkness or give in to wicked temptations. Most will fall somewhere in between — survivors struggling to eke out another day. Though the followers of the One True God speak of divine providence while battling the Old Ones, the sins of the Church often rival those of their enemies. In the world of Vathak, your character's perceptions of heroes and villains is a thin line drawn by their own personal morality and, of course, determined by the victor.

This adventure is set in the dark fantasy world of Vathak. As such there are references to the history, characters, and locations of that world. However, with a little bit of alteration, these adventures can be suited for any horror themed 5th edition game.

If you are new to Shadows over Vathak, make sure you sign up for our newsletter and receive information on our new releases.

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

To run this adventure, it is recommended that you have copies of the 5th Edition core rulebooks.

In this adventure you might come across spells, abilities, creatures, magic items, and other references to content from these corebooks. When this happens that item will appear in bold/red text, like this:

"The **goblins** are waiting to attack the caravan as it comes around the steep bend."

If the content is new (such as monsters or equipment) and not included in one of the corebooks, we will make note of the source or include the item in an appendix to the adventure.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following are a collection of common abbreviations that might be used in this adventure.

AC	Armor Class	GP	Gold pieces
CE	Chaotic Evil	HP	Hit Points
CG	Chaotic Good	LE	Lawful Evil
CN	Chaotic Neutral	LG	Lawful Good
cp	Copper pieces	LN	Lawful Neutral
CR	Challenge Rating	N or TN	Neutral, or True Neutral
d%	Two d10s die one as the 10s the other as the 1s	NE	Neutral Evil
d10	A die of 10 sides	NG	Neutral Good
d12	A die of 12 sides	NPC	Non-Player Character
d20	A die of 20 sides	PC	Player Character
d4	A die of 4 sides	pp	Platinum pieces
d6	A die of 6 sides	sp	Silver Pieces
d8	A die of 8 sides	Stats	The statistical representation of a character
DC	Difficulty Class	XP	Experience Points
EL	Encounter Level		
EP	Electrum Pieces		
GM	Game Master		



BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have been properly motivated and are within site of the shrine, paraphrase the following:

The forest opens into a natural clearing. Sitting, toward the northern edge of the clearing, is a small building built of wood and mud and in a state of disrepair. The building is one-story in height with a wooden door on the east side that hangs by the top hinge, the other hinges are broken and missing. There are no windows on the building.

Smoke rises lazily from the chimney of the building and voices can be barely heard inside.

A battered and broken holy symbol on the roof proves that this is "The Shrine of St. Mina of the Dust."

THE CLEARING IN THE FOREST (MAP A)

The clearing holds the shrine building. Two openings in the forest, one on the south and one on the east, allow access to the clearing and a small dirt path leads through the area. Animals that once lived in harmony with the shrine have fled and the clearing is unnaturally quiet.

ENCOUNTER A.1

There are three **deep ones** standing guard on the east side of the shrine. Anyone entering the clearing is immediately spotted by the **deep ones** unless using Dexterity (Stealth). The **deep ones** are relatively lazy since capturing the shrine (-5 to passive Perception, disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks).

If the **deep ones** notice the visitors, two of them move to attack while the third sounds an alarm, raising a horn to his lips. Sounding the alarm takes a full-round action.

ENCOUNTER

Deep Ones (2) (see Appendix).

1. THE WELL

This small well is about ten feet in diameter and was once covered with a wooden platform that now lies to one side, completely destroyed. The water inside is black and disgusting, completely ruined in the short time since the shrine was overrun.

The well is about 45 feet deep and, if investigated, completely empty of anything but the black water.

POISONED WELL WATER

Anyone drinking from, falling into, or diving into the well has a chance of contracting *River Sickness*.

RIVER SICKNESS

Any creature which either drinks or exposes open wounds to tainted water has a chance to contract river sickness. It must succeed at a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or symptoms of the illness manifest in 2d6 hours. At that time, blisters begin to appear near the face and the muscles weaken, causing the creature's to have disadvantage on Constitution and Charisma checks and saving throws.

At the end of every long rest, the creature may attempt a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the symptoms persist, but on a successful save, the infected creature recovers from the disease. A successful Wisdom (Medicine) check by another character negates the disadvantage that this disease imposes on the Constitution save after a long rest.



2. SMALL TREES

Hanging in each of these two trees are the bodies of a human cleric, both of whom were slain in the original battle for *The Shrine of St. Mina of the Dust*. They are stripped of all equipment and clothing and have been used as target practice by the **deep ones** – twenty or so used arrows protrude from each lifeless corpse. Parts of flesh have been stripped from the bodies where something has been eating at them.

3. THE SHRINE OF ST. MINA OF THE DUST

If the alarm was sounded, two more **deep ones** emerge from the door on the east side within four rounds. All of the **deep ones** fight to the death.

INSIDE THE SHRINE OF ST. MINA OF THE DUST (MAP B)

Once the **deep ones** are defeated, the PCs will no doubt want to investigate *The Shrine of St. Mina of the Dust*. When they get to the door of the shrine, paraphrase the following:

Dozens of burning torches hang on the walls of the shrine, which is simply a large open room with a fireplace on the far east-side and a long 15' x 5' table toward the northern side. In the other corners of the room, and scattered about the room, are piles of filthy rags that the deep ones use as bedding.

Entering the shrine you see a man in chainmail standing before the fireplace. He wears the unholy symbol of Yeghniths and glares at the PCs as they enter. He is inside the surface building of the complex consulting a book when the characters approach. If the guarding deep ones outside raise the alarm, he sends out his two mutated deep one assistants, and prepares himself for combat.

