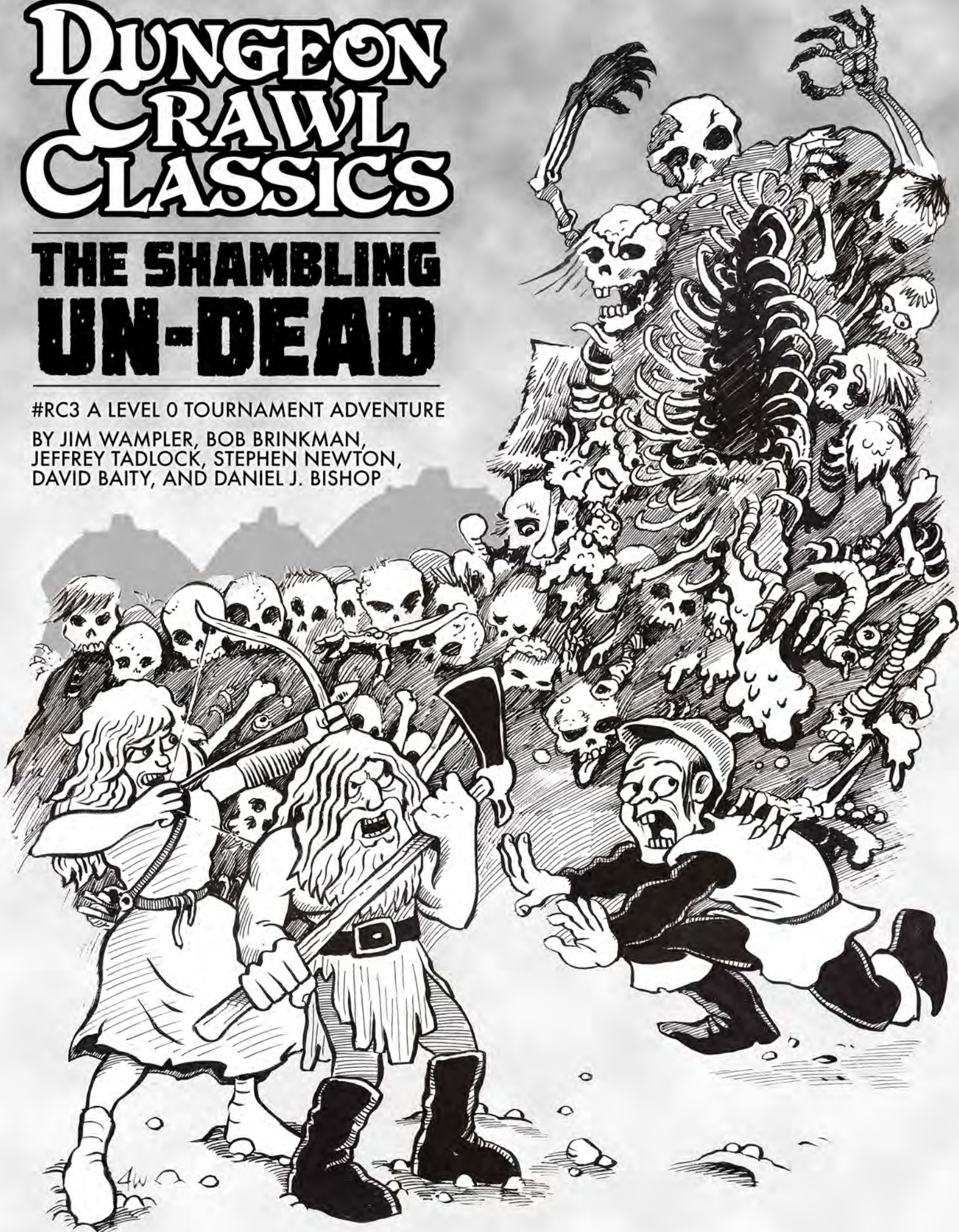


# DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS

## THE SHAMBLING UN-DEAD

#RC3 A LEVEL 0 TOURNAMENT ADVENTURE

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# THE SHAMBLING UN-DEAD

A Level 0 Tournament Adventure

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## INTRODUCTION



The Shambling Un-Dead is a DCC RPG Tournament adventure based on the character funnel format. This adventure is designed for 8 players, with each player having only 1 level-0 PC. As each PC dies, the controlling player taps out of the game, and a new player rotates into the game with a brand new PC. The tournament is scored by ranking individual PCs by largest number of encounters survived. Players eliminated from play may re-enter the game with a new PC when another seat opens up at the table.

