

Fantasy Renaissance Adventure Module

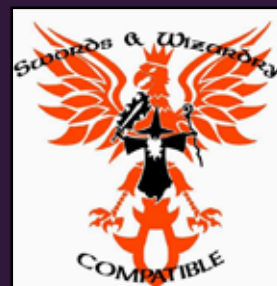
CRYPT OF BONES

Written by "Weird Dave" Coulson

An Adventure for Character Levels 10-12



LORD OF THE BONE FIELDS #2





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Fantasy Renaissance Adventure Module BF2
For use with Swords & Wizardry Complete

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The town of Amberdale is under siege! A skeleton army moves out of the Black Graveyard under the command of a mysterious force, and only a brave band of heroes stand in its path. The source of the undead scourge takes the party into the halls of a trap-filled nightmare, where they must confront the evil at the heart of the ... **CRYPT OF BONES!**

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Fantasy Renaissance Adventure Module BF2

CRYPT OF BONES LORD OF THE BONE FIELDS #2

For use with Swords & Wizardry Complete

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CRYPT OF BONES

Dark and twisted things are crawling up to the surface of the world. Lamotruu, demon lord of graveyards, has been unwittingly released from his prison by a band of heroes, and now the filthy claws of Lamotruu's most loyal servants dig their way through centuries of rest. The town of Amberdale finds itself in the crosshairs of a full undead uprising spurred on by the demon lord's return, and the Black Graveyard hungers for fresh life once again.

BF2 Crypt of Bones is a *Fantasy Renaissance Adventure Module* designed for a group of four to six *Swords & Wizardry Complete* characters levels 10 to 12. It is a follow-up to **BF1 Tower of Skulls**, wherein a band of heroes destroyed that unholy site – setting free its master in the process. Now the demon lord's most powerful servants have returned to wreak vengeance.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: ATMOSPHERE

DMS WHO RUN THIS ADVENTURE SHOULD STRIVE TO ACHIEVE AN ATMOSPHERE OF FEAR. TURNING DOWN THE LIGHTS, PLAYING IN THE EVENING OR INTO THE NIGHT, AND UTILIZING CREEPY ORGAN MUSIC ARE ALL GOOD WAYS TO ACHIEVE THE RIGHT MOOD FOR THE ADVENTURE.

Adventure Background

Within the evil-soaked realm of the Abyss, powerful demon lords and princes fight for dominion over the many layers. As a particularly powerful creature begins to dominate its fellow demons and outsiders, the layer of the Abyss twists and takes shape to the ruler's whim, sometimes unconsciously. Horrors beyond horrors can be found between those near-infinite layers, lorded over by heinous beings of unquenchable power.

Orcus, demon prince of the undead, is a name whispered in rumors on the Prime Plane, and in even more hushed tones on the Abyss. The powerful demon prince has fought countless battles against innumerable foes to control his land and his dominion over the undead. His victories have left scores of rivals dead, insane, or both.

One such challenger was Lamotruu, a demon lord who held sway over plants and undead alike. Lamotruu had many names - Keeper of the Bone Fields, He of the Withering Gaze, the Bone Flower, the Autumn Reaper, the Horned Shepherd. His favorite was the Skull Father, and Lamotruu had a fondness for skulls of all shapes and sizes. In the heart of his Abyssal domain, he held court in a grisly site called Kharrel-Tavox, Abyssal for the Tower of Skulls. A great spire whose exterior was embedded with hundreds of thousands of leering skulls, it commanded respect and housed the demon lord's greatest prizes and was the seat of his power.

Orcus and Lamotruu clashed many times, but eventually Lamotruu was overthrown completely and utterly in an Abyssal coup orchestrated by his ancient rival. Orcus bound the fallen demon lord to the Tower of Skulls and hurled it into the Prime Plane, there to torment the mortals as a crux for evil and breeding ground for wickedness.

Recently, a group of heroes managed to solve Lamotruu's riddles and puzzles, defeat his many guardians, and reach the top of the Tower of Skulls, there to find the demon lord weakened and tired. The Orb of Oblivion, source of the tower's influence, was destroyed by the heroes, and Lamotruu assumed death would finally come for him. It was not to be.

Instead, the shackles of his imprisonment were broken, and Lamotruu found himself with free will once again. Weakened severely, however, he still yearned to return to his Abyssal realm and reclaim his Bone Fields from Orcus' clutches. But he needed time, and he needed help from his ancient followers. The demon lord of graveyards reached out and more than a few of his old servants responded.

In a remote forest, deep beneath the earth, one such sacred site has resurfaced. Known originally as the Black Graveyard, it was tended to by the Eyes of Death, a trio of undead hags who served Lamotruu in life and in death. With their master's return, the Eyes of Death have resurged in power, and the Black Graveyard has resurfaced to wreak havoc across the land and spread Lamotruu's influence.

Amberdale, the closest town to the resurfaced Black Graveyard, finds itself squarely in the path of the Eyes of Death and their goal of satiating their bloodlust in Lamotruu's name.

Module Synopsis

Dark things are crawling up from the ground around the town of Amberdale. The local priest, Father Barondo, is a retired high cleric, old now but with strength left in him to protect the town for a short while. He sends an urgent summons to his allies requesting aid, which is the easiest way for the characters to get involved.

Whatever their motivations, the characters find themselves approaching Amberdale only to be attacked by giant undead bats on the road. Shambling dead rise from the ground as well to harry the party, who find that the path to the town is not safe. Fighting their way through, the characters arrive in Amberdale just as Father Barondo's strength fails him.

Amberdale is a small community centered around the Temple of Hope. It is there where the characters find Father Barondo, who gasps out some information before finally succumbing to the power of the Black Graveyard. The town comes under siege by the Hungry Horde, consisting of ravenous skeletons and worse, led by one of the Eyes of Death. It's up to the characters to mount a defense to keep Amberdale from falling into darkness.

Once the siege has passed, successfully or not, the true problem must be dealt with. To the north, the characters find the Black Graveyard – a great field of pitch-black soil and bone-white trees. This has become the domain of the Eyes of Death, three undead hags loyal to the Demon Lord of Graveyards, and they do not take kindly to trespassers (especially if one of them was defeated in Amberdale). One of the hags is charged with watching over the Black Graveyard, and she must be dealt with if the characters hope to proceed.

The beating heart of the Black Graveyard sits in an unearthly crypt made of bones. This is where the last of the Eyes of Death plots and plans for Lamotruu's return. Only by defeating the three Eyes of Death and destroying the *Star of the Graveyard* can the characters finally put to rest the risen evil that threatens Amberdale and beyond.

Future Modules

The **LORD OF THE BONE FIELDS** series chronicles the return of the fallen Demon Lord of Graveyards. Lamotruu's rising threat and return to power began in **KS1 Tower of Skulls**, which showcased the demon lord's ancient prison, filled with traps, trouble, treasure, and death. While Lamotruu was featured as the lord of the tower, he had grown weak and complacent over the years and yearned to be free. With the destruction of the Orb of Oblivion, Lamotruu was freed – but not unto death as he surmised. Instead, he was returned as a free willed sentient demon lord, though weakened and without an Abyssal realm to command.

BF2 Crypt of Bones features the characters opposing one of Lamotruu's most feared servants, the undead witches known as the Eyes of Death. Other monstrosities rise across the land as well in the demon lord's name, so Lamotruu's restoration of power and influence cannot be stopped wholly at this point.

The final scenario, **KS3 Garden of Graves**, puts the characters directly in the demon lord's path along his road to reclamation. Lamotruu poses a real threat to the balance of Abyssal power, and while some may claim Orcus deserves to be challenged, Lamotruu's

methods require a whole lot of mortal blood be spilled. The characters get sent to the Abyss by a high priest of Orcus in order to thwart Lamotruu's plans directly in his fallen Bone Fields.

Involving the Characters

Father Barondo was a high priest of the healing goddess in a great temple for many years, but age finally caught up with him and he retired to Amberdale to live out the rest of his days. He made many friends as high priest, however, so when the Black Graveyard rises near his town he calls upon as many favors as he can to come to their aid. One of the characters could have been a colleague or pupil of Father Barondo's, in which case the aged priest contacts the character directly via a divine message.

Alternately, another ally of the characters could be contacted by Father Barondo. Perhaps a duke or lord, kind and loyal to the healing goddess but lacking in organized forces could request the characters investigate Amberdale on their behalf.

Adapting the Module

This module tries to use as many generic location names as possible to make it easy to port to nearly any fantasy campaign setting. Below are the elements of the module that would need to be mapped out to an existing setting along with notes of how they fit within the adventure.

Amberdale: The town that falls under attack by a skeleton army. Amberdale is assumed to be located in a northerly climate, generally harsh and unforgiving but with stubborn folk willing to stand their ground for their homes. The area around Amberdale is forested and hilly.

Black Graveyard: Located roughly ten miles from Amberdale to the northeast, this is an unholy site that was once the home to a temple dedicated to Lamotruu. It is now shunned by the populace and considered "haunted" though only recently has there been any undead activity reported.

PART ONE: AMBERDALE UNDER SIEGE

The module begins with the characters traveling to Amberdale, whether by appointment, duty, or happenstance as the situation may warrant. They encounter ominous winged shadows in the night along the way before arriving in Amberdale, where the people are cowed and Father Barondo lies on his death bed. Unfortunately, the same magic that



keeps the town safe from the Eyes of Death drains him of his very life, but he has enough time to gasp out some details to the characters. Then they have only a matter of hours as the protective ward around Amberdale drops and the night of the Hungry Horde begins.

Getting to Amberdale

As high level heroes, the characters have quick travel options available to them, such as *teleport*, to reach Amberdale and the beleaguered Father Barondo. However, the same protection ward that keeps the Hungry Horde of the Black Graveyard at bay also prevents teleportation and extradimensional travel. Any attempt to travel to Amberdale via magical means (*teleport* or *plane shift*) results in the party arriving outside the town on the southern end along the little-used dirt road (leading to the **Shadowy Wings** encounter).

Shadowy Wings

The characters are on the road south of Amberdale, heading there to answer the summons of the venerable Father Barondo who's health is quickly fading before some unknown but powerful evil. This encounter is used to highlight the grave nature of the threat that looms over Amberdale.

Read or paraphrase the following.

The road that winds through the light forest follows an idyllic stream that flows south, though your path leads you north. According to your map, the town of Amberdale should be just about a mile ahead, and you're glad for it too – the sun is just passing its zenith to dip low over the horizon, lengthening the shadows around you. Suddenly, the canopy of trees around shake violently as a screeching fills the air!

The shrieking comes from **5 wraiths**, monstrous beings that once were living souls but fell against the forces of Lamotruu long ago. These creatures move quickly and attack directly.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: TIMING

THE MODULE ASSUMES THE CHARACTERS ENCOUNTER THE BAT SKELETONS JUST AFTER NOON AND THUS REACH AMBERDALE LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER. FATHER BARONDO IS DESTINED TO DIE (OR AT LEAST GIVE UP THE MAGICAL SHIELD) SHORTLY AFTER THEY ARRIVE, AND THAT NIGHT IS WHEN THE EYES OF DEATH LAUNCH THEIR ATTACK WITH THE HUNGRY HORDE. THIS SHOULD GIVE THE PARTY ENOUGH TIME TO PREPARE SOME DEFENSES AND SHELTER SOME OF THE TOWN.

Tactics: The wraiths start by shrieking, though it has no effect other than to unnerve their opponents, before launching themselves into melee. The characters are standing on the very border of Father Barondo's

magical shield – at some point, illustrate the power of the shield by having one of the wraiths flap away a short distance to the north only to crumple as it hits an invisible wall.

Development: The Eyes of Death have sent many bands of wraiths to test the limits of Amberdale's shield, so if the party decides to head off the beaten path to the west or east they can encounter more of them along the way. The creatures are malicious and have orders to attack any living creature they can find.

The Last Words of Father Barondo

A mile after dealing with the bat skeletons, and having passed without issue into the magical shield that protects the area, the characters finally make it to Amberdale. The community is cowed, having had no real direction since Father Barondo took to bed and created the magical shield, and are eager for someone to lead them.

Read or paraphrase the following as the characters enter Amberdale.

The road opens up into a large clearing encircled by rolling hills and a forested border to the north, south, and west. In the center sits the town of Amberdale nestled in a natural valley, with the swift-moving stream forming its western border. Dozens of single-story wood houses, many of them with crude fences keeping in small groups of livestock, cluster together around a broad well-trodden ground in the center. On the northern end of the town, a small hill rises with a walled keep squatting on its top – no flag flies atop the keep and the doors leading in appear to be missing! In the center of Amberdale stands a temple, simply decorated but made of stone, and in the afternoon light you swear the temple seems to radiate a golden hue unmatched by the other buildings. Citizens wander around with children, though no sounds of merriment reach your ears. A tenseness fills the air that sets your teeth on edge and stands the hairs on the backs of your necks.

Amberdale is in desperate need of some heroes, and hopefully the characters have what it takes to step up and save the town from the Hungry Horde. The citizens of Amberdale are gruff, hardy folk, who do not take kindly to strangers right away – at least not without Father Barondo's blessing first. Anyone the characters talk to points them in the direction of the Temple of Hope in the center of town, though anyone with a bit of social skills sees that the people are worried.

Temple of Hope

The Temple of Hope is one of the few stone buildings in Amberdale (the other being Highwater Keep).

Characters seeking Father Barondo are told to head to the temple, which has a set of great double doors that are currently closed. Knocking on them brings a young acolyte opening the door a crack and peeking through from the inside, asking tentatively what business the characters have. If any of them display the same faith symbol as the Temple of Hope, the acolyte apologizes profusely and falls over himself letting everyone inside. Otherwise the acolyte needs to be convinced with a simple Charisma check (or simply ignored!).

**WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: THE GENERIC FAITH
WHAT DEITY DOES FATHER BARONDO WORSHIP? WHATEVER
SUITS YOUR CAMPAIGN SETTING! IT'S BEST TO TIE IT INTO
A PRIEST-TYPE CHARACTER IN THE PARTY IF POSSIBLE, BUT
OTHERWISE A GOD OR GODDESS OF LIGHT, HOPE, SUN, AND
HEALING WOULD DO THE TRICK.**

Inside, the temple consists primarily of a large worship hall with benches leading up to a washbasin and altar. Pillars stretching up to the thirty-foot-high ceiling line the hall. Two chambers flanking the altar at the end of the hall appear to be the only rooms inside the temple.

The acolyte leads the characters quickly to the left chamber, muttering that there isn't much time left. Inside, two young acolytes tend to the still form of an old man in a simple bed, the white sheets slick with sweat. The lead acolyte holds his breath for a moment, and lets it out only when the old man – Father Barondo – wheezes out a shallow gasp indicating he's still alive.

The appearance of the characters brings the aged Father Barondo back to consciousness. Read or paraphrase the following.