"You'll pay for interfering here," he screams as he attacks.

1. THE TABLE

This large wooden table, with stools on each side, is covered in the remains of previous meals, scattered loot, and the body of a cleric who has been tortured and murdered. The deep ones variously divided up any treasure he may have once had.

2. THE FIREPLACE

The mantle once held various holy relics but they've been smashed or otherwise removed and is now being used merely for storage save a few unholy trinkets and the severed hand of a human.

No fire has been lit in the fireplace for many years. A DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check easily discovers the lever revealing stairs leading into the crypt. The lever can be activated as a standard action and the floor drops in the time of a move action, allowing a character that triggers it to activate and move down the stairs in the same turn.

ENCOUNTER

The fallen cleric, Batista Vilfaus, was once a member of the holy order that maintained this shrine. He had discovered the secret of the crypt in his youth, as well as his blood relations to them through local historical texts. Bent on retrieving any valuable heirlooms for himself, and rising from a lifetime of poverty, he spent years infiltrating the cleric order and gaining their trust. He hired the deep ones and assisted in the takeover of the shrine, killing several members of the holy order in their sleep.

He has been attempting to unlock the many doors and vaults below and has managed to keep the deep ones under his control by promising them power and treasure once the crypt is completely open.

Batista Vilfaus is found with the two deep ones from the previous encounter if the alarm was not sounded or they were not otherwise sent out to combat the players. If Batista Vilfaus realizes he will lose, he will attempt to flee into the fireplace and the crypts below.

Batista Vilfaus (see Appendix)

Deep Ones (2) (see Appendix).

TREASURE SIDEBAR

- **Exterior Shrine:** Besides what meager items the **deep ones** come normally equipped with, a dozen arrows that missed their intended targets in the trees and a shortbow can be found in the area.
- **Interior Shrine:** Sitting on the mantle of the fireplace are an assortment of unholy trinkets (worth 50 gp to the right buyer) and lock picking tools.
- **Random Treasure:** If the characters defeat the traitorous cleric, they are free to search the piles of rags, corners of the room, and the table for any available treasure. You can determine treasure for the deep ones randomly, or use the standard equipment of three NPC clerics, representing the three slain holy people slaughtered by Batista Vilfaus and his deep ones.
- **Suggested Treasure:** *healing potions* (4), *scroll of comprehend languages*, *scroll of darkness*, *alchemist's fire* (2), *breastplate*, *scale mail* (2), *light crossbow* (2) with 40 bolts, *greatsword*, *quarterstaff* (2), *silver holy symbol*, *wooden holy symbol*

If you use this full list of suggested treasure, Batistia Vilfaus is clever enough to have armed his deep one guards and self with much of the best of it, like the potions and scrolls. The equipment would all be for Medium sized creatures, so it may have been too large and awkward to wear normally, but it would not be beyond a deep one to have a few pieces on even if they gained no full benefit from just a helm, boots, or gauntlets.

In addition, whether Batista Vilfaus is defeated or simply flees, he always leaves behind the *Journal of Delfon Vilfaus*, normally on the fireplace mantel.

JOURNAL OF DELFON VILFAUS

A large tome composed of two heavy covers of wood and finely etched iron construction. In addition to the writings of Delfon Vilfaus, his descendant (Battista Vilfaus) has written notes in the back describing his thoughts and plans involving the betrayal of the clerics of *The Shrine of St. Mina of the Dust*, as well as cryptic notes to his explorations of the Crypts below. If characters “get stuck” while adventuring, allow them to consult this journal for an additional clue but needing to spend time reading or deciphering it.

The book is over 100 years old and so much of the information inside is considered common knowledge by most modern alchemists.

Value 395 gp (770 gp with preparation ritual)