The tournament is played for a pre-designated amount of time. Typically, 3-4 hours is enough for everyone to have a great time. Players are scored in the tournament as follows: For each encounter survived (an encounter being defined as any time in which initiative is rolled to begin a combat), stamp the player's character sheet once with the "I Survived!" stamp. When a PC dies, likewise stamp that player's character sheet with the "Dead" stamp. Remind players to hang onto their character sheets for later event scoring. At the end of the event, the players with character sheets that show the most encounters survived stamps will be ranked, and the top three numerical survival totals will be awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place respectively. Any ties will be settled by a d20 dice-off between the tying players.

For more details and advice on how to run a DCC RPG tournament, see the sidebar in the back of this adventure.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND



The player characters are peasants living in Cowlinsport, a large medieval village with a native population of approximately 1,000 souls. The village is situated on a waterfront where the Rivening River flows into a sunny harbor of the Orange Sea. As a regional trade center, Cowlinsport is home to many merchant guilds and three temples.

Outside of all living memory, the site was the location of one of the final ancient battles between two extra-planar armies from the realms of life and anti-life. Though the battle took place thousands of years ago, before men and demi-men settled the land, there still lingers the dormant negative energies of slain anti-life denizens buried deep in

the earth. As the dimensional planes rotate and orbit each other within the Oververse, once every 666 years the planes come into an alignment that reawakens these suspended forces buried in the deep places, and the effects are felt by all. The dead rise from their graves. Nocturnal un-dead are empowered to step into the daylight. Living souls turn sour and living bodies disincorporate. Arcane ley lines light up in the ground and slay any who attempt to cross them.

For the next 24 hours, an anti-life apocalypse will befall the residents of this sleepy harbor town, and there is no escape except by dint of brutal survival tactics and great luck.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY



In The Shambling Un-Dead, the PCs are peasants trapped within varying sections of their native village during an un-dead apocalypse that will last from sunrise to sunrise. Since escape is impossible, survival by any means necessary is the name of the game.

The anti-life ley lines that surround each section of this adventure instantly kill any living being who crosses them. There are two types of these deadly ley lines that are easily distinguishable from each other. The more common type manifest as purplish necromatic runes inscribed into the ground from which a wavering violet haze shoots upwards into the sky. These are the ley lines that lie between the different sections of this adventure. Each of these ley lines can only be deactivated by a specific set of actions performed by the PCs, thus granting them access to the next section of the town (and the adventure).

Note that as the PCs cross deactivated ley lines, the ley lines will reactivate, unless otherwise noted in a section of this adventure. This prevents the PCs from backtracking, splitting the party, or fleeing to a defeated portion of the tournament adventure after entering a new section of the town.

The town itself is surrounded on the outer perimeter by a double set of anti-life ley lines, and these lines do not deactivate for the duration of the tournament session.

### Replacement PCs

As PCs are killed, replacement PCs suddenly appear from random hiding spots within the village — inside barrels, hidden beneath wagons, or narrow alleyways and the like.

Throughout the adventure, when a PC dies from any cause that leaves behind an semi-intact body, the ambient anti-life forces that are saturating the area raise that dead PC as a 1 hit point level-0 zombie on the following round.

**Level-0 Zombie:** Init -4; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4); AC 7; HD 1d1, 1 hp; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead; SV Fort +4, Ref -4, Will +2; AL C

### Disgeneric Un-dead

Through the course of play, situations may occur in this tournament adventure for which the judge simply needs a herd of un-dead to prompt dithering PCs along their way. For just such occasions, the freshly zombified corpses of fallen NPC villagers may appear at the judge's discretion in order to provide that little extra incentive for the players to get on with it.

**Disgeneric Un-dead (as many as you need):** Init -4; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4); AC 9; HD 1d1+1, 2 hp; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead, plus one random trait from Table 1-1 below per group; SV Fort +4, Ref -4, Will +2; AL C

**Table 1-1: Abilities of Disgeneric Un-dead**

d10	Un-dead Ability
1	Energy-draining touch (1d6 random ability score damage; Will save resists) .
2	Level-draining touch (reduced to Level-0 zombie; Will save resists)
3	Searing gaze (1d6 damage with a look)
4	Touch of cold (1d4 damage; immune to fire spells).
5	Blood drain (causes 1d4 damage + 1 Stamina point each round)
6	Flight 30'
7	Transformation (rat, cat, bat, wolf, worm; or mist, dust, spirit; etc.)
8	Extraordinary strength (Str 22+, 1d4+6 melee strike)
9	Swift (2 actions per round)
10	Paralysis with touch (Will save to resist)



## STARTING THE ADVENTURE

*After a night of fitful sleep and fevered dreams, you awaken and step outside your thatched cottage to greet the coming day. Apocalypse greets you eyes instead. You quickly discover that the dirt streets and back alleyways of your village are now overrun with hordes of the shambling un-dead. Quickly glancing to the scattered few friends that you see standing about equally shocked, you grab the nearest crude implement that you can find and form a circle standing back-to-back – desperately hoping that there is somewhere to run and hide, and that things don't get even worse. Is that a vampire out in broad daylight?*

PCs entering the tournament may attempt to search their immediate area for crude implements that can be used as weapons. If a PC announces the intention to do so, have that player roll on Table 1-2.