The ancient priest beckons you forward with a spotted, wrinkled hand, a smile playing upon his weathered face as his hazy blue eyes focus on you. "I was hoping someone would come," Father Barondo gasps out in a voice barely above a whisper. "Terrible things are happening. Something is coming from the Black Graveyard. I've kept them at bay, but I cannot hold them back any longer. You must protect Amberdale and then find the black star in the old crypt. Evil has come back to the graveyard and it comes for us all." A coughing fit wracks the fragile man's body in a series of painful convulsions. His hand clutches your arm in a vice-like grip as his eyes grow wide. "The Eyes of Death have returned! They must be destroyed to save Amberdale!" A moment later, the light in Father Barondo's eyes fades and his hand goes limp.

Father Barondo dies having passed his burden on to the characters. The acolytes arrive quickly to prepare his body for burial though they are clearly lost without their leader.

The Eyes of Death

Father Barondo references the Eyes of Death. Sage-like characters and collectors of historic lore can make Intelligence checks at -6 penalty to recall the name as referring to a trio of hags that served a demon lord long ago, but faded away when the demon lord disappeared. Characters that played through **BF1 Tower of Skulls** connect the Eyes of Death as servants of Lamotruu.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: SAVING FATHER BARONDO
FATHER BARONDO'S DEATH IS MEANT TO UNDERSCORE THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION, BUT TRUTHFULLY HE DOESN'T HAVE TO DIE. HIS MAGIC IS SPENT AND HE CAN DO NO GOOD DURING THE NIGHT OF THE HUNGRY HORDE, BUT IF A PLAYER MOVES QUICK ENOUGH AND IS DETERMINED, GIVE THEM A TOUGH ROLL TO TRY AND SAVE THE DYING MAN.

Frightened Amberdale

With the passing of Father Barondo, the acolytes go into mourning and begin funeral preparations, mainly because they don't know what else to do. The characters have some tough decisions ahead of them now.

Amberdale at a Glance

Now that the characters have met with Father Barondo and are aware of the coming Hungry Horde from the Black Graveyard, they can take stock of Amberdale and see what they are dealing with. The following bits of information can be gleaned from one of the acolytes in the Temple of Hope or just by asking around.

- Amberdale has 500 residents spread across about 100 buildings.
- The keep in the northwest area of Amberdale is abandoned, but its walls can hold up to 200 people (combined in the building and the courtyard). The doors to the keep were taken off long ago though the walls, standing 20 feet high, are still strong stone.
- The Temple of Hope in the center of Amberdale can hold about 150 people. The doors are strong and the windows are high (40 feet up) and narrow. The doors can be barred from the inside and barricaded with wooden benches.
- The Pleasant Knight Inn and Tavern is a two-story wooden building with an expansive root cellar used to store ale and food stores for the winter. The owner, Delwyn Moris, is an older man who never settled with a family, and has become bitter and resentful in his later years. He only helps Amberdale if he can gain financially from the deal. The cellar can hold 50 people in cramped conditions.

- The land is technically owned by a nearby kingdom, but the location is so remote that the tax collector comes by infrequently. Father Barondo served as the town's leader as well as its faith minister, and without him the town has lost its guiding sense.
- The Amberdale militia can be raised by characters with oratory skills. The bulk of the available militia consists of 75 poorly armed men and women with little more training than fighting off wolves and other forest animals. They are each equipped with a suit of leather armor, a short bow with two dozen arrows, and a spear. There are also 25 soldiers with some military experience – these warriors have ring mail, a long sword, a shield, and a short bow with two dozen arrows.

Amberdale Residents

The people of Amberdale are stubborn folk, but they are genuinely frightened if informed of Father Barondo's passing. Hunters have seen the skeletal monsters out in the forest, generally north and east of town, and word has spread that it is only by Father Barondo's power that Amberdale has been spared direct attacks. With the priest's passing, people fear for the worst, but the best they do when left to their own devices is to lock their doors and hope for the best.

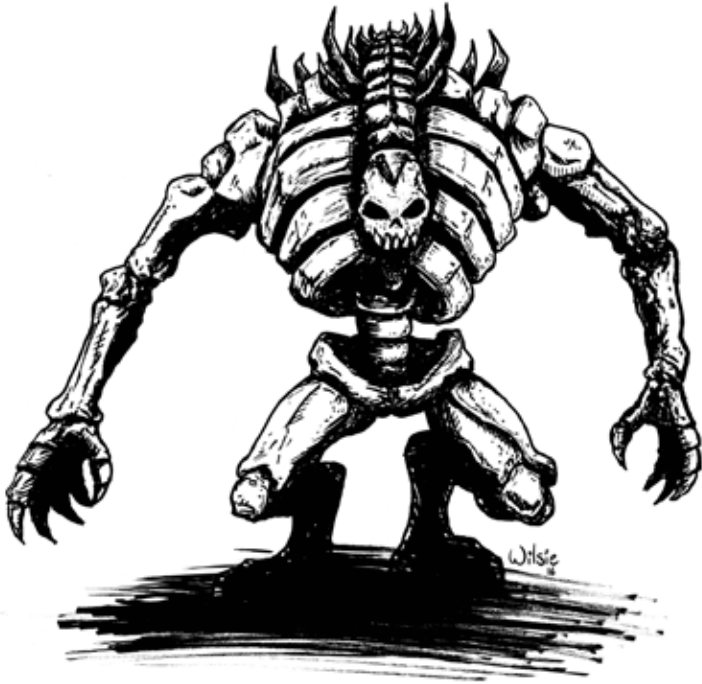
Amberdale Geography

Amberdale sits on a small plain east of a slow-moving river. The surrounding countryside is hilly and forested, with three large hills dominating the eastern border of the town. The older woods stand watch across the river to the north and west. Two bridges cross the wide river on Amberdale's western edge, and at the northwestern corner the land rises up slightly to overlook a confluence of the two northerly streams into the stronger and wider river that flows south.

Travelling to the Black Graveyard

Father Barondo mentioned the evil from the Black Graveyard, and the acolytes can provide more details about the site itself, which is located about ten miles northeast of Amberdale along a little-used trail. The acolytes can provide most of the information found in **PART TWO: THE BLACK GRAVEYARD** to the characters.

Characters may be tempted to travel to the Black Graveyard immediately. Unfortunately, the Hungry Horde is already on the move (they've been waiting near the protective shield for the last week), so if the characters don't travel by air or by land they're not going to be able to save Amberdale. The evil undead residents of the Black Graveyard, including the Eye of Death that watches over it, are not affected by sunlight so the area is just as described in **PART TWO**. After dealing with the graveyard and the Crypt of Bones, however, the characters are going to return



to find Amberdale destroyed and a very powerful army of ravenous skeletons and other undead horrors waiting for them! And they still need to defeat the last Eye of Death that leads the Hungry Horde.

Reconnaissance

If the characters travel by air or by land (magically or otherwise) towards the Black Graveyard to the northeast they encounter the vanguard of the Hungry Horde first – **10 ravenous skeletons** led by a **skeleton knight** mounted on a **warhorse skeleton**. This force moves about a quarter of a mile ahead of the main Hungry Horde and have regular chances of noticing characters, depending on how well hidden the party is as they pass by. The characters may be able to slow down the advance of the Hungry Horde through magic and clever tactics before the force reaches Amberdale, in which case adjudicate the “Night of the Hungry Horde” as appropriate to the situation.

The Hungry Horde itself consists of hundreds of skeletons with strange green fire burning in their eye sockets, along with legions of rune-carved skeletons, powerful skeleton knights mounted on warhorse skeletons, and grotesque piles of fused giant and ogre bones walking as lumbering skeletal hulks. **Amelina**, the Eye of Death that leads the Hungry Horde, rides invisibly on her **dragon skeleton** (also invisible) above the horde.

Preparing Defenses

With the support of the Amberdale militia, the characters can prepare defenses to slow the advancing Hungry Horde. Additionally, they can station their forces around the town so they don't get flanked by a surprise attack. All of these factors can contribute to a successful repulsion of the invading undead army.

Powerful characters are going to have options and capabilities that go beyond these numbers, so adjudicate what the players come up with as best as possible.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: MAKING IT EPIC!

THE SIEGE OF AMBERDALE BY THE HUNGRY HORDE IS MEANT TO BE EPIC, AND HIGH-LEVEL CHARACTERS ARE GOING TO HAVE A HOST OF ABILITIES AT THEIR COMMAND. LET THEM SHINE! USE SIMPLIFIED RULES FOR HANDLING THE COMBATS THAT FOCUS LESS ON THE ROUND-BY-ROUND ELEMENTS AND MORE ON THE BIG PICTURE MOMENTS, ESPECIALLY AGAINST THE RANK-AND-FILE SKELETONS. AND LET THE PLAYERS HAVE SOME FUN PLANNING DEFENSES FOR AMBERDALE IF THEY WANT, IT'S NOT EVERY SCENARIO THAT LETS THEM PREPARE FOR AN UNDEAD ARMY ATTACK!

Bad Weather Rolls In

The very weather seems to obey the will of the Eyes of Death, for just as evening approaches the gray clouds overhead unleash a rainstorm onto Amberdale and the surrounding region. The rain dampens the spirits of the defenders and can create slick battle conditions for when the skeletal horde moves in at night.

Night of the Hungry Horde

Amberdale falls under attack by Amelina, one of the Eyes of Death, and a large force of skeletal monsters from the Black Graveyard. Their goal is to kill every living creature in Amberdale and then raise the dead as new soldiers in service to the Demon Lord of Graveyards, and the characters find themselves positioned between the town and that very goal. It's going to be a long night!

The attack by the Hungry Horde is presented over a series of encounters that must be dealt with during the night, along with one interlude. Each encounter features a surge of monsters in a location around Amberdale with a short time in between, usually only about 10 minutes, though there is one longer lull.

During all of these encounters, **Amelina** and her **dragon skeleton** are flying just a short distance away, surveying and coordinating the attacks. She does not reveal herself until the final assault, but she does use her power to taunt the characters throughout the night. Amelina can see and hear through the eyes

NPC Profile: Amelina, Eye of Death

Amelina was a powerful wizard in a long-forgotten kingdom in ages past, where she wielded great power – political and arcane. She was beautiful, ambitious, smart, and dedicated to seeing herself rule one day, but her ambitions got the best of her. Amelina made powerful enemies, and they banded together one fateful night to end her rise to power. They used powerful sorcery to not only end her life but to cast her soul into the depths of the Abyss itself.

There she toiled away as a lost soul maggot, but her determination and guile saw her to be rebirthed as a wicked Abyssal hag. Amelina sought revenge on those who had wronged her and to that end she worked deals with demons and monsters. She learned of Lamotruu, Demon Lord of Graveyards, and eventually she came to idolize the powerful demon. Her dealings brought her into contact with Melisanda and Gozimira, and together the three hags formed the Eyes of Death, a powerful coven dedicated to Lamotruu and his machinations.

That came to end when Orcus defeated Lamotruu and stole the demon lord's domain. The Eyes of Death were killed by Orcus' forces and their grand temples and graveyards were torn down. This was the seeming end of Amelina and her hag sisters, but when Lamotruu was freed from his prison in the Tower of Skulls, new power flowed into their long-dead bones. The Eyes of Death were reborn as undead hags and knew their master needed mortal souls to usurp Orcus and reclaim the Garden of Graves on the Abyss.

Amelina is vain and cruel. Before rising as an undead hag, she used magic to obscure her features and retain her beauty. Now, the spells don't work like they did and no illusion seems to hide her decaying leather-like flesh. She has chosen to take her rage out on Amberdale and the defenders that dare stand in her way.

of any skeletal monster in the Hungry Horde, and she can speak through them at any time.

Running the Night of the Hungry Horde

There are two ways of running this section of the adventure. The first is the most straightforward, and involves rounds of combat for each encounter. There are opponents arrayed against the characters and their allies and these opponents stop at nothing to destroy them and all of Amberdale. The stakes are high but the encounters are played as extended combats.

The other option is to use a simplified abstract mass combat system to determine loss and success. There are many options available, and the information provided in this module should help adjudicate the rules based on how you want to play it out at the table. You can also narrate the results of the encounters, perhaps having the players roll dice to see how many resources they consume or damage they take.

Whichever option you use, the final encounter (**Death Revealed**) should be played using regular combat rules to give the characters the satisfaction of facing Amelina and her skeletal dragon face to face.

Encounter 1: March of Death

Just as night falls, the vanguard of the Hungry Horde advance on Amberdale from the most direct and obvious route. The attacking force of **100 ravenous skeletons** charge forward in a chaotic mass of rattling bones and frenzied claws.

Tactics: The ravenous skeletons are armed only with their necromantically-charged claws and they are ordered to kill everyone in Amberdale, which includes the characters. The skeletons mostly charge down the broad valley between the two hills east of the town, creating a natural chokepoint for the characters to exploit.

After five rounds, Amelina sends in a squad of **5 skeleton hulks** to assist the ravenous skeletons. These hulks charge down the center line and move towards the biggest target they can find.

Encounter 2: Death From Above

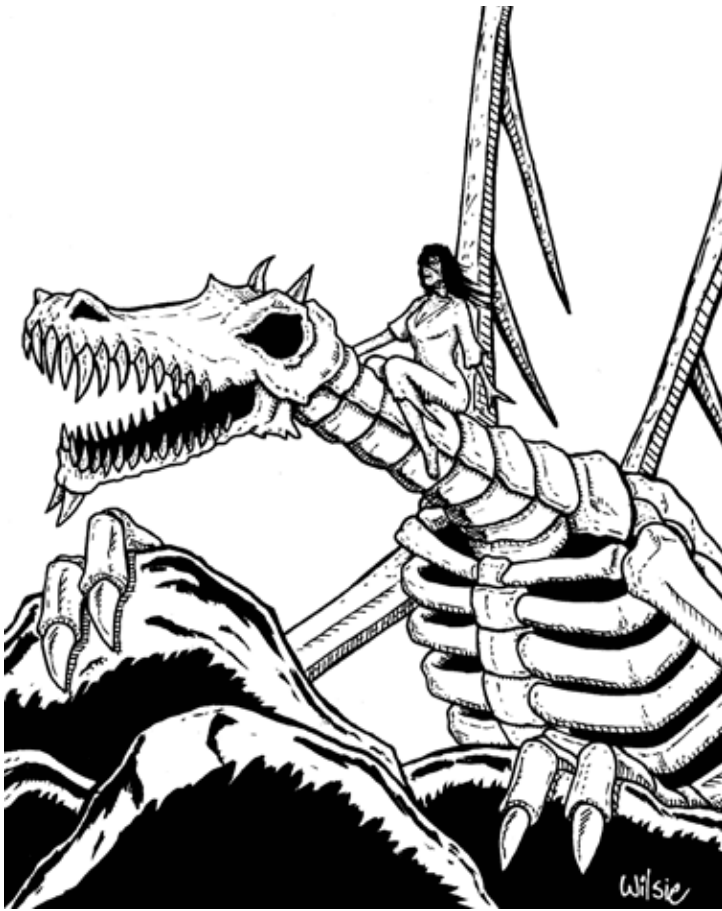
Amelina sends in her flying units to attack the southeastern side of Amberdale in a hope to catch the town off guard. This force of **10 wraiths** wing out of the rainy darkness to suck the life from defenders and create general mayhem.