Spellbook

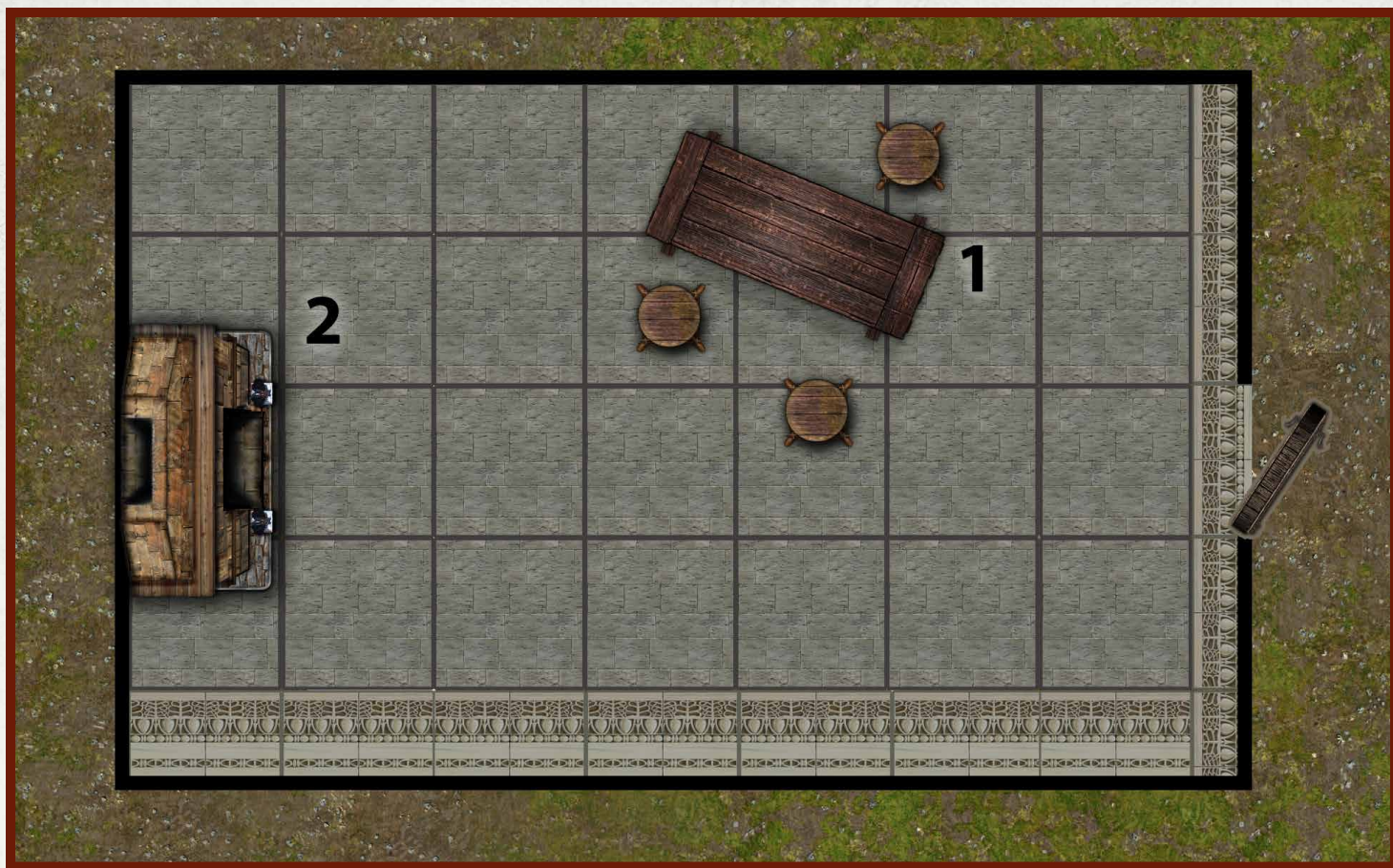
2nd— *alter self, blur, detect thoughts, invisibility, suggestion*

1st— *charm person, comprehend languages, disguise self, expeditious retreat, illusory script, jump, silent image, sleep*

Preparation Ritual

Alchemical Protection. The alchemical knowledge granted by this book protects you from poisons and alchemical items. Activate this effect as a reaction when you make a saving throw against poison or an alchemical item but before rolling the saving throw. You gain advantage on that saving throw. Once this ability is used, it cannot be used again until the next dawn.





THE VILFAUS CRYPT: FIRST LEVEL (MAP C)

Behind the fireplace a secret lever reveals stairs down to the Vilfaus family crypt. Once the characters have defeated all the **deep ones** and possibly Batista Vilfaus on the surface, they may decide to investigate the crypt (assuming they locate the lever mechanism in the fireplace). When they descend the stairs of the crypt, paraphrase the following:

Your light burns away the darkness and exposes a sizable cavern which serves as a crypt. The floor is smooth but unworked stone. The walls are rough hewn. Small mounds of debris lay in the many niches in the walls and on the floor throughout the room, clearly recently disturbed. It appears deep ones might have been using this as their sleeping quarters as piles of debris litter the room.

ENCOUNTER

The debris is the skeletal remains of warriors originally buried in the crypt. Several **deep ones** are hiding amongst the remains waiting to ambush the PC's if they come near. After any of the PCs have entered the cavern proper (20 feet from the stairwell down), the **deep ones** will spring from hiding to snipe or ambush them.

If Batista Vilfaus flees the characters from upstairs, the four **deep ones** here come to his aid, harrying the player characters while he continues to escape through the secret door at the far side of the crypt.

1 - COMMON CRYPT

A stone sarcophagus rests in an alcove on the far side from the stairwell. Decorated with ornate runes carved on top of it, and seeming to depict the rise and fall of some family. If opened, it is found to be empty. There is an inscription written in an ancient tongue of humans on the exterior of the lid of the sarcophagus. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) reveals the message:

"When I move to greet the morning sun, my greatest secret shall be revealed."

There are faded murals on the three walls of the small alcove where the sarcophagus is located. An Intelligence check (DC 10) reveals they seem to depict an entire day, starting at sunrise (east wall), detailing the middle of the day (north wall), and finally the end of the day (west wall). The east and west walls are identical.