**Table 1-2: Random Improvised Weapons**

d12	Improvised Weapon
1	A pointy stick (1d2)
2	Barrel stave (1d3)
3	Walking staff (1d3)
4	Cudgel (1d4)
5	Fireplace poker (1d4)
6	Wooden mallet (1d4)
7	Cart axle (1d5)
8	Butcher's cleaver (1d5)
9	Pitchfork (1d6)
10	Shovel (1d6)
11	Smitty's hammer (1d6)
12	Scythe (1d7)

## DIVIDED WE RISE

**Area 1-1 – Divided We Rise:** The initial city block for this adventure is located just off the central town square. All beginning PCs appear together in a rough grouping as they spill out into the street at the onset of anti-life apocalypse.

*The street outside is filled with screams as you see your fellow villagers fleeing in panic in all directions at once. Old Samael the Butcher runs down past a row of thatched cottages towards the center of town, but as he crosses a snaking violet line of arcane symbols that glow in the dirt before him, you see him flash briefly in a purplish light before crumbling into a blackened pile of ash. Then you catch sight of what has set off the mass hysteria. On the ground are hordes of dismembered heads, arms, legs, and torsos – all appearing withered, grey, and desiccated. They seem to have crawled up out of the dirt of the street and are flopping towards you and towards one another.*

The PCs will note that the immediate area (roughly 4 city blocks) is reamed on all sides by a glowing ley line composed of obscene necromatic symbols. Anyone crossing this boundary suffers instant death. Observant PCs may note that the glowing ley lines grow notably dimmer with each un-dead head killed, but the barrier remains intact until every zombie head within the area has been crushed.

### The Divided Un-dead

Each round that any divided un-dead body part is not presently in combat with a PC, it will seek to join with another body part, its un-dead flesh loosely knitting together. The divided un-dead arms and legs will only attack if attacked first by a PC. In the case of the lone torsos, attacks are not even possible. The divided un-dead heads, and any assemblage that they are connected to, may attack the PCs freely.

Each assemblage's attack, defense, and movement rate is dictated by the additive abilities of the constituent parts.





of commerce for this the town. Normally the brightly colored stalls are occupied by any number of merchants and the aisles between are filled with numerous mongers hawking their wares. Now, it is desolate. Dappled sunlight shines down on a scene of ruination – spilled baskets of fruit, overturned platters of already spoiling fish, and unsold merchandise are scattered everywhere. Several tented stalls are still standing and look to have been unmolested.

The ground of the new market is disturbed in several places that you can see. Lying amidst the upturned dirt and scattered goods are the corpses of several long-dead women.

### Remaining Market Stalls

Four market stalls remain in place here, each containing a number of useful items. In addition, PCs attacked while in the booths will notice it is much easier to see and combat the chitterlings in the shaded areas inside.

The PCs have three rounds to search the market stalls for items of use before the chitterlings manifest. If any PCs examine the female corpses (6 in all), they will note that the decades old bodies are missing their abdominal areas, as if something inside tore its way out.

**Keehn's Weaponry Stall** – This tent contains one each of the following mundane melee weapons – dagger (1d4), short sword (1d6), and battle axe (1d8).

**Fletcher Wood's** – This stall has one longbow and a crossbow, and a quiver of 10 arrows and another with 10 bolts.

**Chyson's Charms** – This ornate pavilion contains three mystical looking bracelets and talismans. The charms' effects cancel each other out, so that only one charm may be worn by a PC at a time in order to be efficacious.

**The Evil Eye:** This necklace features a pendant depicting a bloodshot eye. Negates one curse cast on the wearer, then shatters.

**Childbearer:** This bracelet is for protection from spirits during labor and child birth. It grants the wearer +1 AC versus un-dead creatures.

**Vigo's Vigor:** A small vial of elf blood suspended on a silver chain. Grants +1 HP while worn.

**Hartnell's Wonders** – Among the odds and ends in this junk-filled booth are the following real magic items. A PC must make a DC 10 INT check to determine and find the actual magic items from among the other worthless artifacts. Note: The arcane powers of these items are disrupted by crossing even a deactivated ley line, thus in other areas of this adventure these items will revert to a non-magical state.

**Gladiator's Sandals:** These ornate golden sandals grant the wearer a 1d3 deed die (see Warrior class, DCC RPG rulebook, pg. 42).