Tactics: The wraiths are meant to harass the Amberdale defenders so they spread out as much as possible across the buildings and areas on the south side of the town.

Encounter 3: Fiery Death

Out of the woods to the north of Amberdale, Amelina sends a swift moving force capable of great destruction if not dealt with quickly. The **20 flaming skeletons** and **20 ravenous skeletons** pose a real problem if left to spill into the town proper.

Tactics: The flaming skeletons are just like regular ravenous skeletons except they are on fire and deal 1d8 extra fire damage with their attacks. However, Amelina can command one per round to explode in



a fiery torrent, dealing 3d6 fire damage to everything within 10 feet of the flaming skeleton. Doing this destroys the skeleton, but Amelina is generally only concerned with causing as much mayhem as possible to care.

Interlude

After the first three waves of the Hungry Horde are dealt with, Amelina pulls back her forces to reassess the situation. Her powers over the skeletons allows her to speak through even a destroyed body so she uses the opportunity to verbally harass the party as much as possible. However, the characters have a chance to catch their breath and shift their resources around if they want. Allow the party a short rest, even though this interlude only lasts roughly 10 minutes.

Encounter 4: Charge of the Death Riders

After Amelina has had a chance to assess the characters and the defenses of Amberdale, she sends out one of her most powerful units – a force of **10 skeleton knights** each mounted on a **warhorse skeleton**. Behind them charge **50 ravenous skeletons**.

Tactics: The undead riders charge down the hill on the eastern side of Amberdale in a blitz raid meant to demoralize the defenders. Unless stopped, they continue to ride throughout the town, cutting down defenders as quickly as possible and trying not to stop in one place at a time.

Encounter 5: Death Revealed

With the bulk of her forces deployed over Amberdale, **Amelina** and her **dragon skeleton** finally engage the characters directly.

Tactics: At an opportune time in the battle after the death riders have moved forward, Amelina and her dragon skeleton land in the center of Amberdale, right before the Temple of Hope. She challenges the characters to face her finally, but she tries not to engage them alone if possible. A sneak attack unit of **5 skeleton hulks** move from the river on the western edge of Amberdale to engage the characters at the same time.

Amberdale's Fate

The night of the Hungry Horde ends with the defeat of Amelina and her dragon skeleton. How does Amberdale fare? That result is entirely up to you and your players. If they performed well, planned for the defenses, and kept more defenders alive than lost, then it could be considered a true victory.

On the other hand, it is entirely possible that the characters simply abandon Amberdale to the Hungry Horde, perhaps by evacuating the people. In this case, Amelina and her skeletal forces have a defensive stronghold outside of the Black Graveyard from which to launch further offenses. If the characters defeat Melisanda and Gozimira and destroy the *Star of the Grave*, they still have one more Eye of Death to confront before the threat from the undead hags is truly resolved.

PART TWO: THE BLACK GRAVEYARD

The true threat to Amberdale and the surrounding region stems from the Black Graveyard, a shunned place some miles from the town itself. Long ago, it served as the breeding ground for the undead experiments of the Eyes of Death from a great temple on the site, but when Lamotruu was defeated and imprisoned the hags lost their power and fell into obscurity. The Black Graveyard was abandoned – but now no longer with the Demon Lord of Graveyard's escape from the Tower of Skulls.

The three Eyes of Death are returning the Black Graveyard to its once former glory, but they need time. The attack on Amberdale was an attempt to buy that time, but with Amelina's (likely) demise during the Night of the Hungry Horde, Melisanda is charged with keeping the graveyard free of trespassers while Gozimira works on the ritual to fully connect them with Lamotruu's essence in the Crypt of Bones beneath it.

About the Black Graveyard

The following pieces of information can be gleaned either from the acolytes at the Temple of Hope, via divination spells, or by very knowledgeable sages.

- The site was once a temple dedicated to some demon lord. Long ago the temple was razed and the cultists and monsters were buried in the black earth around the crumbled building itself and then left alone.
- The soil around the area is black as night and always moist, anytime of year.
- Before Amberdale, there was another farming settlement that was established and they buried their dead in the black soil. Unfortunately, the dead did not stay buried, and the other community was wiped out by the "Hungry Horde." Skeletons rose with the power to suck the life out of a living person.
- Citizens of Amberdale avoid the entire area, and there haven't been any real problems in living memory. Or at least, until very recently, when the dead started to rise back up in the area. Father Barondo kept Amberdale safe, though, so no foul undead monsters came into the town.

Travel to the Graveyard

The Black Graveyard is located along a little-used trail that winds its way to the northeast from Amberdale. The distance is about ten miles, and there is ample evidence of the skeletal horde that menaced the town during the Night of the Hungry Horde so finding the site does not prove difficult.

Day or night, it doesn't matter when the characters reach the Black Graveyard – the undead and monstrous residents of the surface area are not affected by sunlight in any negative way.

As the characters approach, read or paraphrase the following.

A light rain falls from the gray blanket of clouds overhead as if the weather were matching the mood of the forest around you – ominous, oppressive, and full of dread. A low rumble of distant thunder rolls through the air and the smell of freshly dug earth fills your nostrils. The trees around you give way to a broad, low clearing that explains the smell. The ground of the clearing is freshly churned dirt turning quickly to mud in the light rain, and a crooked fence made of ill-kept bleached wood creates a poor perimeter around a large graveyard. Headstones and markers set into the soft ground made of wood or stone fill the area with no discernable paths marked through the gaps. In the center stands a squat, stone building, with the

carven image of a huge skull on its front. A handful of barren trees stand amidst the headstones.

The Black Graveyard is protected by **2 night worms** that patrol the area.

Tactics: If the characters approach by foot, the night worms move to attack as soon as they enter the clearing. They use their breath weapon on grouped foes and try to swallow as many characters as possible. If the party flies or otherwise does not touch the ground, the night worms attack when they do (likely around **area 4**, Mausoleum of the Skull).

The Black Graveyard

The Black Graveyard is watched over by **Melisanda**, one of the Eyes of Death that worship Lamotruu. Unlike her sisters, Melisanda does nothing to hide her grotesque features, and she revels in the torture of good creatures. The earth within the borders of the Black Graveyard has been charged with powerful necromantic energy, though it still took a few weeks to gather the Hungry Horde and strike out against Amberdale.

General Features

Crawling Dead. Skeletons crawl out of the ground at an alarming rate, especially when living creatures stand still. Anytime a character does not move in a round, bony claws burst out of the ground around them, and on the next round a **ravenous skeleton** crawls out of the ground.

Unholy Ground. The Black Graveyard has been specially consecrated with unholy energy, and over time it has only grown stronger. Turning undead is more difficult here. Undead are considered to be 4 levels higher than their HD here, and every turn undead attempt requires the priest to make a saving throw at -2 penalty. On a success the turn attempt can be made normally, but on a failure the priest becomes exhausted and suffers a cumulative -2 penalty to saving throws and ability checks for the next 24 hours.

1. Broken Fence

Long ago, descendants of present-day Amberdale tried to use the Black Graveyard as a resting place for their dead. Much to their dismay, they discovered that the dead buried in the black soil did not stay dead! Remnants of their crude fencing still stands in perimeter around the Mausoleum of the Skull. The fencing is comprised of crude metal bars roughly five feet tall with wooden poles between them.

Each of the standing corners of the Black Graveyard

(northeast, southwest, and southeast) contain **6 ravenous skeletons** milling about.

Tactics: The ravenous skeletons attack any intruder without mercy, though Melisanda speaks to the characters through them to learn their motives for coming to this place. She enjoys toying with her foes and offers them a chance to surrender and return to the soil from whence they came.

2. Headstone Patch

Piles of broken stone headstones lie in a heap in these locations. Currently they each hold a **shambling graveyard** loyal to Melisanda.

Tactics: If a character walks over one of the patches of headstones, the shambling graveyard lurches forth to stop the intruders. Melisanda can also summon them at will to help protect the Mausoleum of the Skull against intruders.

Treasure: One of the headstones in the northeast section of the graveyard contains five rubies (each worth 250 gold) studded in its surface.

3. Tree of Withering

Plants do not grow natural in the Black Graveyard,

and few things represent this better than the handful of gnarled, white trees that stand scattered about the black soil. Each tree is roughly twenty-five feet tall with barren, stark-white limbs, grasping out in frozen attempts to claw at the living. These trees have developed a unique property, however. In addition, each holds a pack of **3 wraiths**.

Any non-undead, non-demonic, non-plant creature that comes within 20 feet of the tree's trunk feels their life force be sucked into the bark of the tree. They must succeed at a saving throw or suffer -2 penalty on all Strength- and Constitution-based ability checks and saving throws for the next hour.

Tactics: The wraiths watch for anything flying into the Black Graveyard and rush to engage any such foes in flight. Melisanda uses them to harry opponents that assault the Mausoleum of the Skull directly.

4. Mausoleum of the Skull

In the center of the Black Graveyard squats the only structure in the area – a stone mausoleum. Dirt clings to its rocky exterior as if it had been recently thrust up from the dark soil around it. The entirety of the south wall contains the carved image of a leering skull though you can just make out the line indicating the skull opens in the center to form a door leading inside.

The Mausoleum of the Skull is a remnant of the Eyes of Death once proud temple dedicated to Lamotruu, and it contains the only entrance into the Crypt of Bones below. The undead hag **Melisanda** keeps a watchful eye on the Black Graveyard from the top of the mausoleum and she keeps a force at her beck and call – **8 ravenous skeletons** and **3 skeleton hulks**, all lying just below the dirt around the building.

Tactics: Melisanda is a straightforward foe, but she does enjoy talking to intruders, if only to learn their secrets and torture them as much as possible. She keeps herself invisible on top of the mausoleum in the shadow of the peak, making it difficult to locate her. She calls forth the ravenous skeletons in the corners (**area 1**) and the wraiths in the trees (**area 3**) to harangue the party as much as possible. Melisanda stays on top of the mausoleum as long as possible, using her spells and ranged attacks to keep the party engaged.

When someone with obvious fighting skills approaches the mausoleum, Melisanda summons forth the skeleton hulks to engage the foe in melee combat. She saves the buried ravenous skeletons for when things start to go bad for her, or when she feels she can use them the most effectively against spellcasters. Melisanda fights to the death, as she trusts that it is only temporary –



NPC Profile: Melisanda, Eye of Death

In her mortal life, Melisanda was greedy and wicked, living as a witch in a remote part of the world. Her swampy home was rumored to be haunted, but she performed valued services to the isolated communities around her – mostly medicinal, but she would offer advice if the price was right as well. All the while she gathered information and created a spy network of birds and beasts in the area.

Eventually, Melisanda's power brought her to the attention of a forlorn knight lord who had recently lost the love of his life. He came to the witch asking for the power to bring his dead wife back, and Melisanda promised to reunite the knight with his lost love. The potion she gave him to give her dead wife brought her back as an undead horror that claimed the knight's life. The risen monster sought out Melisanda and in a cruel twist of irony killed the witch on a stormy night.

Melisanda's meddling and creation of the undead horror caught the attention of Lamotruu, Demon Lord of Graveyards, and he snared up the lost soul of the witch. Transforming her into an Abyssal hag, Lamotruu promised wickedness galore to Melisanda in exchange for service, to which she readily agreed. Melisanda found Amelina and Gozimira, and together they formed the Eyes of Death.

Even in life, Melisanda found twisted joy in her grotesque matronly appearance, and she relished in drawing the screams of children that beheld her ghastly form. As an undead hag, her skin has hollowed and tightened, but Melisanda doesn't care. Her back hunches beneath her filthy black robes, and she is quick to snap at anyone. She doesn't tolerate fools or failure and delights in general torture.

her spirit visibly leaves her dead body and flies into the mausoleum, where it enters the *Star of the Graveyard* on the third level to be reborn in a week's time.

Trap: The door to the Mausoleum of the Skull is locked with a special triple lock mechanism that can only be safely disengaged by one of the Eyes of Death. The mechanism can be unlocked through an opening just above the top teeth in the center of the skull. This requires three successful open lock checks with thieves' tools. However, each lock has a separate trap involved with it that must also be discovered and disabled.

Each trap releases toxic gas from porous holes in the eye sockets, nostrils, and mouth of the skull face on the front. The cloud quickly fills an area 40 feet by 40 feet.

For the first trap, each living non-plant creature in the white cloud must make a saving throw at -4 penalty. On a failure, the poison gas seeps into their body and affects the physical nerves. For the next 24 hours, the victim suffers a -2 on all saving throws.

The second toxic cloud is a red mist, and everyone in the area must make a saving throw at -4 penalty. On a failure, the mist enters the brain and creates a rage-like state. Anyone affected goes berserk for the next 1 minute, attacking the nearest moving creature in sight, friend or foe.

The third toxic cloud is green, and everyone in the radius feels intense pain wrack their bodies. The raw pain causes 6d10 poison damage, or half as much on a successful saving throw. The cloud is only in effect for one round.

5. Anguish and Torment

The interior of the mausoleum is bare, cold stone except for two statues and a block of black stone. The statues stand on pedestals and depict near-naked human males in extreme anguish. The black stone between them is about five feet tall and is unmarked except for the indents of two clawed handprints on its surface.

The entrance to the Crypt of Bones is sealed by the flesh of the Eyes of Death. In order to access the accursed site and put an end to the hags, the characters must get the physical hands of one of the hags (either Amelina or Melisanda). Once the hands of the undead hag are placed on the stone, the floor rumbles for a moment before a narrow staircase is revealed in the middle of the room. The staircase descends into darkness down to **area 1** of the Howling Halls.

PART THREE: CRYPT OF BONES

Long ago, when Lamotruu still held a position of Abyssal power, the Eyes of Death built a great temple where the Black Graveyard now sits. They ruled the countryside from the castle walls and tortured victims caught by their forces in a series of dungeon crypts below the ground. Those forlorn halls and pits became known as the Crypt of Bones, and when Lamotruu fell the forces of Orcus raised the temple to the ground and defeated the Eyes of Death.

They left the dungeon crypt mostly intact, mainly because the hags had magically sealed the entrance. There it lay, beneath dark soil of the Black Graveyard, until Lamotruu was freed from his prison in the Tower of Skulls and the Eyes of Death were brought back as undead hags. They don't have the power to rebuild their temple, but they've opened up the Crypt of Bones as their personal domain once again.

Crypt Overview

The Crypt of Bones is comprised of three levels – the Howling Halls, the Statues of Blood, and the Bone Pits. Each level contains traps, puzzles, and monstrous denizens the Eyes of Death have utilized, either in the distant past when the crypt served as their dungeon dumping ground or since Lamotruu's return when they've taken it over as their operational fortress. The Eyes of Death enjoyed toying with their prisoners, and they always promised freedom to anyone that could reach the bottom and touch the *Star of the Graveyard*.

Now, however, the *Star of the Graveyard* serves as the link to Lamotruu. It should be the ultimate goal of the party to destroy this item, severing the link between the Eyes of Death and the Demon Lord of Graveyards, though they likely don't realize it to start.