ENCOUNTER

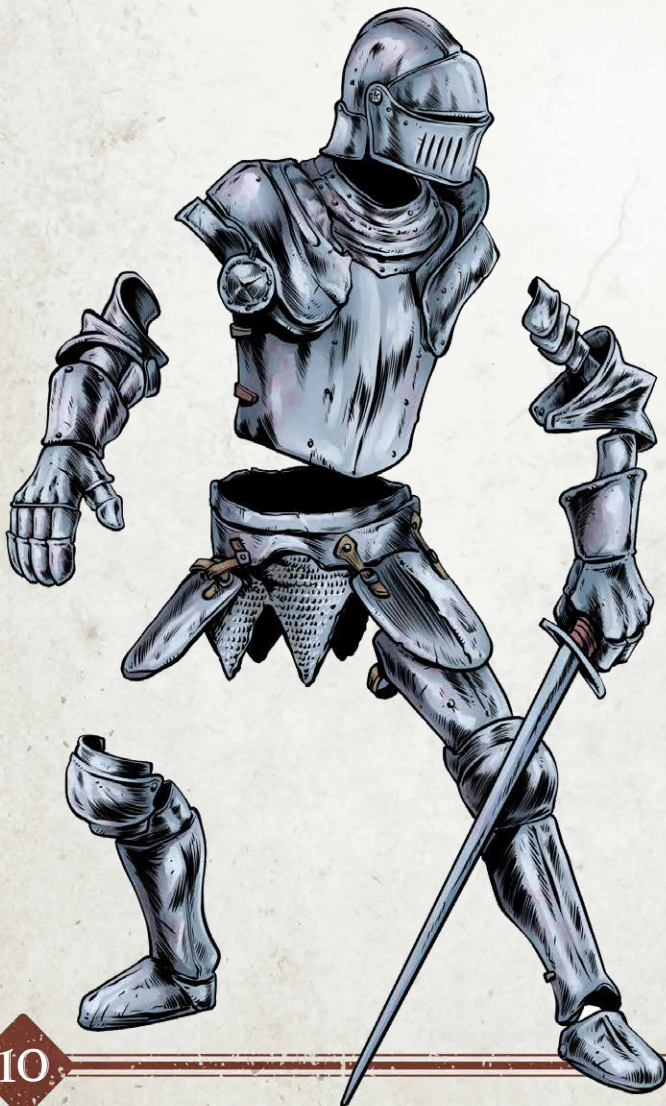
Moving the sarcophagus requires a Strength check (DC 20). No more than two other people may assist. Moving the sarcophagus to the east activates the secret door leading to the Inner Sanctum. The secret door can be detected (DC 20) without moving the sarcophagus, but cannot be opened.

Moving the sarcophagi west sets off the Crypt Dust Trap.

CRYPT DUST TRAP

CR 4 (XP 1,100)

Poison gas fills the room, forcing all creatures within 30 feet of the sarcophagus to make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 7 (2d6) poison damage, and is poisoned. The poison condition remains until the target takes a short or long rest, or can be removed with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check. The trap can be found with a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, and disabled with a DC 16 Dexterity (Thieve's Tools) check.



2 - INNER SANCTUM

Once the **deep ones** are defeated, the characters may decide to continue to explore the crypt (if they located the hidden passage). When they enter area 2, paraphrase the following:

The room beyond the secret door is lit with a single ball of magical light, suspended from the ceiling in the center of the chamber. The walls, covered in ivy in some places, are decorated with murals depicting warriors battling against monsters in the wilderness.

A stout iron-banded door sits in the north wall. An archway leads away to the south. Two large couches squat in the room, dry-rotted and ruined by the hands of time. There is nothing else apparent in the room.

There is nothing of interest or value in the couches. The door in the northern wall leading to the stairwell is locked (DC 20 to unlock).