Gozimira in the Crypts

In order to get to the Crypt of Bones, the characters should have defeated Amelina and Melisanda, which leaves the third and final Eye of Death left. Gozimira is the most devout of the undead hags and keeps a close watch on events unfolding around Amberdale and the Black Graveyard. She knows what the characters have done and what they are capable of, and she uses this information as best she can as the party moves into the crypts.

Gozimira stays in the Bone Pits guarding the *Star of the Graveyard* as she knows that her and her sisters are vulnerable if the item is destroyed.

Leaving the Crypt

It is likely the party is going to want to leave the crypts to rest and recover their resources at some point while exploring the halls. Resting at all within the crypt is impossible – Gozimira's command of the dungeon is complete, and she does not let anyone rest and relax enough to regain their strength!

Gozimira keeps a reserve pool of skeletons and monsters at her disposal to replenish those that fall if she is given at least four hours to prepare. In these situations, she sends **6 ravenous skeletons** and **2 skeleton hulks** to protect any dungeon entrances that have been cleared (**area 1** or **area 9**).

General Features

Ceiling. Unless otherwise noted, the ceiling is 15 feet high.

Doors. Doors in the Crypt of Bones are sturdy stone portals, heavy and resistant to attack. They are unlocked unless otherwise noted and opening them creates a grinding sound of stone against stone.

Light. Sconces along the wall flare to life as the characters traverse the crypt. These sconces are spaced 10 feet apart and ignite when a living creature comes within 10 feet of them, making it especially difficult in hallways or corridors. If extinguished (they are otherwise treated as normal torches), the lights reignite in 1 minute. The entire crypt is considered illuminated in dim light by these torches.

Sound. Each of the three levels of the crypt has a distinct sound. The first is true to its name – wailing and howling can be heard from every direction, sounding as if someone were being tortured. The second level contains soft weeping and moaning from all areas, while the lowest level is filled with the sounds of bone grinding against bone.

Unholy Aura. Much like the graveyard above, the Crypt of Bones is infused with powerful necromantic magic. Undead are considered to be 4 levels higher than their HD here, and every turn undead attempt requires the priest to make a saving throw at -2 penalty. On a success the turn attempt can be made normally, but on a failure the priest becomes exhausted and suffers a cumulative -2 penalty to saving throws and ability checks for the next 24 hours.

First Level – The Howling Halls

1. The Skull of Passage

Sconces spring to life around the chamber as you exit the stairs from the mausoleum above. The light illuminates a large stone chamber with a single dominant feature – the bleached skull of a great monster sits in the center of the room. The reptilian skull, dragon or large lizard perhaps, is ten feet tall, and its jaw is closed tight. A brass plaque sits on the ground in front of its mouth. Three doors lead out of the room, and though they are closed the sound of howling and moaning fills the chamber.

This first room also contains the entrance down to the second level, but accessing it is going to require finding some pieces in the crypt. The plaque on the floor is worn but anyone that gets close enough can see that it spells the following:

*Death came to me, as it comes to you
The Graveyard Star is your way out
Flame and acid, burning all but few
My eyes open the door, do not doubt*

The rhyme was placed to give prisoners sentenced to the crypt by the hags hope for an escape, though none got down to the Bone Pits to find the *Star of the Graveyard*. To access the second level, the hollow sockets of the giant skull must be filled with two gemstones located on this level, specifically the red and green gemstones (located in **area 7** and **area 6**, respectively). If the wrong gemstones are placed in the eye sockets (white or blue), black poisonous gas fills this room, causing 10d6 poison damage or half that with a successful saving throw.

The room also contains a pair of guardians, **2 bone weirds** created by the Eyes of Death to deter and eat intruders that were not fast enough.

Tactics: The bone weirds start coiled up behind the skull, and slither to attack while the characters are distracted with the rhyme on the floor. They slither forward to suck up as many bones from the characters as possible.

Treasure: Behind the skull, the bone weirds had collected a small cache of treasure from previous victims. In a small pile among bones and debris can be found a golden amulet worth 500 gold and a tarnished silver ring bearing the inscription of a famous painter worth 750 gold to the right buyer.

2. The Screaming Jars

The howling grows louder as you gaze into this rectangular chamber. Five large clay jars, each roughly five feet across and five feet high, sit on the stone ground around the center of the room. Each jar has a lid that is closed but they seem to rattle with penned up energy.

The Eyes of Death developed a way to capture the very screams of their victims and bottle it away, though they found no practical use for such energy. Instead, they used it to torture victims sentenced into the crypt. The jars in this room are filled with the screams of the long dead held in a magical stasis, and when the lid is removed the screams are released in a howling cacophony and a gust of powerful wind.

The howling causes a wild madness in any living creature who can hear it in the room or adjacent hallways that affects a key function of the body. Those targets must make a saving throw at -2 penalty. On a failure, roll 1d6 on the following table to determine the effect. The physical madness lasts for 1d6x10 minutes.

1d6	Madness Result
1	Eyes. The victim is temporarily blinded as the madness shuts down their vision.
2	Nose. The victim loses all sense of smell for the duration of the madness.
3	Ears. The victim goes deaf for the duration of the madness.
4	Mouth. The victim loses their voice as the madness robs them of their speech.
5	Arm. One of the victim's arms (determined randomly) goes numb and cannot hold objects.
6	Leg. One of the victim's legs (determined randomly) goes numb, inhibiting movement. The victim's movement speed is halved for the duration of the madness.

The guardians of the screaming jars are **3 wraiths** that hide in this room.

Tactics: The wraiths cling to the shadowy corners of the room and do not move to engage intruders right away (they receive +4 on hiding attempts). They wait until a curious character opens one of the jars, but if discovered they move quickly to knock the lid off of one before moving into melee. They make disquiet moaning during combat.

Treasure: Four of the jars are empty, but the one in the northwest corner contains a large white gemstone. Smashing the jar is the easiest way to get at it. The gemstone is oval shaped and looks like it would fit in the eye socket of the skull in **area 1** (though doing so triggers the trap in that area). The gem is worth 750 gold.

3. Vault of the Warrior

Inside this square chamber you see a white stone sarcophagus on the ground opposite the entrance. The lid is carved to resemble a man dressed in a suit of heavy plate mail, his hands clasping the hilt of a sword over his chest. The sword, however, is pitted and marked as if acid had eaten away at it, though no other part of the sarcophagus seems to have the same damage. The man's mustachioed face is frozen in a look of undeniable pain.

This sarcophagus contains the mortal remains of a once proud warrior who fought against the Eyes of Death and lost. The hags kept his tortured, broken

body and bound the warrior's spirit to the room, forever twisting in silent torment. As the characters enter the room, the ghostly visage of the warrior etched on the sarcophagus materializes in the middle of the vault.

The ghostly visage does not attack but instead offers the following lament: "In life I stood for truth, but now in death I stand only for the amusement of the Demon Lord of Graveyards. My name is lost, but if you can find it the treasure that failed me life can be yours." The ghost then disappears with a howling moan.

Trap: The sarcophagus that holds the remains of the knight is magically sealed. Opening it requires saying the command word in Abyssal – "lost." The hint is in the words of the ghost itself. Tampering with the lid of the sarcophagus without saying the command word creates a powerful electrical shock coursing through the room, causing 6d6 lightning damage or half that with a saving throw.

Treasure: If the command word is spoken, the lid to the sarcophagus silently opens to reveal the moldering skeleton of the knight. Clutched in his hands is a silver long sword. The weapon is +2 *long sword*, +4 vs. *undead*. Destroying the physical remains of the knight severs the link to the ghost, sending him free. Bonus experience should be awarded in this case.

4. Vault of the Priest

This square chamber contains a single feature against the opposite wall. Resting on the ground is a white stone sarcophagus bearing the carved image of a woman on the lid. The woman is depicted in heavy armor with a mace at her side and a shield held over her chest. An expression of eternal agony is etched on her face and the shield bears dozens of deep scratch marks that have marred whatever symbol was once on it.

Many people have stood up against Lamotruu in the past, and this vault contains the physical remains of a loyal priestess of a sun deity that led a mighty force against the Eyes of Death. She and her forces were defeated and as punishment the hags bound her spirit to her physical remains to serve as a tease for those trapped in the Crypt of Bones.

As the characters enter the chamber, the incorporeal form of the priestess materializes in front of them. She appears as she does on the sarcophagus lid but she does not wield her weapon or shield in a combat stance. Instead, she intones the following in a hollow voice: "My crime was to bear arms against the Eyes of Death, and for that transgression I have been punished. I am here now as a witness to history. Speak truth and see history as I have seen it." The priestess then fades away.

Trap: Like the warrior's vault, the priestess' sarcophagus opens only when the command word is spoken. The word "truth" must be spoken in the Abyssal language. If anyone tampers with the sarcophagus lid without speaking the command word, a torrential howling fills the room, dealing 6d6 psychic damage to every living creature in the vault, or half that on a successful saving throw.

Treasure: If the command word is spoken, the lid to the sarcophagus opens up revealing the decaying remains of the priestess. Her armor and weapons are pitted and worthless but a well-preserved leather book rests on her chest. The book is bound in unmarked black leather and contains roughly fifty pages. This is the Book of Graveyards, containing many legends and rites concerning Lamotruu used by the creatures that worship the demon lord. It is worth 1500 gold to a collector of religious texts and can provide assistance in figuring out the puzzle to the second level.

5. Hall of the Glass Flame

The sconces along the wall of his long hall spring to life as you approach. In the center of the hall squats a ten foot square platform about five feet high, upon which rests a crystalline object. It is shaped like a teardrop, easily five feet wide at the base, and sheds brilliantly hued light from what appears to be a raging torrent of fire and energy kept within it. First blue, then it shifts to red, then to white, and finally to green before it starts the cycle over again. Whatever is kept inside this crystal tear pulses erratically with the colors, which shift suddenly and without apparent obvious timing. You feel powerful emotions tug at you as the dancing shimmering light touches you.

This hall contains a curious object collected by the Eyes of Death long ago. It was originally called a rainbow tear and it had intense power over the emotions of living creatures. The hags claimed the item and perverted it to their own ends so that the emotions it pulses out are only negative ones.

When the first person comes within 15 feet of the glass flame, it flares to life and maintains its vibrant color. Roll 1d4 to determine the color – 1 blue, 2 red, 3 white, 4 green. Every time someone new steps within 15 feet of the glass flame, it surges again, prompting a new roll and another result. If the same result comes up twice, the saving throw to resist the effect is made at -4.

Blue: On a blue result, all living creatures in the hall are gripped with a powerful feeling of depression. Every living creature in the hall must make a saving throw. On a failure, the depression becomes overwhelming, the victim suffers -4 on all saving throws for the next



hour.

Red: When the glass flame flares red, anger and fury cloud the eyes of all living creatures in the hall. Every living creature in the hall must make a saving throw at -2 penalty. On a failure, the irrational anger takes over and the victim lashes out to attack the nearest target with whatever tool is at their disposal (weapon for warriors, spells for magic-users). The fury only lasts for one round.

White: Irrational and powerful fear grips the hearts and minds of living creatures in the hall when the glass flame pulses white. Every living creature must make a saving throw at -2 penalty. On a failure, the victim suffers -4 on all ability checks (including initiative rolls) for the next hour.

Green: On a green pulse, the glass flame draws upon feelings of paranoia on all living creatures in the hall. Every living creature in the hall must make a saving throw at -2 penalty. On a failure, the victim lapses into fit of rampant paranoia, believing that all of their allies have turned against them. This mind-affecting result lasts for one hour.

Destroying the glass flame is possible. It has an AC 10, hp 20, and suffers half damage from slashing and piercing weapons. If destroyed, the torrent of energy released from inside cascades over the hall and spills into the adjacent hallways. Every living creature in the

radius is washed with a wave of powerful emotional energy, which deals 10d6 psychic damage. Any creature killed by this wave has their emotions washed out and drawn into a separate realm, making resurrection more difficult.

Treasure: In the pedestal that the crystal flame rests on, a secret compartment can be found (Wisdom check). The compartment is locked, requiring an open locks check to unlock, and inside is a large blue oval gemstone in a small box. The gemstone is perfectly sized for the draconic skull in **area 1**, but inserting it triggers the trap. The gemstone is worth 750 gold.

6. Tombs of Sacrifice

This long hall is covered in cobwebs that stubbornly cling to the walls and ceiling. Four darkened archways stand on the west wall, their contents shrouded in darkness that the sconces on the opposite wall do not dispel. At the far end of the hall, also covered heavy cobwebs, stands the skeleton of a ten-foot tall giant. The giant's skull has a single eye socket, and in the flickering light of the torches you can see a green gemstone glittering in that socket.

The Eyes of Death decided a fitting place for one of the gemstones needed to access the second level of the crypt was in the eye socket of a cyclopean skeleton. The **giant skeleton** that stands at the end of the hall hasn't moved in hundreds of years, but if any character enters the hall it raises its head to speak the following in a raspy, hollow voice: "A sacrifice of life must be given in the name of Lamotruu."

In order to access the gemstone in the giant skeleton's eye, the characters must sacrifice a living person to Lamotruu – or defeat the skeleton in combat. If the characters make a move towards combat, the skeleton raises his hands and from the tombs in the hall run **8 ravenous skeletons**. In addition, hidden holes in the corridor wall on the opposite of the entrance spew forth toxic and flammable gas. The gas fills up the corridor for thirty feet. Any living creature in the gas suffers 5d6 poison damage, or half that on a successful saving throw. In addition, any lightning or fire effect causes the gas to ignite, dealing 10d6 fire damage to everyone in the area. The gas persists for 1 minute or until dispersed (or ignited).

Combat: The jewel in the eye of the giant skeleton is simply decoration – it does not confer any magical or special abilities. The giant skeleton and the ravenous skeletons fight to keep the characters in the poisonous hallway as they are immune to the toxic effects, though they are not immune to the explosion.

Treasure: The gemstone in the eye of the giant skeleton can be removed after a round of prying. The green stone is large and worth 750 gold, and it fits into the draconic skull in **area 1**.

7. The Howling Tombs

This large square stone chamber contains numerous darkened archways along its walls, each filled with shadows and thick cobwebs. The dusty floor is bare except for a single mark in front of each of the archways – there are nine of them in total. The marks are etched in the stone in gold and each appears to be different. You feel a breeze on your exposed skin which seems to move in a circular pattern around the room.

The Eyes of Death created these howling tombs to hold dissidents of Lamotruu's will. The nine deep tombs each contain the skeletal remains of these infidels, though they are not animated. The marks on the floor are stylized letters in the common language, and they are as follows (going around the room, starting in the northwest corner): S, V, D, R, I, E, G, Y, A.

The threat in the room is not from the skeletons in the tombs, but rather from the **4 screaming scarecrows** hidden in the ten-foot high ceiling.

If a living creature steps on one of the letters, it glows a bright yellow. The trick in this room is to spell out the word GRAVEYARD. If a letter is stepped on that continues the sequence, the letter remains illuminated, but if a letter is wrong it turns green. When a letter turns green, howling wind pours out from each of the open tomb entrances, spewing forth bone shards in a deadly hail. Every creature in the room suffers 6d8 piercing damage, or half that on a successful saving throw.