Iron-Bound Wooden Door- AC: 15 Damage Threshold 5; HP: 20 Break DC 25

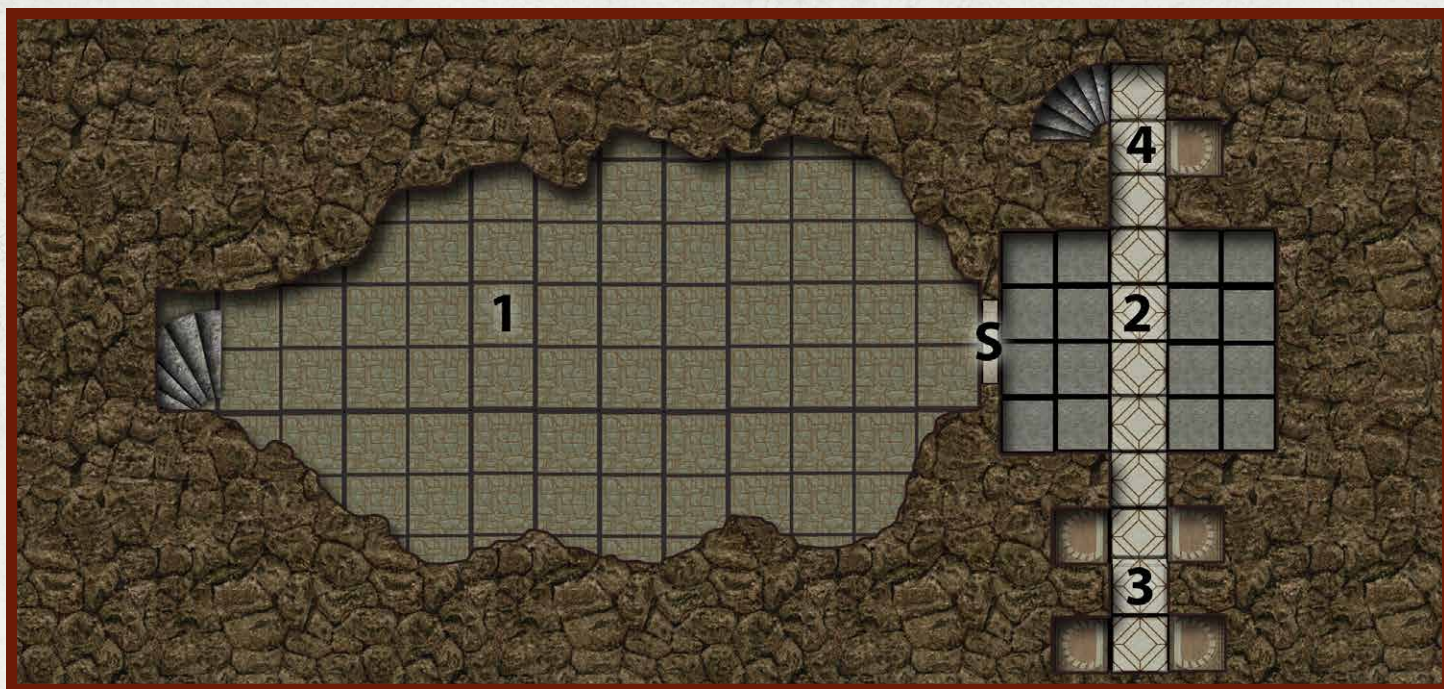
ENCOUNTER

The northern door has a *Freezing Ward Trap* set around its edge. The trap is designed to trigger when a creature tries to pass through the doorway once it is open.

FREEZING WARD TRAP

CR 2 (XP 450)

The trap makes a ranged spell attack (+5 to hit, range 50 ft.) on any creature that crosses the doorway. On a hit, the target takes 4 (1d8) cold damage and is restrained as chains of ice manifest around his arms and legs for 1 hour. The chains are as impressively strong and require a DC 17 Dexterity check to break out of. Otherwise, the chains must be shattered (AC: 12, HP: 20, Damage Threshold 4, Break DC 15). This trap can be spotted with a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check, and disabled with a DC 16 Intelligence (Thieve's Tools) check. Alternatively, it can be disabled with a specific phrase.



Batista Vilfaus knows the sacred phrase to allow safe passage past this trap without triggering it, but it would be difficult for characters to learn this information as it was never written down by him. If the characters are chasing Vilfaus, they can make a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check to clearly hear the phrase. It simply allows him to bypass the trap in case he is fleeing the characters.

3 - DESECRATED TOMBS

Paraphrase the following if a character begins to head through the southern archway.

The light from the other room quickly fades away as you move through the archway and into this narrow hall. The hallway continues away from you another 15 feet to a large family crest of a stylized symbol of a deer clenching a spear in its mouth on a shield carved into the wall. Four small arched alcoves open up off the hallway on either side. The stench of decay is heavy here.

The remains of the forgotten family lay upon old tapestries placed on shelves that have been carved into the stone walls. As soon as the PCs move through the archway from area 2 the armor of the dead family members were buried in rises from their resting place, dust and bones falling to the floor. They pursue the PCs until they are slain, even upstairs to surface and into the forest if needed.

Batistia Vilfaus was aware that this forgotten offshoot of his family had restless spirits among it, and forbade his **deep one** minions from disturbing their sleep.

ENCOUNTER

See **Animated Armor** for the stat block for this encounter

A Wisdom (Perception) check (DC 15) of the alcoves reveals the treasure the **Animated Armor** left behind

TREASURE

If the characters defeat the **Animated Armor**, they find four heavy steel shields in the alcoves, worth 25 gp each to the right buyer. The shields are rusting but usable and adorned with a symbol of a deer clenching a spear in its mouth.

A Intelligence (history) (DC 15) reveals the symbol belongs to a noble family (the Balfaus, possibly an offshoot of the Vilfaus) long since considered all dead. The family was known for its many acts of heroism and justice.

4 - ETERNAL GUARDIANS

Paraphrase the following if a character begins to head through the southern archway.

The door swings inward to reveal a hallway leading away into the darkness. Along the right wall is an alcove with broken coffins, the largest being no more than 4 feet long. This room seems colder than the previous chamber, and every sound echoes as if the area is much larger.

The small caskets belonged to the children of the family and were buried here amongst the bravest and noblest with the belief they would aspire to greatness in the afterlife. The desecrated bones of these children scream out in agony and revenge.

Any simple nursery rhyme sung after disarming the *Freezing Ward Trap* but before passing by this alcove soothes the restless spirits of these children to sleep. Batista Vilfaus would sing such a rhyme where he passed by it even in great haste, but it would be difficult for characters to learn this information as it was never written down by him. It simply allows him to bypass the trap in case he is fleeing the characters. Alternately, GMs can reward those that actually take time reading his family journal from upstairs thoroughly with a hint by having had a rhyme perhaps scribbled into the margins in his entry about having made it this far. The characters may also potentially overhear this phrase with a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check.

ENCOUNTER

As soon as the alcove has any light or is otherwise clearly detected by any of the characters after the door is opened (for instance, by having the *Freezing Ward Trap* activated), the four **screaming heads** out of the alcove and begin attacking all present.

Screaming Heads (4) (see Appendix).

THE VILFAUS CRYPT — SECOND LEVEL (MAP D)

Down the stairs to the north, even greater horrors and secrets await.

5 - TRAPPED HALLWAY

Paraphrase the following if a character travels down the stairs to the second level of the crypt.

You have descended the stairs deeper into the earth. The stones of the crypt are moist and slick, with the deepest roots from the forest above clinging to the walls and hanging from the ceiling, having broken through the worked stone and masonry. Every step you take gives way to the crackling sound of insects underfoot. Perhaps 15 feet ahead the hall comes to an intersection.