If the characters have the Book of Graveyards from **area 4**, they can use it as a reference point if they get stuck. Allow a character perusing it a reasonable chance at a hint based on how stuck the party is at that point.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: PUZZLES AND TRICKS

MANY ROOMS AND SEVERAL OF THE LEVELS OF THE CRYPT OF BONES CONTAIN PUZZLES AND TRICKS DESIGNED TO TEST THE PLAYER, NOT JUST THE CHARACTERS. THESE KIND OF OBSTACLES CAN BE FUN FOR THE RIGHT GROUP, BUT IF YOU'VE GOT PLAYERS WHO GET STUCK EASILY OR DON'T ENJOY THESE KIND OF ENCOUNTERS, ALLOW THEM TO MAKE SOME CHECKS TO GAIN SOME HINTS. HOWEVER, IT'S WORTH IT TO GIVE THE PLAYERS A CHANCE - THEY MIGHT SURPRISE YOU!

Tactics: The screaming scarecrows in the ceiling have instructions to drop down if the party spells the word GRAVE. The letters remain illuminated while the constructs drop from the ceiling around the room, shrieking as they do. The scarecrows cannot trigger the letters.

Treasure: Once the word GRAVEYARD is spelled out, a five-foot section in the middle of the room pulls away as a small pedestal rises up from the resulting hole. On the pedestal rests a red oval gemstone perfect for the eye socket of the draconic skull in **area 1**. The item is worth 750 gold.

8. Treasure Cache

The secret door in the wall of the southeast tomb of **area 7** can be found with some searching and a Wisdom check. Inside is a hidden treasure cache for the resourceful to find.

In an unlocked chest against the wall the characters find the following items: seven blue sapphires (each worth 1000 gold), ten peridots (each worth 500 gold), a *girdle of giant strength*, a *cloak of protection +2*, and a *spade of excavation*.



Second Level – The Statue of Blood

The second level of the Crypt of Bones is called the Statue of Blood and is dedicated to a mythical figure known as Mother Thornheart. This woman was a powerful witch in a far-off land, and she committed horrendous atrocities in the name of Lamotruu. She was known to drown victims of her local village and then serve them to the demonic creatures that she played host to in her hovel. She was eventually hung by a powerful band of knights, and in death she was taken before the court of Lamotruu to stand trial. The demon lord raised her up and placed her at his side, and in this she serves as the mother of the Eyes of Death (at least in spirit).

Passing through the Statue of Blood level requires finding Mother Thornheart's story from among the rooms and placing it in the correct order. The book from **area 4** can help straighten the story out as well.

9. Sanctum of Mother Thornheart

The steep stairs leading down from the open mouth of the draconic skull open up into a truly massive chamber. The sconces flare to life along the walls as you gaze inside. Towards the opposite end of where you came in stands a broad stone platform, roughly ten feet high, upon which rests a large marble statue of a matronly woman. A bowl rests in her hands which catches rivulets of thick blood that trickle from her stone eyes. The bowl bears an inscription on the outside that you can't quite make out from here. On the stone floor in front of the platform you see four square indentations, each about a foot wide and tall, that look like tiles have been removed. Flanking you to your left and right are large stone statues of horned, muscular demons, leering at you with unmoving eyes. Four archways lead out of the room.

The statue is a larger than life portrayal of Mother Thornheart, or at least the guise that she most preferred. The demonic statues in the room are **2 stone golems** that animate to attack all intruders.

The bowl carried by the statue of Mother Thornheart bears the following inscription in a magical script that twists to form a readable language by the reader.

"The story of Mother Thornheart is found through the arches, but you must place her story in the correct order if you wish to pass the Statue of Blood."

In order to trigger the stairs leading down to the Bone Pits, the characters must recover the stone tablets found in the adjacent areas and place them on the ground in the indentations. The correct order is as follows: Tablet of Blood (**area 12**), Tablet of Flesh (**area**

10), Tablet of Judgement (**area 13**), and Tablet of Trial (**area 11**). The Book of Graveyards from **area 4** can help piece the tablets in the correct order. Doing so incorrectly triggers the trap (see below).

Tactics: The stone golems are ruthless and straightforward, but they are enchanted to not leave the sanctum. They do not pursue characters that flee, either through one of the archways leading out of the room or back up to the Howling Halls.

Trap: If the four tablets are placed in the indentations in the incorrect order, the blood in the bowl of the statue begins to bubble furiously. A moment later, caustic blood slime spews forth from the eyes of the statue to cover the entire room. Every living creature in the room must make a saving throw. On a success, the character suffers 5d10 acid damage, while on a failure the character suffers that damage plus exhaustion that inflicts a -4 penalty on Strength and Constitution based checks as the blood slime leeches away vitality. Touching the blood slime in the bowl also triggers the trap.

10. Feast of Flesh

The torches flare to life to reveal a stone chamber dominated by a large feast table. Platters of steaming well-carved meat sit next to goblets of thick red wine. Seated at the table facing you are three monstrous creatures that resemble humanoid vultures. They tear great hunks of meat with their beaks and slurp thick red wine. Noticing you, the three demonic vultures raise goblets and screech what sounds like a toast to you.

The **3 vrock**s in this chamber have been bound by the Eyes of Death to enjoy an endless feast. The feast is not regular meat however – it is the flesh of victims that met their end in the Crypt of Bones. Symbolically it represents the flesh of the victims of Mother Thornheart, however.

As the characters enter, the vrock's give a screeching toast in their horrendous language and then drain their goblets. The middle one stands up on the table and beckons for the characters to join (the demons speak Common). "There is plenty to share," the vrock croaks out, "come and taste the sweetest food imaginable!" If the characters partake, they discover whatever illusion kept over the banquet hall disappears as they get closer – the meat is rotten and the wine is sludge-like and brown. Eating the food induces vomiting that incapacitates the character for 1d4 rounds.

If the characters refuse, the vrock's give a screech and the illusion around the banquet fades. The demons charge forward, complaining that they haven't been fed actual food in hundreds of years.

Tactics: The vrock are dangerous opponents and use their abilities to their utmost in combat. They are starved, though their demonic bodies require less consumption so they suffer no real effects, but their hunger makes them attack savagely.

Treasure: Behind the table, on the ground, is a stone tablet bearing the same type of magical inscription as in **area 9**. The inscription reads as follows:

"The feasting would start at midnight and continue all through the night, and Mother Thornheart always took care of her special guests. The tastiest and tenderest meat was that of the truly frightened, and Mother Thornheart served that sweetest meat as a last course."

This is the Tablet of Flesh, and it can be removed from the room without incident after the vrock have been defeated.

11. The Trial of the Witch

The lights illuminate this stone chamber, but something about the positioning of the sconces keeps dark shadows dancing along the walls. On the east and west walls are four shadowed alcoves, each containing the red stone statue of a heavily robed individual – man or woman, human or otherwise is impossible to tell. A circle of glowing blue runes is etched into the ground in the middle of the chamber.

When Mother Thornheart was hung, she was sent to Lamotruu for her trial. The trial was to determine her worthiness to join the Demon Lord of Graveyards at his side, and it is one that she passed without any issue. As the characters enter, the red stone statues in the alcoves intone in a low voice: "Step forward so that your worthiness be judged by the Conclave of the Fallen."

Any character that steps forward into the circle must succeed at a saving throw at -4 penalty. On a failure, they are paralyzed by a magical force and they cannot move – on a success they have one chance to leap out to avoid what comes next. After that, a character still standing in the circle hears the following in a shrill mocking voice: "You stand on trial to determine your worthiness to stand in the Garden of Graves. Feel the power of Lamotruu!"

The trial has different effects for different characters, but unless the character is truly worthy of being at Lamotruu's side (determined by the DM), the result is a loss of 2d6 ability score points to a random ability score (roll 1d6 – 1 Strength, 2 Dexterity, 3 Constitution, 4 Intelligence, 5 Wisdom, 6 Charisma). The lost ability

score points return at a rate of 1 per day. A character that has an ability score reduced to 0 or lower dies immediately.

After the judgement is over, the character is released, and a tablet appears on the ground at the end of the chamber.

Treasure: The Tablet of Trial that appears after the judgement fits in the floor section in front of the statue of Mother Thornheart. The tablet has the same magical writing that allows anyone to read it, and it bears the following inscription:

"The trial was long and agonizing, but Mother Thornheart was prepared. Every action she had taken was questioned, and there were multiple witnesses to her deeds that spoke. In the end, Mother Thornheart was given a swift sentence."

The Tablet of Trial is the last of the tablets that should be entered into the sanctum in **area 9**.

12. Pool of Blood

A glittering pool of red liquid sits in this stone chamber. The pool is roughly twenty feet long and ten feet wide, and a narrow walkway skirts around the edge to the opposite end of the room. There you can see two stone coffins illuminated in the shaky torchlight.

Mother Thornheart was a fan of drowning her victims, and this room is a testament to the cruel joy she found in doing that. If a character walks around the pool, the lids to the coffins open up to reveal **2 skeleton knights** (one from each). The skeleton knights rasp out a challenge to the characters: "Come and meet your death in the pool of blood!"

At the same time, **2 blood puddings** rise up from the pool in the center. The pool is made of blood slime, which is caustic to exposed flesh. A living creature that falls in suffers 10d10 acid damage per round and suffers from exhaustion (-2 on ability checks and saves for the next 24 hours).

Tactics: The skeleton knights are tricky fighters and do their best to force characters into the blood slime pool. The blood puddings try to envelop opponents in their sticky hideous mass.

Treasure: Once the skeleton knights are defeated, a stone tablet appears on the ground between the two coffins. The tablet bears the same magical inscription as the bowl in **area 9** allowing anyone to read it. It has the following etched on its surface:

"Mother Thornheart delighted in drowning her guests in pools of blood. She relished the feeling of holding them down to feel their life ending, and by doing so she was able to capture more souls. Mother Thornheart was truly an artist."

This is the Tablet of Blood and it can be removed from the room safely. It fits in the empty slot in front of the statue of Mother Thornheart in **area 9**.

13. The Gallows of Judgement

This room is dominated by a large stone platform that raises up ten feet from the ground. The platform surface is flanked by six well-armed skeletons, but you see quickly their armor and weapons are rusted and pitted. At the end of the platform, rising up nearly to the thirty-foot-high ceiling, is a bone white tree. A noose is hung from the lowest branch.

Mother Thornheart was hung by a band of knights, unjustly as the Eyes of Death saw it, but it was an important step in the witch's life. As the characters enter, the skeletons turn their skulls towards them and intone the following: "To find the stone someone must swing." They otherwise do not animate to attack.

In order to trigger the appearance of the tablet, a body must be hung from the noose. It can be any body, though the skeletons that flank the platform crumble to dust if disturbed. A vrock body from **area 10** or one of the skeleton knights in **area 12** would work.

Tactics: If the characters try to put the noose around a dead creature, the tree sprouts tendrils that try to stop them. There are **4 assassin vines** that try to strangle the characters.

The noose itself is magical, and draws the life force of the victim as well as strangling them to death. If a living creature puts the noose on, the rope tightens and strings them up. The victim must make a saving throw each round, with a cumulative penalty of -1 per round. On the first failure, they pass out and are considered to be dying. On the third round they die. Cutting the victim down requires dealing 20 points of slashing damage to the rope (AC 4 [15]).

Once a victim (dead or alive) is hung for 1 minute, a stone tablet appears at the base of the tree.

Treasure: The stone tablet that appears is inscribed with the same magical glyphs as **area 9** that allow anyone to read it. It bears the following words:

"It took a band of warriors two nights of watchful vigilance to ensure Mother Thornheart was brought to justice. She used every tool in her power and managed to curse the warriors, but in the end the tree claimed her life."

This is the Tablet of Judgement that fits into the slot in front of the statue of Mother Thornheart in **area 9**.

14. Tomb of Mother Thornheart

The physical remains of Mother Thornheart were retrieved by the Eyes of Death and they enshrined it on this level with some of her worldly possessions. The secret door in the hallway to **area 12** can be found with a Wisdom check, but it can only be opened by applying blood slime to the seal. A character searching it can make an Intelligence check to find trace amounts of dried red crud along the seal of the secret door.

The chamber contains a black stone slab with the mummified remains of Mother Thornheart. She is unrecognizable, but the treasure in the room can be removed without any problems.

Treasure: Scattered about the room are the following items: a set of nine small ivory idols representing the alignments (each worth 750 gold), six black pearls (each worth 500 gold), a jeweled anklet (worth 2500 gold), a +2 shield, a +3 dagger, and a wand of cold.

Third Level – The Bone Pits

The lowest level of the Crypt of Bones is the Bone Pits, and it contains the *Star of the Grave* kept by Gozimira, the last of the Eyes of Death. The entrance to the actual Bone Pits is through one of the torture pits in the main room of the level, which may go unnoticed by the characters. In order to truly put an end to the Eyes of Death and the threat of the Crypt of Bones, the *Star of the Grave* must be destroyed.

15. The Torture Cages

The large chamber illuminated by the lit torches is dominated by two iron cages hung on thick iron chains from the thirty-foot-high ceiling. The cages are currently empty and they hang over broad pits in the floor. The chains in the ceiling are connected to a series of wheels at the far end of the room, which is guarded by two enormous skeletons. The ground is littered with bones of all kinds.

The **2 giant skeletons** move to intercept any living creature in the room. A crank attached to the wheel allows the cages to be raised or lowered

(there are two wheels, one for each cage). The pits in the middle of the room are twenty feet deep and end in piles of splintered bone shards.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: SOMEONE IN THE CAGES?

ONE WAY TO USE THE CRYPT OF BONES IS TO HAVE THE PCS FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF A MENTOR OR COLLEAGUE, AND IN THIS CASE IT WOULD MAKE DRAMATIC SENSE TO HAVE THAT NPC CAGED UP IN THIS ROOM. ARE THEY DEAD AND THE CAGE RESIDENT ONLY AN ILLUSION? IS IT REALLY A TRICK BY GOZIMIRA TO LURE THE CHARACTERS INTO THE PITS? WHO KNOWS? HAVE FUN WITH IT REGARDLESS!

Tactics: The giant skeletons hurl bones at the characters from a range before charging into combat. After a few rounds, the bone weirds in the pits (**area 16**) slither out of the pit to join in the fight, but their goal is to pull the characters down into the pit to subsume their bones.

16. Shard Pits

The two Bone Pits are each twenty feet deep and filled at the bottom with countless shards of bone splinters. They have each become the home of a **bone weird**, and they crawl out the pit once they sense living creatures in the Torture Cages.

The bones at the bottom of the pit are more than just inanimate objects. Falling into the pit results in 2d6 bludgeoning damage from the fall and 4d6 piercing damage from the bone splinters. In addition, the victim must make a saving throw. On a failure, one of the bone splinters enters the body of the character and makes its way to the victim's heart. Unless the character can remove the bone splinter in 2d4 rounds, the splinter finds the heart and pierces it, causing instant death. Removing a bone splinter can be done by digging into the flesh with a bladed weapon, dealing weapon damage.

There is a secret door on the north wall at the bottom of the northern-most pit. The secret door is well hidden but if a character is in that pit they can make a Wisdom check to notice the outline. Once found the latch can be removed, but doing so empties the contents of the pit into the bone chute (**area 18**).

Treasure: The southern-most shard pit contains a few items left by an adventurer many years ago. A small sack contains twelve pieces of jade (each worth 100 gold) and a *potion of longevity*.

NPC Profile: Gozimira, Eye of Death

Ruthless, cunning, vindictive, and thoroughly evil, Gozimira has been one of Lamotruu's longest serving servants. Ancient legends say that she was taught by Mother Thornheart herself before they went to serve the Demon Lord of Graveyards in the Abyss, but such records are unreliable at best. What is known is that Gozimira found Melisanda and Amelina and pulled the three of them together to form the wicked coven known as the Eyes of Death.

In the temple built on the site that is now the Black Graveyard, Gozimira ruled supreme. She was powerful and confident in her rule, and her hag sisters shared in the spoils of their victories over those that opposed Lamotruu. Before Orcus moved against the Demon Lord of Graveyards, he created havoc for the Eyes of Death by aiding an army of knights and paladins that sacked the temple. The Eyes of Death were defeated that day, and though they were powerful hags Lamotruu was too occupied by Orcus' coup to return the Eyes of Death to his side. So Gozimira and her sisters were plunged into the void, thought lost to the world at large.

Then Lamotruu was freed from his Tower of Skulls, and though weakened he knew his first move was to resurrect his most faithful servants. The demon lord pulled the Eyes of Death from the void and gave them new unlife, along with the *Star of the Grave* to keep themselves anchored while Lamotruu worked to return to his seat of power. Gozimira, ever the loyal, is striving to create a force worthy of the Demon Lord of Graveyards in the newly reclaimed Crypt of Bones.

17. Tomb of the Demons

The putrid scent of rotting meat fills the air of this large chamber. You can see six stone coffins placed about the room, with spots indicating there were a total of eight at one point. However, where the missing two once stood there now exists a hole in the ground. The tops of the coffins are carved to resemble demonic soldiers of a wide variety. A howling rises up from the open pits in the ground.

The Eyes of Death were served by a horde of demonic forces in their time, and the most destructive soldiers were entombed here when they were defeated. The smell comes from the poor preservation of the demonic corpses – each sealed tomb holds the quivering, stinking mass of a dead demon from hundreds of years ago.

The pits are inhabited by a band of **5 shadow demons** that rise up to attack living intruders. The pits descend into the ground roughly one hundred feet before terminating in pools of liquid shadow – falling into one results in immediate death as the body of the fallen is consumed by pure demonic shadow energy.

Tactics: The shadow demons are charged with protecting the tombs. The flickering torches in the room provide dim lighting, allowing the shadow demons to hide behind the tombs from attackers. They actively try to keep characters from entering the pits, as they view them as their “home.”

Treasure: The coffins can be opened by characters with a total Strength score of 25 or higher. When opened, they reveal their oozing, stinking contents, forcing everyone within five feet to make a saving throw or contract a minor disease that inflicts 1d6 Constitution damage per day until cured. The demon flesh can be bottled and used in experiments, as spell components, or as an ingredient to a potent item.

18. Bone Chute

The secret door in **area 16** dumps the contents of the pit into a slanted chute that leads directly to **area 19**. Characters that cannot find a way to slow or stop their rapid slide suffer 6d6 piercing damage at the end and must make a saving throw; on a failure they contract a bone shard (as described in **area 16**).

19. The Bone Pit

This grisly chamber is filled with bones, bone splinters, and bone fragments of all shapes and sizes. The yellowed stone walls mimic the color of the contents, and you wonder if the walls are also made of bones. A pile of bones stitch themselves together to form a vaguely humanoid shape at the end of the chamber.

This is the eponymous Bone Pit of the Crypt of Bones. The creature stitching itself together at the end of the room is a **bone golem**, and at the same time **3 skeleton hulks** rise up from around the room. The piles of scattered bones make the entire room difficult terrain. In addition, if a living creature falls down, they must make a save to avoid contracting a bone shard (see **area 16** for details).

Tactics: The bone golem and skeleton hulks attack with savage ferocity to add bones to their prized collection. Gozimira takes the opportunity here to taunt the characters, promising to enjoy picking the meat from their skeletons when they are dead.

Treasure: Searching around the Bone Pit for 1d6 minutes turns up the following scattered items: a *bag of devouring* and a spell scroll containing *meteor swarm*.

20. Idol of Lamotruu

The unworked stone of the hall leads into roughly-hewn cave about twenty feet wide. Against the opposite wall, resting on the uneven ground, squats a five-foot-tall statue made of marble. It is carved to resemble a gaunt, sexless, naked humanoid figure with thorns covering its entire body. It holds a trident in its hands, and its tongue is long and wraps around the haft of the weapon. The eyes of the statue glow a fierce green color.

In the time the Eyes of Death maintained the Crypt of Bones as a torture maze, no living creature made it to this area. The stone idol depicts Lamotruu, Demon Lord of Graveyards, and it was used by the hags to communicate with their master. Its eyes have flared to life since Lamotruu's rebirth from the Tower of Skulls, and while the demon lord can exert some will to see through the idol's eyes he has been too busy to look in here.

Treasure: The idol is easily worth 5,000 gold or more to a collector of demonic or religious artifacts. The item weighs only 30 pounds, but keeping it provides Lamotruu a link to the characters. The item proves impervious to damage because of ancient demonic sorcery performed long ago.

21. Pit of Cursed Shackle

The rough unworked stone of the hallway ends abruptly in a pit, about twenty feet deep. The pit appears empty save for a single skeleton of a humanoid figure lying slumped against the wall of the pit. The skeleton looks up to you.

This pit has become the home of a thief who once tried to steal from the Eyes of Death long ago. The thief's name has long been lost and the torture put to him was almost unbearable, but somehow he persisted. He was kept alive as a skeleton and thrown into this pit to rot along with his thoughts, and that has been his life. He calls himself Shackle.

Shackle calls up to the characters in a dry, raspy voice, asking if they are here to destroy him finally. He wishes to be released and is willing to tell the characters anything if they promise to free him. Unfortunately, that is a trap (see below). However, Shackle does not know this, and he can relay the following to the characters if they promise to destroy him finally. The curse that keeps Shackle alive also keeps him



22. Stars of the Grave

The smell of wet earth permeates this large unworked cavern. The ground is covered in thick black dirt, through which you can see numerous bones protruding. In the center of the cave rests the very large skull of a horned demonic creature, and behind that sits a grand throne. The throne is made of thousands of bones. Flanking the throne are two white obelisks, each bearing a curious black jewel with six points. Upon the throne rests a hag, her skin pulled tight across her bones and her claws dug deep into the arms of the throne. She leans forward with a hungry gleam in her black colorless eyes.

This is the lair of **Gozimira**, the third and final Eye of Death that the characters must confront. She cackles at the appearance of the party, promising pain and suffering for an eternity before she raises her hands and summons forth the guardian of the *Star of the Grave* – a **skeletal minotaur demon**. The undead demon rises from the skull in the ground.

Tactics: The skeletal minotaur demon moves into melee combat as quickly as possible to engage the party while Gozimira hangs back and provides support. Neither one of them pull their punches – this is a fight for the *Star of the Grave*, and without it Gozimira and her sisters return back to the void of death from whence they came.

Treasure: Behind the throne made of bones is a large black chest the Eyes of Death kept their most prized possessions from their previous lives. The chest is locked and trapped. If the trap is not disabled the needle pricks the finger of the lockpicker, injecting them with a powerful toxin. The victim must make a series of saving throws each at -2 penalty. If they accumulate three successes, they manage to beat the poison. However, if they accumulate three failures the toxin liquefies their interior organs, killing them in an incredibly messy manner.

Once opened, the treasure chest is revealed to contain the following items: twelve emeralds (each worth 1000 gold), a *ring of human control*, a *ring of telekinesis*, a *wand of fireball* (10 charges), a *helm of fiery brilliance*, and a *staff of healing*.

Destroying the Star

There are two black jewels in this chamber set in white obelisks, but only one is the *Star of the Grave*. The true one is on the right-hand side of the throne (so if one were sitting in the throne, it would be the one the one on the right). However, both detect as powerful necromantic magic under sorcerous investigation. Under close scrutiny (Intelligence check), the false one identifies as glass rather than a real jewel.

immobile – he can only move his head and talk.

The Eyes of Death keep a black jewel called the *Star of the Grave* in a chamber not far from here. There are two stars, however, and Shackle was able to determine that the left one was the correct one (this is accurate). He also knows that Gozimira, the wickedest of the three hag sisters, is also the most dangerous and she was in charge of maintaining the black jewel. Destroying the star should destroy the power of the Crypt of Bones.

Trap: Unfortunately, Shackle is bait for well-meaning heroes who have made it this far in the crypt. Destroying Shackle from a range is nearly impossible – he is immune to magic and ranged attacks from arrows and crossbows. He says that the only way to destroy him is with a blunt attack to his skull, which is true. However, any living creature that enters the pit must make a saving throw at -2 penalty. On a failure, they pass out and the ground sprouts tendrils that pull the unconscious body into the earth, where the victim is suffocated and killed in a matter of 1d6 rounds.

Shackle is not aware of this trap expresses genuine concern if this happens, but there is nothing he can do about it.

If the false star is destroyed, the pieces of glass raise up and fill the room with razor-sharp shards. All creatures in the room suffer 6d6 slashing damage, with a saving throw for half damage. The shard cloud lasts for three rounds.

Destroying the correct *Star of the Grave* requires spilling the blood of Gozimira or one of the other hags on it and then smashing it with a heavy object (such as a weapon). Once destroyed, the pieces of the *Star of the Grave* fall to the ground and become inert. There are eight pieces of the jewel, each worth 2500 gold.

EPILOGUE

The destruction of the true *Star of the Grave* removes the link between the Eyes of Death and their demon lord master, preventing the undead hags from reforming once again. Lamotruu feels the loss and rages against the foes that have thwarted him – through the Eyes of Death the Demon Lord of Graveyards now knows who stands against him and his plans of Abyssal reclamation.

What about Amberdale? The town's fate is largely in the hands of the characters and their actions during the Night of the Hungry Horde. The residents, if they survived, are stubborn and refuse to leave unless given good enough reason – which a siege by skeletons might qualify as!

Rewards

In addition to the experience awards for defeating their foes in combat (or cleverly avoiding combat), the characters can also earn bonus experience points for accomplishing story-centered goals. The list below offers examples of some that can be used, but create your own as you see fit!

- Stopping the Hungry Horde from destroying Amberdale
- Defeating the Eyes of Death
- Finding the tomb of Mother Thornheart
- Rescuing Shackle

Next Steps

With the *Star of the Grave* destroyed and the three Eyes of Death defeated, the Black Graveyard sinks once again into history. The necromantic energy from the blackened soil loses its power and the bones of those buried in the area no longer rise to unholy life. Lamotruu's most powerful servants return back to the void, but the demon lord is far from defeated at this point. Lamotruu seeks to reclaim his Abyssal heritage once more, but to do so he needs to spill a lot more innocent blood. The characters are going to need all of their strength to stop the Demon Lord of Graveyards in the ...

GARDEN OF GRAVES!

Monster and NPC Information

Ravenous skeleton: HD 2; hp 10; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 claw (1d6 plus drain); Move 12; Save 15; Special: immune to sleep and charm spells, half damage from non-bludgeoning attacks, drain (lost hp from attack does not heal magically or medically, recovered 1/hp per day); ALC; CL/XP 4/120

Raised by powerful necromantic energies from the Black Graveyard, **ravenous skeletons** appear as normal humanoid skeletons with one important difference – their bony claws are wreathed in purple flames. These flames are bone-chilling cold and if they touch flesh they can suck the very life out of a living creature.

Warhorse skeleton: HD 3; hp 16; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 hooves (1d3); Move 18; Save 14; Special: half damage from non-bludgeoning attacks, immune to sleep and charm spells; AL C; CL/XP 4/120

Usually accompanied by a skeleton knight, the **warhorse skeletons** are the bony remains of a powerful stallion. These once noble steeds are now completely loyal to their skeleton knight riders.

Skeleton knight: HD 5; hp 31; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 long sword (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; Special: half damage from non-bludgeoning attacks, immune to sleep and charm spells; AL C; CL/XP 6/400

When the temple of Lamotruu was raised and the Eyes of Death defeated just before Orcus' coup, it was a band of knights and paladins that led the charge against the forces of the hags. Now, through black sorcery, these once noble warriors fight for the Eyes of Death as **skeleton knights**. Clad in rusted armor and wielding ancient blades, they are loyal to their undead hag mistresses and capable of cutting down lesser foes on the battlefield.

Skeleton hulk: HD 5+1; hp 29; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; Special: half damage from non-bludgeoning attacks, immune to sleep and charm spells, charge (if it moves at least 6 before attacking, gains +2 damage); AL C; CL/XP 6/400

The **skeleton hulks** raised by the Eyes of Death are a mish-mash of skeletons magically fused together to form an ogre-sized undead monster. It is near mindless and is usually sent as a battering ram against opposing forces.

Dragon skeleton: HD 8; hp 48; AC 1 [18]; Atk 2 claws (1d8) and 1 bite (1d10) and 1 tail strike (1d6); Move 12, fly 18; Save 5; Special: half damage from non-bludgeoning attacks, immune to sleep and charm spells; AL C; CL/XP 10/1400

In life, the hag Amelina had a fondness for dragons and she kept one as a pet in the time of Lamotruu's power. When she and her sisters were raised by the demon lord's return, Amelina knew she wanted her pet at her side, and so she raised it as a **dragon skeleton**. Though it lacks most of the abilities it had in life the monster is still capable of rending flesh from bones with its claws, bite, and tail.

Screaming scarecrow: HD 4; hp 20; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 claw (1d6 plus fear); Move 12; Save 13; Special: fear (target must make a save or frightened, suffer -2 to attack and saves for 2d6 minutes from fear), scream (1/day, let loose scream, deals 3d6 damage to living creatures within 24, save for half, frightened targets suffer 5d6 damage instead), immune to non-magic weapons, double damage from fire; AL N; CL/XP 7/600

The Eyes of Death had a fondness for scarecrows during their life, and they would often take the fallen victims of the Crypt of Bones and turn them into warning signs around their temple. The **screaming scarecrows** were a favorite creation of Gozimira, who relished the sounds of the screams the constructs gave out.

NPC Profile: Amelina, Eye of Death

Amelina was a powerful wizard in a long-forgotten kingdom in ages past, where she wielded great power – political and arcane. She was beautiful, ambitious, smart, and dedicated to seeing herself rule one day, but her ambitions got the best of her. Amelina made powerful enemies, and they banded together one fateful night to end her rise to power. They used powerful sorcery to not only end her life but to cast her soul into the depths of the Abyss itself.