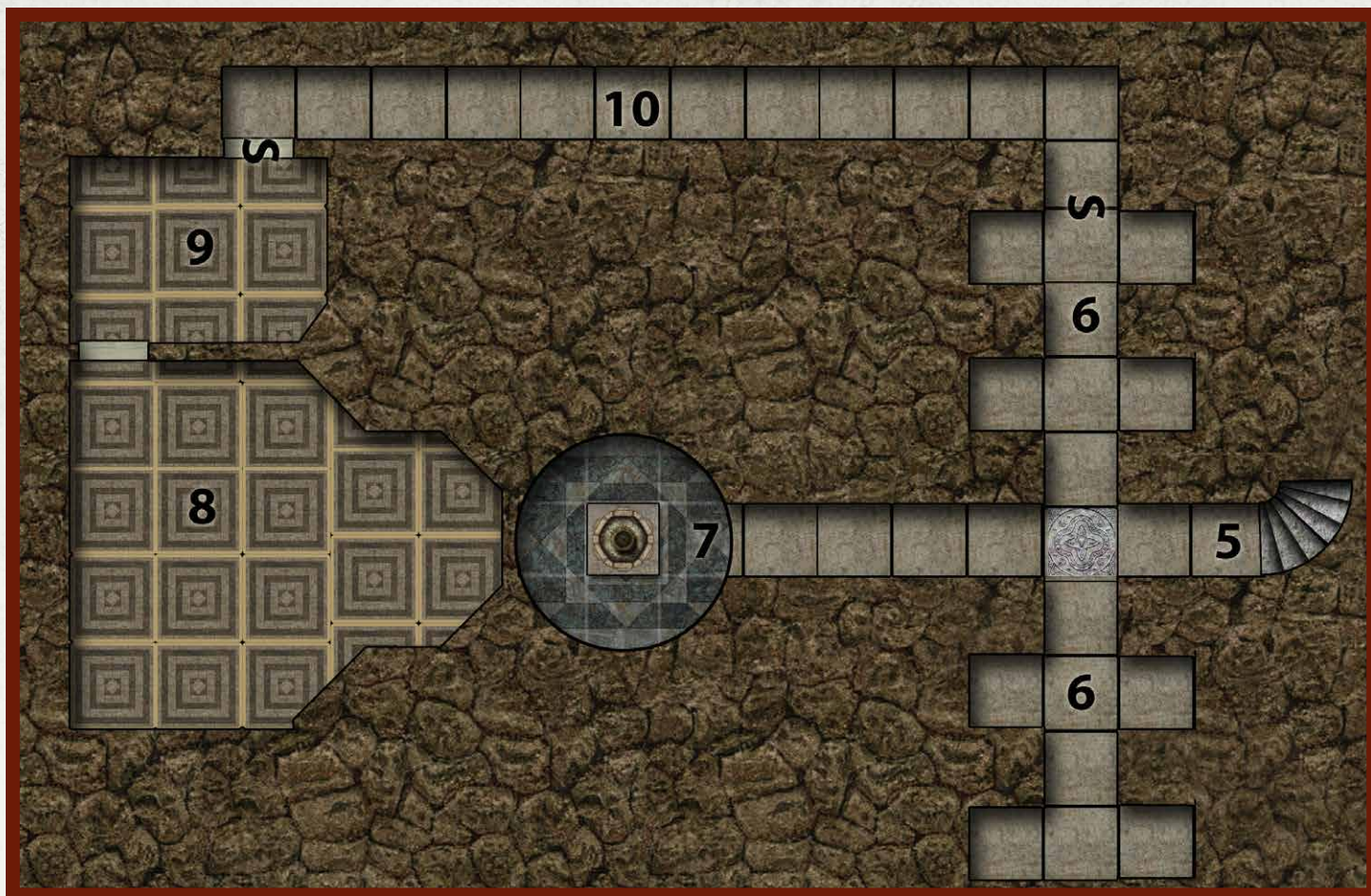
ENCOUNTER

The 10 ft. x 10 ft. square of the intersection is a trapped section of floor. Walking on it causes the floor to drop open, dumping the characters into a 20 ft deep pit. Pressing a special stone near the stairs causes the floor to lock in place for 3 rounds. Batista Vilfaus knew of this locking mechanism, but did not note it in his journal.

PIT TRAP

CR 1 (XP 200)

Characters that fail to notice the trigger to this trap with a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. Failure results in falling down the 20-ft.-deep pit and taking 7(2d6) bludgeoning damage. This trap can affect all targets in a 10-ft.-square area), as the trigger is on the far side of the trap. A DC 18 Dexterity (Thieve's Tools) check can disable.



6 - LOWER CRYPTS

Paraphrase the following if a character travels down either the northbound or southbound passages.

Alcoves flank either side of the narrow passage here. Each is filled with several niches containing the bones of those long dead. Mostly tattered burial shrouds hang from the niches, but in a few spots the glint of metal suggests something potentially more valuable.

These lower crypts were mostly for the wives and daughters of the Vilfaus family. While still treated with a sense of reverence, multiple women's bodies were clearly interred together, often with just their wedding bands or torcs still upon their bodies. The silks or other clothing that once surrounded their remains have long since vanished. Few of these people died with any hatred left in their hearts, and thus were the least likely to have been raised despite the turn of the family.

Batista Vilfaus was obsessed with only the male lineage, and thus ignored these remains utterly. A DC

20 Wisdom (Perception) check or DC 18 Intelligence (investigation) in each alcove reveals some small piece of jewelry of the forgotten. There are six such pieces in total.

TREASURE

Six small pieces of jewelry, worth 20 gp each.

See section **10 - The Hallway of Art** below for more information on the secret door off of Area 6 to the north.

7 - DRY FOUNTAIN

Paraphrase the following if a character travels down the eastbound passages, just before entering the circular room.

The hallway opens up here into a circular chamber. The ceiling above is domed and frescoes similar to those in the rooms before decorate both it and the walls. Dominating the center of the room, a small fountain of a comely looking man pouring water out of an urn around a group of eager children stands dry and silent. A single iron door on the far

side of the room is the only other visible exit.

If Batista Vilfaus fled from the battle in The Shrine of St. Mina of the Dust, he would be encountered here. He will fight to the death.

He had not yet discovered the secrets of this room, so he has never made it past the iron door and if captured instead of killed, does not know what lies beyond (though he was consulting his journal above ground when the party arrived precisely to ponder this matter.)

The iron door in the south wall is locked and barred, with no discernible method to pick it. A Wisdom (Perception) reveals a stone button to open the door in the dry fountain. Ancient writing circles the lip of the fountain. A DC 16 Intelligence (History) check reveals the following phrase.

*“From the glory of his divine judgement did we all receive aid.
So shall you, if you but drink as we did.”*

The fountain is long dry, but its magical effects are still present. If sufficient water is placed in the fountain (such as with casting the *create water* spell or even dipped from the well above ground), the fountain begins to work again (and magically purifies any such water run through it).

Anyone who drinks from the fountain gains the effects of an *aid* spell. The spell acts as if cast using a 5th-level spell slot.

8 - DESECRATED CHAPEL

Paraphrase the following the moment a character activates the button in the fountain.

The room beyond the iron-bound door is much larger than the domed room you just came from. The darkness prevents many of you from seeing to the far side of the chamber. Several rotten and rent tapestries line the walls and at the far end lays a small table or altar. Two large sarcophagi rest on either side of the altar. Otherwise, the room appears vacant.

Herein lies the greatest of the warriors of the former Vilfaus family. Cursed in death to become that

which they hunted in life, Clarence Vilfaus lives out an eternal existence as a starved ghastr. The locked door and the guardianship of the clerics of The Temple of St. Mina of the Dust has prevented him from leaving these many long years, as refilling the fountain in Area 7 with blessed waters prevents any undead from entering the room. Batista Vilfaus had failed to unlock the door and free him, but Clarence Vilfaus has heard the PCs as they raided his tomb and fiddled with the door, and is currently crouched behind a sarcophagus with two of his fellow former family.

ENCOUNTER

Ghouls (2)

Clarence Vilfaus (see Appendix)

Once the **ghast** and **ghouls** are defeated, the PCs will want to have a look around the room. The two sarcophagi appear empty, and were made to hold the two attending family members that became ghouls.

TREASURE

A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check or DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) on the altar reveals it was in fact a third sarcophagus, for Clarence himself. A second such check discovers a secret compartment and hidden inside, a small but stout wooden box holds a great treasure – the *Helm of Vilfaus*.

HELM OF VILFAUS

Wondrous item, uncommon

Once per day as an action, you can speak the command word to activate the effects of a *beacon of hope* spell affecting only yourself for 3 minutes. This ability only functions if you are lawful good. You also get advantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks.

None of the tapestries look to have any value at all, having been rent and torn by the ghastr. Hidden behind one such rotting tapestry in the northeast corner is a concealed door (DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) to discover). The door was originally faced with plaster, but the years have chipped some of the plaster away.

It is unlocked and swings open easily, as it was often used by Clarence.

Inscribed on the door is some writing –

May the riches herein serve goodness after life as it did in its daily life.

9 - TREASURY ROOM

This room was mostly ignored by the **ghast** and his **ghouls** as its “treasures” were lost on him.

The GM should place treasure appropriate to the composition of the party. The treasure should not exceed 1,500 gp. Suggested items include armor and weapons, coins and gems, or small objects of art. The family was primarily warriors so that too should be reflected in the composition of the treasure.

10-THE HALLWAY OF ART

The secret door in the northern wall off Area 6 is well hidden, requiring a DC 19 Wisdom (Perception) check or DC 10 Intelligence (investigation) check to find. Once found, the door can be opened by uttering the correct password, the full name of Clarence Vilfaus’ late wife, “*Gertrude Elizabeth Vilfaus née Novoum*”. Otherwise, the door can be opened with a DC 21 Strength (Athletics) check. While various inscriptions throughout the entire crypt may include the first three names, a DC 18 Intelligence (History) is required to know her maiden name and use it.

The hallway beyond is lined with beautiful frescos dedicated to his dead wife, and tells the full tale of the Vilfaus family. Unlike so much of the work herein, this art was done rather recently — in fact it has been the undead past-time of Clarence Vilfaus to carve and paint here. A thorough search of the hallway will reveal a simple paint brush with worn bristles. This brush acts as a *wand of prestidigitation* with an unlimited number of charges, but is only able to color or remove color from 1 square foot per use, as if casting the spell. Studying the artwork for 8 hours grants a one-time boon on any future Intelligence (History) or related check for the characters that studied it.

The secret door off the treasure chamber is similarly designed and similarly difficult to discover and open, short of breaking it down.

Clarence Vilfause was unable to pass through the secret door of Area 10 into Area 6 because of a massive holy symbol placed on either side of the secret door and sealed with a *hallow* like spell-effect over all Area 6, that was meant to ward those interred there against raising as undead. Had the architects of this crypt not relied on a magic fountain that was more powerful but more likely to fail in Area 7, perhaps none of these misadventures would have been necessary.