There she toiled away as a lost soul maggot, but her determination and guile saw her to be reborned as a wicked Abyssal hag. Amelina sought revenge on those who had wronged her and to that end she worked deals with demons and monsters. She learned of Lamotruu, Demon Lord of Graveyards, and eventually she came to idolize the powerful demon. Her dealings brought her into contact with Melisanda and Gozimira, and together the three hags formed the Eyes of Death, a powerful coven dedicated to Lamotruu and his machinations.

That came to end when Orcus defeated Lamotruu and stole the demon lord's domain. The Eyes of Death were killed by Orcus' forces and their grand temples and graveyards were torn down. This was the seeming end of Amelina and her hag sisters, but when Lamotruu was freed from his prison in the Tower of Skulls, new power flowed into their long-dead bones. The Eyes of Death were reborn as undead hags and knew their master needed mortal souls to usurp Orcus and reclaim the Garden of Graves on the Abyss.

Amelina is vain and cruel. Before rising as an undead hag, she used magic to obscure her features and retain her beauty. Now, the spells don't work like they did and no illusion seems to hide her decaying leather-like flesh. She has chosen to take her rage out on Amberdale and the defenders that dare stand in her way.

Giant skeleton: HD 10; hp 55; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 slam (2d6) or bone throw (range 48, 1d8); Move 12; Save 5; Special: immune to charm and sleep, half damage from non-bludgeoning attacks; CL/XP 11/1,700

Melisanda is the one credited for bringing in a force of hill giants to the Crypt of Bones as **giant skeletons** to torment those doomed to its halls. These sixteen-foot tall monstrosities are nearly as

strong as they were in life, and they are capable of hurling their own bones at opponents to devastating effect.

Bone weird: HD 7; hp 32; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 bite (1d8 plus bone subsuming); Move 12, climb 6; Save 9; Special: reform (if reduced to 0 hp, the skull must be destroyed or it reforms with half hp in 1d4+1 rounds), bone subsuming (victim must make save or lose 1d4 bones, lose 1 point of Dexterity and Strength for each lost bone, recovered at a rate of 1/day), half damage from non-bludgeoning attacks, immune to sleep and charm spells; AL C; CL/XP 10/1400

Bone weirds have long been allies of the Eyes of Death. These creatures appear as jumbled piles of broken bones usually in a serpentine form, with a large skull serving as its "head." They are undead, but the force giving them animation is an elemental spirit from some distant demiplane of horrors. They are capable of subsuming the bones of living creatures.

Shadow demon: HD 5; hp 27; AC 0 [19]; Atk 2 claws (1d6); Move fly 18; Save 12; Special: +1 or better magic weapons to hit, magic resistance 50%, shadow strike (+1d6 damage in shadowy area); AL C; CL/XP 8/800

In the Abyssal hierarchy, **shadow demons** rank pretty low, but they were always welcome by the Eyes of Death in the Crypt of Bones. They appear as wispy shadowy creatures with long talons and gargoyle-like faces, their torsos trailing off to tendrils of darkness.

Stone golem: HD 12; hp 60; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 fist (3d8); Move 6; Save 3; Special: +2 or better magic weapons to hit, immune to spells; AL N; CL/XP 16/3200

To honor Mother Thornheart, the Eyes of Death crafted great **stone golems** to guard her statue in the Crypt of Bones. These constructs appear as muscular horned demons and they have instructions to destroy any intruder into the sanctum of Mother Thornheart.

Blood pudding: HD 5; hp 24; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 attack (2d6); Move 6; Save 5; Special: acidic surface (any weapon or armor contacting a black pudding is eaten away, magic items can last extra rounds of contact per +1), immune to cold, divide (if hit by lightning, splits into 2 puddings with half hp but same HD); AL N; CL/XP 7/600

Amelina is credited with the creation of the **blood pudding**, an ooze monster very similar to a black pudding. The blood pudding is dark red in color and is drawn to living energy.

Amelina, Melisanda, Gozimira, Eyes of Death: HD 8; AC 8 [11]; Atk 1 claw (2d6) and 1 witch-bolt (range 60, 1d12); Move 10; Save 8; Special: magic resistance 65%, +2 or better magic weapons to hit, magic spells (8th-level caster, at will – *charm person*, *magic missile*, *sleep*, *detect invisibility*; 3/day – *mirror image*, *lightning bolt*, *hold person*); AL C; CL/XP 12/2000

The **Eyes of Death** are described in more detail in the NPC Profiles.

Skeletal minotaur demon: HD 10; hp 61; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d8) and 1 hoof (2d6); Move 18; Save 5; Special: half damage from non-bludgeoning attacks, immune to sleep and charm spells, gore (if both claws hit same target, victim takes extra 1d8 damage); AL C; CL/XP 12/2000

Gozimira raised the **skeletal minotaur demon** to serve as the last defender of the *Star of the Grave* at the bottom of the Crypt of Bones. In life this hulking monster was a demon that commanded legions and was capable of breaking down castle walls, but in death it serves as a massive skeletal behemoth.

Vrock: HD 8; hp 39; AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 beak (1d6) and 2 foreclaws (1d8) and 2 rear claws (1d8); Move 12, fly 18; Save 8; Special: magic resistance 50%, immune to fire, create darkness (5 ft. radius); CL/XP 11/1,700

The vulture demons, or **vrocks** as they are known, are favored demonic servants of Lamotruu. As demons, they are effectively immortal on the Prime Plane unless slain in battle, but the vulture

NPC Profile: Melisanda, Eye of Death

In her mortal life, Melisanda was greedy and wicked, living as a witch in a remote part of the world. Her swampy home was rumored to be haunted, but she performed valued services to the isolated communities around her – mostly medicinal, but she would offer advice if the price was right as well. All the while she gathered information and created a spy network of birds and beasts in the area.

Eventually, Melisanda's power brought her to the attention of a forlorn knight lord who had recently lost the love of his life. He came to the witch asking for the power to bring his dead wife back, and Melisanda promised to reunite the knight with his lost love. The potion she gave him to give her dead wife brought her back as an undead horror that claimed the knight's life. The risen monster sought out Melisanda and in a cruel twist of irony killed the witch on a stormy night.

Melisanda's meddling and creation of the undead horror caught the attention of Lamotruu, Demon Lord of Graveyards, and he snared up the lost soul of the witch. Transforming her into an Abyssal hag, Lamotruu promised wickedness galore to Melisanda in exchange for service, to which she readily agreed. Melisanda found Amelina and Gozimira, and together they formed the Eyes of Death.

Even in life, Melisanda found twisted joy in her grotesque matronly appearance, and she relished in drawing the screams of children that beheld her ghastly form. As an undead hag, her skin has hollowed and tightened, but Melisanda doesn't care. Her back hunches beneath her filthy black robes, and she is quick to snap at anyone. She doesn't tolerate fools or failure and delights in general torture.

demons in the Crypt of Bones hunger for fresh meat to eat.

Night worm: HD 15; hp 70; AC 6 [13], Atk 1 bite (2d12); Move 9, burrow 12; Save 3; Special: swallows whole (if attack roll is 4 or higher than needed to hit the victim is swallowed, suffers bite damage automatically each round), poison breath weapon (3/day the night worm can exhale a cloud of poisonous gas in a 60 foot cone, victims in the cloud must save vs. poison or suffer 5d6 damage); CL/XP 16/3,200

The massive **night worms** are long, midnight blue colored worms capable of exhaling clouds of necrotic gas that eats away living flesh. They are a favored creation of Lamotruu, who used them in the Garden of Graves on the Abyss to aerate the soil and let the rancid plants grow. They have no eyes but their mouths are filled with razor sharp teeth.

Wraith: HD 4; hp 18; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 touch (1d6 + level drain); Move 9, fly 24; Save 13; Special: level drain (drain 1 level with hit), hit only by magic or silver weapons; CL/XP 8/800

Mortal humanoid that die in the Crypt of Bones are eventually transformed into **wraiths** – incorporeal undead monsters with a hunger for the life force of the living.

Assassin vine: HD 7; hp 31; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 vine (1d6+1); Move 1; Save 9; Special: animate plants (plants in a 30 ft. area animate to immobilize victims, save to avoid); CL/XP 8/800

In his prized gardens, Lamotruu kept groves of **assassin vines** as protection against intruders. These plants are typically gray-green in color and they subsist on blood, usually drawn from choked victims that underestimated the seeming innocuous plant. They move towards the heat of the living.

Shambling graveyard: HD 10; AC 1 [18]; Atk 2 fists (2d8); Move 6; Save 5; Special: immune to cold and fire, graveyard aura (anyone seeing a shambling graveyard must make a save or be paralyzed with fear for 2d4 rounds), fester (victims hit by the fist suffer 1d8 damage on the following round unless the wound is healed first), half damage from weapons, engulf (if it hits a victim with both fists, engulfs victim who suffers 3d8 damage each round); CL/XP 14/2,600

A massive pile of vaguely humanoid shaped grave dirt, a **shambling graveyard** is a moving mass of tombstones and black earth summoned from the vilest of burial grounds. It is a plant creature, however, and its single-minded determination is to consume as much living material as possible.

NPC Profile: Gozimira, Eye of Death

Ruthless, cunning, vindictive, and thoroughly evil, Gozimira has been one of Lamotruu's longest serving servants. Ancient legends say that she was taught by Mother Thornheart herself before they went to serve the Demon Lord of Graveyards in the Abyss, but such records are unreliable at best. What is known is that Gozimira found Melisanda and Amelina and pulled the three of them together to form the wicked coven known as the Eyes of Death.

In the temple built on the site that is now the Black Graveyard, Gozimira ruled supreme. She was powerful and confident in her rule, and her hag sisters shared in the spoils of their victories over those that opposed Lamotruu. Before Orcus moved against the Demon Lord of Graveyards, he created havoc for the Eyes of Death by aiding an army of knights and paladins that sacked the temple. The Eyes of Death were defeated that day, and though they were powerful hags Lamotruu was too occupied by Orcus' coup to return the Eyes of Death to his side. So Gozimira and her sisters were plunged into the void, thought lost to the world at large.

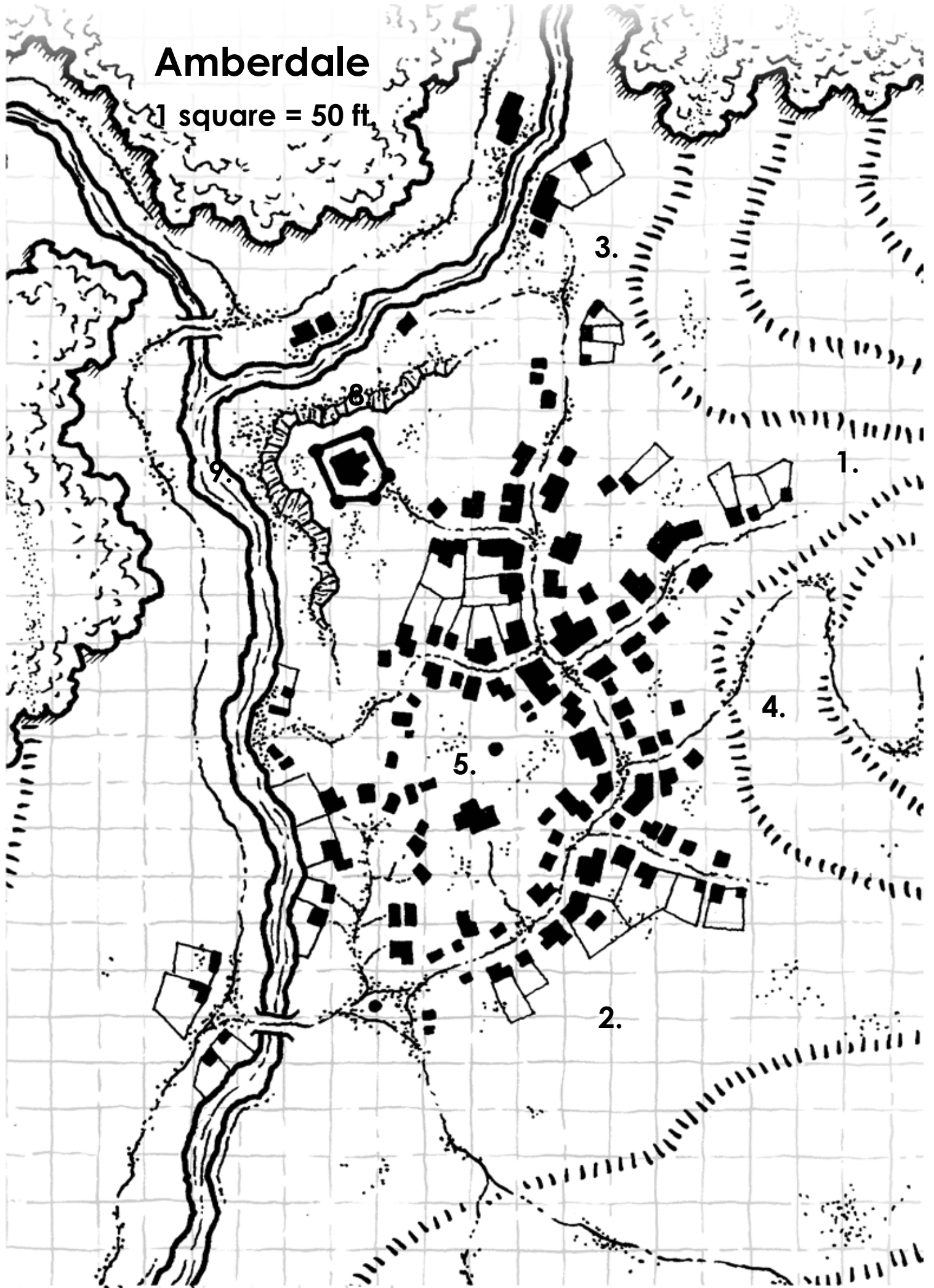
Then Lamotruu was freed from his Tower of Skulls, and though weakened he knew his first move was to resurrect his most faithful servants. The demon lord pulled the Eyes of Death from the void and gave them new unlife, along with the *Star of the Grave* to keep themselves anchored while Lamotruu worked to return to his seat of power. Gozimira, ever the loyal, is striving to create a force worthy of the Demon Lord of Graveyards in the newly reclaimed Crypt of Bones.

Bone golem: HD 10; hp 53; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 fist (3d10); Move 8; Save 5; Special: half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, hit only by magic weapons, magic resistance 90%, cackle (can release a horrendous cackle, everyone that can hear it must make a save or run in terror for 2d6 rounds); CL/XP 14/2,600

The **bone golems** of the Crypt of Bones are constructs made in the misshapen image of a hunched ten-foot tall giant. Few of the bones in the golem match, giving it an awkward gait, but its skull is always hinged to allow for its hideous cackle to ring out.