APPENDIX

BATISTA VILFAUS

700 XP TOTAL

Medium humanoid (human), Neutral Evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 55 (10d8+10)

Speed 30 ft.

Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha
10 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Saves Con +3, Wis +3

Skills Arcana +5, History +5, Religion +5, Perception +3, Thieve's Tools +5

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Undercommon, Deep Speech

Challenge 3 (700 xp)

Poisoner. Batista has advantage on saving throws involving poison and poison damage.

Mutagenic (1/day). As a bonus action, Batista can activate a potion that gives him increased strength, but decreases his mental capacities. This effect lasts for 1 minute. While under the influence of this potion, his Strength is increased by 4, and his natural armor by 2, but he may not use his bombs or innate spells until the duration is elapsed. As an action, Batista may end the effects of the potion.

Innate Spellcasting. Batista's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring only verbal components:

1/day each: *expeditious retreat*, *grease*, *shield*

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

Bomb (4/day). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) fire damage. Those adjacent to targets hit by this bomb must make a DC Dexterity saving throw, taking 6 damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. When making this attack, Batista can choose to make the bomb deal acid or cold damage instead.

TACTICS

Before Combat If he hears intruders approaching, he drinks his *expeditious retreat* extract.

During Combat If he hasn't been alerted of the PC's presence, he orders the 2 deep ones to attack intruders before using his bombs. If forced into melee, he drinks his mutagen, increasing his Strength and natural armor at the expense of his bombs and innate spells, then drinks one of his potions of enlarge person.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, he tries to flee into the crypt or one of the other exits. He refuses to be captured and brought before the church for justice, so if cornered, he fights to the death.

Equipment. alchemist's fire (2), alchemist's supplies, healing potions (2), potions of enlarge person (2), studded leather armor, thieves' tools, 33 gp, 19 sp, 43 cp

DEEP ONES

50 XP TOTAL

Medium humanoid (deep one), Neutral Evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor, shield)

Hit Points 18 (4d8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 1/4 (50 xp)

Amphibious. The deep one can breathe air and water.

Otherworldly Perception. The deep one can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of it that is invisible or on the ethereal plane. It can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

Slippery. The deep one has advantage on ability checks and saving throws made to escape a grapple.

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

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

TACTICS

As per their listing in each encounter. Deep ones tend to be fanatical, and fight to the death.

Equipment. As per their listing in each encounter, as well as one spear, one studded leather armor, and a shield.



SCREAMING HEADS (4)

200 TOTAL XP

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 12 (5d4)

Speed 0 ft., flying 40 ft.

Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha
11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saves Wis +2

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities. necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities. exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 12

Languages Common (cannot speak)

Challenge 1/8 (50 xp)

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) bludgeoning damage.

Screaming (Recharge 5-6) A screaming head can open its jaw and emit a bone-chilling scream. All creatures that can hear within 30 feet must make a DC 10 Wisdom save or be frightened for 1d4 rounds. Affected creatures can make another saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the effect on themselves on a success. Once a creature has succeeded on this saving throw, they are immune to being frightened by this screaming head for 24 hours..

Screaming Heads are floating skulls or severed heads whose bodies have long since been lost. They are reanimated by a will to seek revenge on those who disturbed their rest. They can sometimes infest areas that are beset with misfortune and mass deaths. Screaming Heads silently hover at about eye-level, and are often the last thing a casual wanderer or careless villager ever sees.

CLARENCE VILFAUS

1,100 TOTAL XP

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 85 (12d8+36)

Speed 30 ft.

Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)

Saves Con +4, Wis +6

Skills Acrobatics +4, Athletics +5, Persuasion +1, Intimidate +3, Religion +3, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 4 (1,100 xp)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghaſt muſt ſucceed on a DC 10 Conſtitution ſaving throw or be poisoned until the ſtart of its next turn. On a ſuſſeſſful ſaving throw, the creature is immune to the ghaſt's ſtench for 24 hours.

Turning Deſiance. The ghaſt and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on ſaving throws againſt effects that turn undead.

Spellcaſting. Clarence is a 4th level ſpellcaſter. His ſpellcaſting ability is Wiſdom (ſpell ſave DC 14, +6 to hit with ſpell attacks). Clarence has the following ſpells prepared:

Cantrips: *chill touch*, *guidance*, *reſiſtance*

1ſt Level (3 ſlots): *bane*, *command*, *inſlict wounds*, *protection from evil and good*

2nd Level (2 ſlots): *darkneſs*, *hold perſon*, *ſpiritual weapon*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Clarence Vilfaus makes two attacks: one with his bite and one with his claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature other than undead, it muſt ſucceed on a DC 10 Conſtitution ſaving throw or be

paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the ſaving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itſelf on a ſuſſeſſ.

Channel Necrotic Energy. Once per day, as an action, Clarence may heal himſelf and any undead within 30 feet. Roll 2d8, and heal each target for the reſulting amount.

TACTICS

Before Combat In the ſarcophagi, he has two guards (CE male ghouls CR1) and is quick to ſummon them if he is in danger.

During Combat He caſts *ſpiritual weapon* before joining the fray. During the fight, he uses his channel necrotic energy ability to heal himſelf and his undead allies. He tries to paralyze as many opponents as poſſible.

Morale He uses his darkneſs ſpell to flee if the combat turns againſt him and will try to make his way out of the crypt.

Equipment (in ſarcophagus) potion of barkſkin, potion of magic fang, ſcale mail, 250 gp, 75 ep, 400 ſp, 300 cp

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