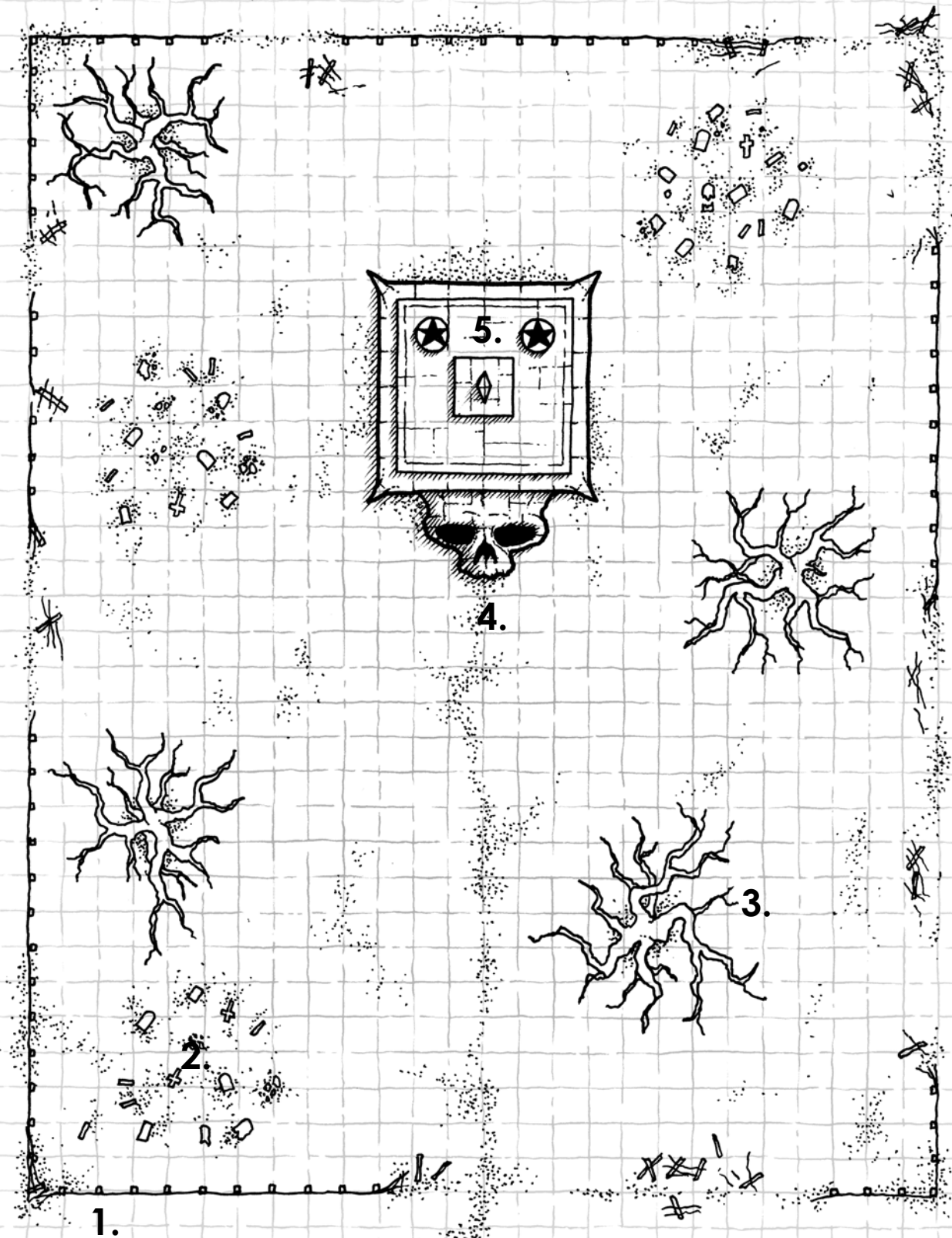
Amberdale

1 square = 50 ft.



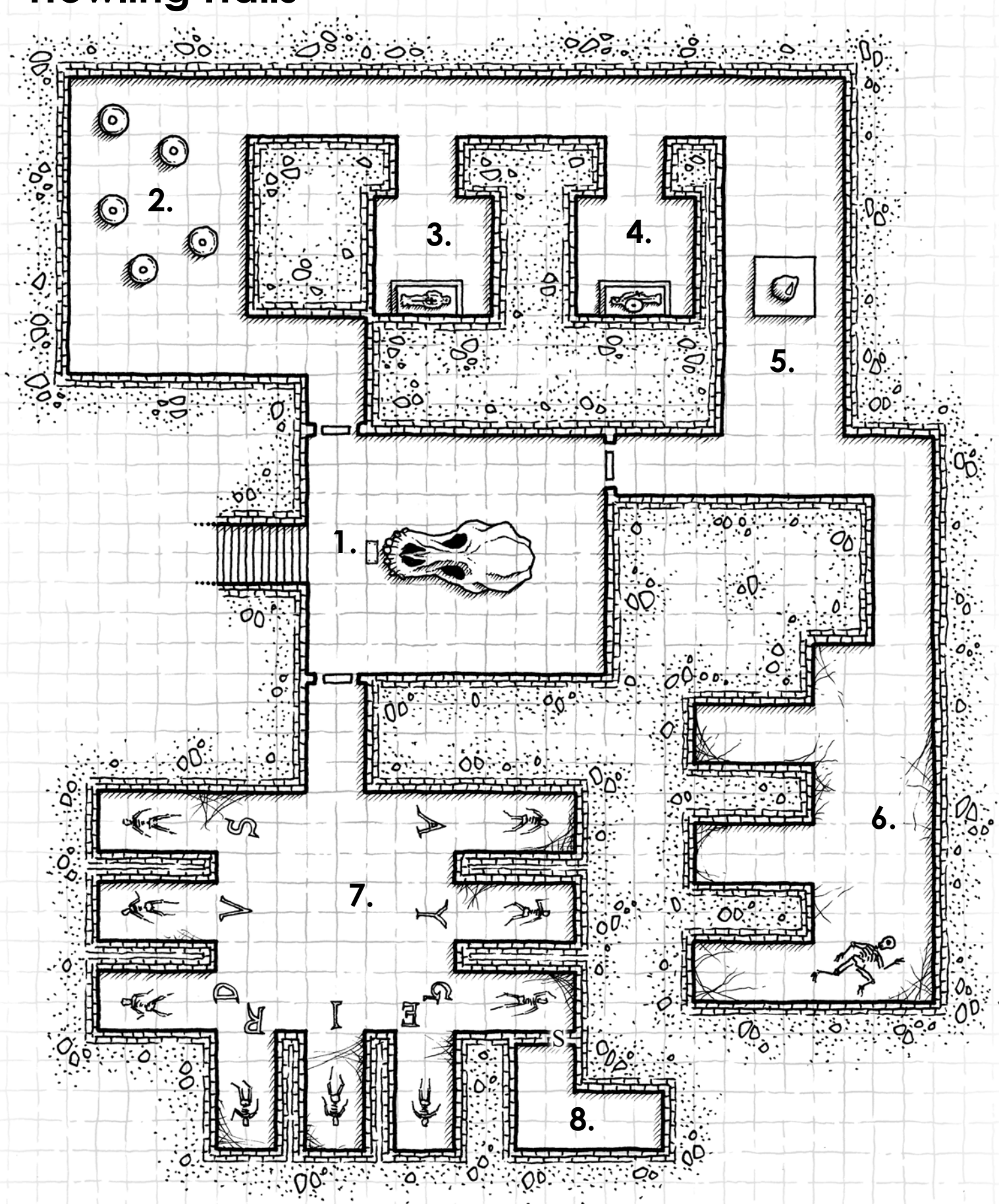
Black Graveyard

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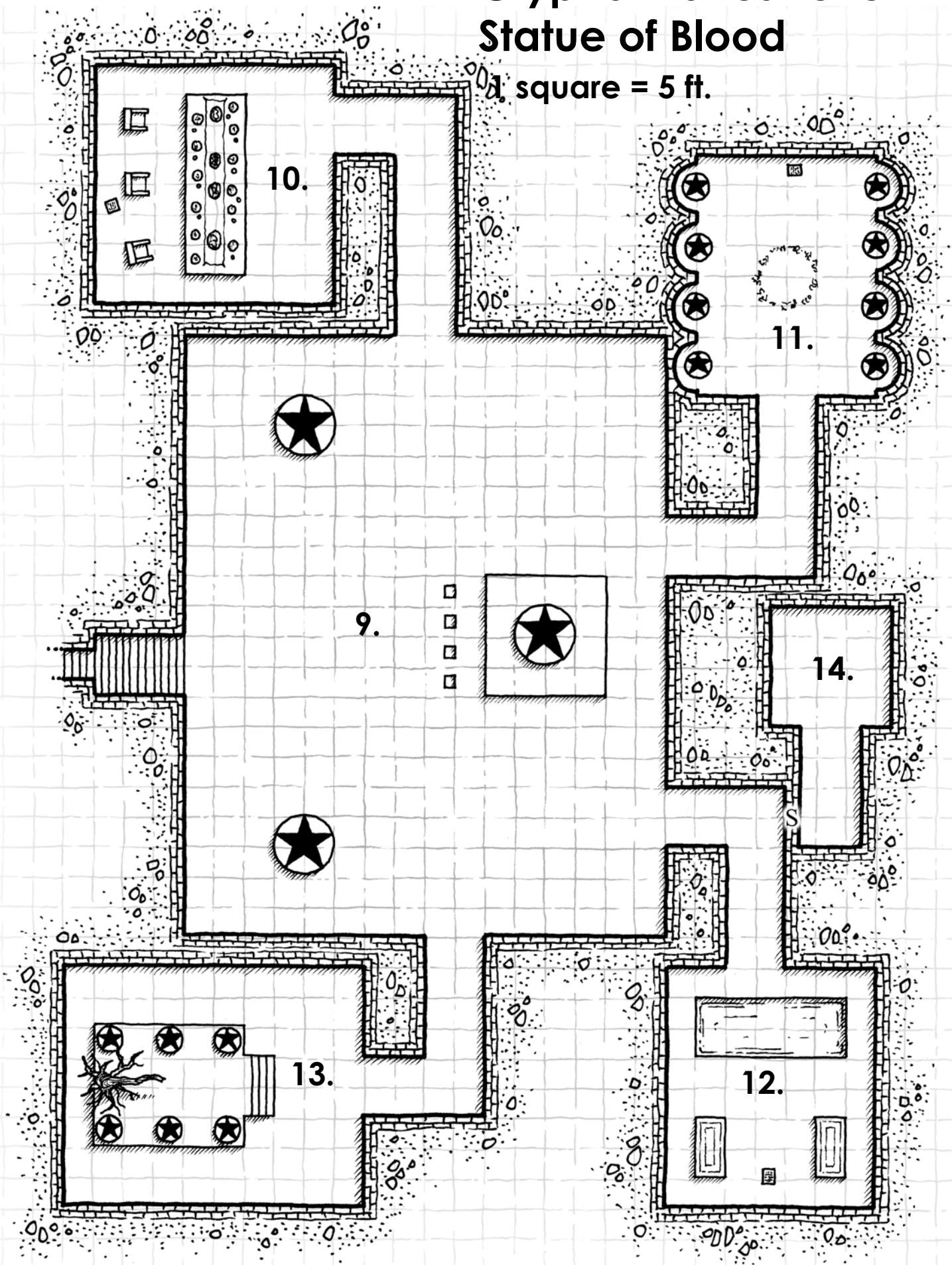
Crypt of Bones Level I - Howling Halls

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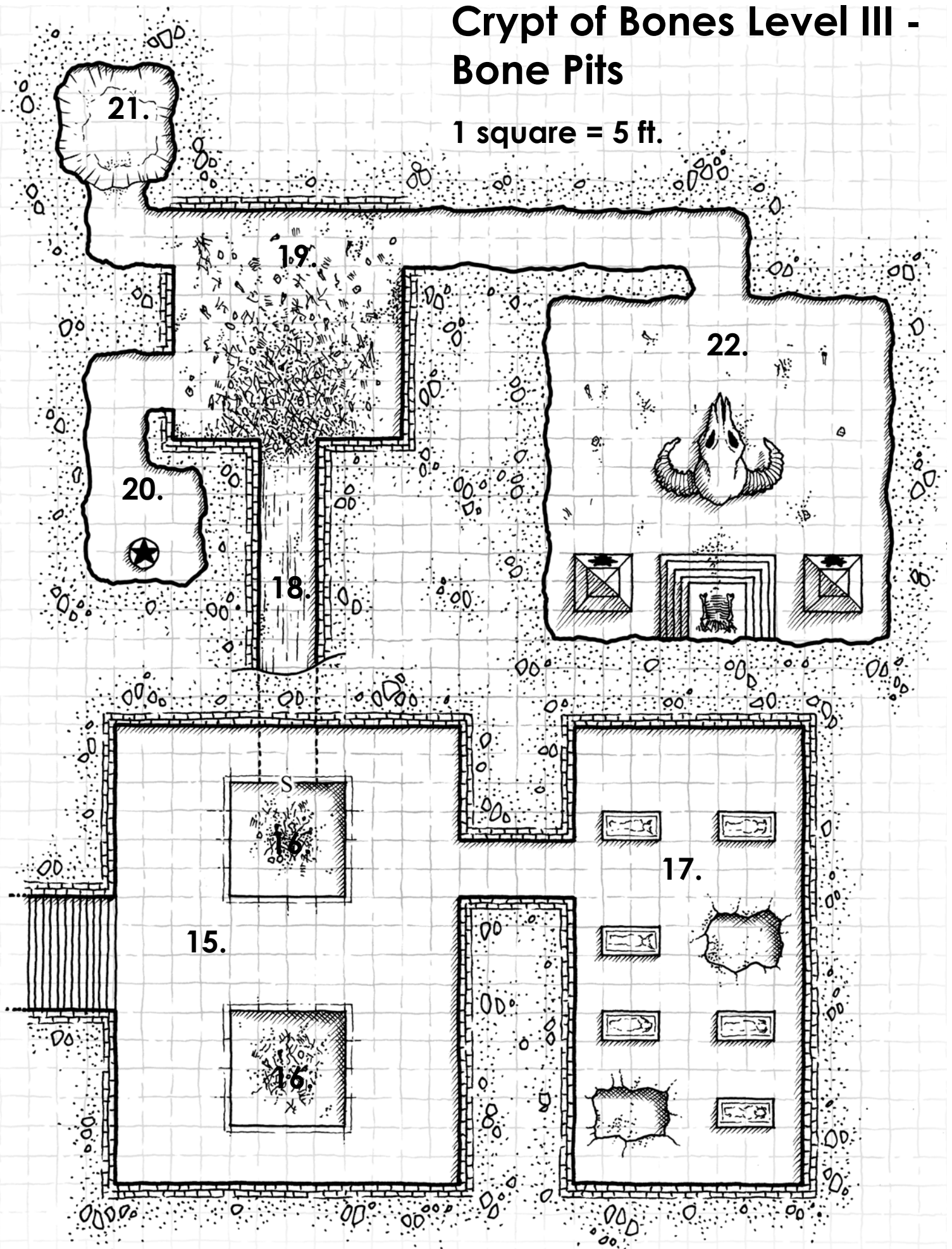
Crypt of Bones Level II - Statue of Blood

1 square = 5 ft.



Crypt of Bones Level III - Bone Pits

1 square = 5 ft.



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