**Murderer's Gloves:** These well-oiled thin leather gloves grant the wearer the backstab ability (see Thief class, DCC RPG rulebook, pg. 34).

**Stoutfella's Boots:** These dwarf-sized boots grant the wearer the shield bash ability and an extra d14 action die.

To use the boots powers, an improvised shield is required (see Dwarf class, DCC RPG rulebook, pg. 52).

**Toe Ring of Kindness:** This toe ring in the style worn by halflings grants the wearer the ability to 2 Luck points for every point of Luck burned. These Luck points may be donated to other PCs (see Halfling class, DCC RPG rulebook, pg. 60).

**Robes of the Bentu:** This plain brown desert robe allows the wearer to cast the spell *Force Manipulation* with a d16 spellcheck (see DCC RPG rulebook pg. 142).

On the fourth round after the PCs enter the area, the chitterlings appear.

### Rise of the Chitterlings

*Rising up from the ground are the faint outlines of six ghostly infants. Sunlight passes freely through their cherubic but spectral forms, making them difficult to see. Their dimly-visible eyes are bright and smiling. A giggling laughter bubbles out of their mouths – mouths with smiles that seem to grow ever wider as the expression on their faces becomes ever more manic and horrifying. Their child-like laughter quickly changes into an eerie chittering sound. Within moments, what at first seemed to be the nearly invisible angelic ghosts of newborn infants transforms into menacing unholy threats.*

**Chitterlings** - Chitterlings are the vengeful spirits of unborn children, trapped stillborn within the corpses of their deceased mothers. Angry at being denied even the chance at life, these un-dead horrors are pack hunters and will attack targets in groups of 2-3 when possible, so as to maximize the damage caused by their hatred of all things living. The chitterlings will not leave the market area or willingly enter the New Cemetery.

The chitterlings are hard to see and can only be clearly made out when in shadow. In the sunlight of the open market they are difficult to hit (AC 16). In the shade provided by the market tents, their spectral forms are much clearer (AC 12). While these creatures do not strike for great amounts of damage, their touch does inflict curses just as deadly.

**Chitterlings (6):** Init +1; Atk claw +1 melee (0 + curse); AC 12/16; HD 2d6; hp 7; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits, curse, shadow born; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.

**Curse of the Chitterling:** Upon striking a victim the chitterling drains a single point of Luck and subject the victim to one of a number of curses. Each additional instance of the same curse laid upon a single individual increases any penalties by -1.



**Table 1-3: Curses of the Chitterling**

d6	Curse
1	<b>Dizziness:</b> Target is at -1 to hit and on Reflex saves. In addition, the target must make a Reflex save vs. DC 10 every round or fall prone.
2	<b>Hives:</b> Target is immediately afflicted with itching hives over their entire body. Target is at -1 to Will saves and must make a Will save vs. DC 10 each round or lose their action while scratching uncontrollably.
3	<b>Blindness:</b> The target's vision begins to cloud over, causing a -1 to all attacks. As this stacks, should the total ever reach -4, the victim is completely and permanently blinded as their eyes rupture.
4	<b>Boils:</b> Painful boils and buboes erupt all over the victim's flesh weakening them with a -1 penalty to damage.
5	<b>Death visage:</b> The target begins to take on a deathly visage as their flesh begins to dry out. The victim suffers from a -10' penalty to movement.
6	<b>Bloodlust:</b> The target is overcome with a lust for warm blood and will attack the nearest living target for the next two rounds with a +1 bonus to hit and damage. If the bonus reaches +3 the target's heart explodes from the strain, killing them instantly.

## The New Cemetery

Should anyone choose to enter the New Cemetery there are 40 freshly-risen flesh-eating zombies waiting for them. PCs who choose to brave the cemetery versus the market have quite a battle ahead of them. One thing in the PC's favor is that these zombies will not leave the grounds of the cemetery or enter the marketplace.

*The New Cemetery swirls in fog and the headstones gleam amidst the reflected indigo light of the ley lines. The normally well-maintained grounds are marred where large holes seem to have exploded from below, showering clods of worm-ridden soil about the area. The guttural moaning is louder here, and its source far more obvious. Rotting corpses in varying stages of decay stumble about, their mouths alternating between slaw-jawed menace and rictus grimace. The clacking of their teeth as their jaws snap open and shut, coupled with their low groans, is accented by the purplish bruising of death and the bloated state of several of the corpses. These are the hungry dead. As one, their eyes turn towards your band.*

**Flesh-Eating Zombies** - Each time one of these un-dead creatures successfully bites a victim, a huge chunk of living flesh is ripped out of the victim and swallowed by the zombie. For each such successful melee strike the zombie gains 1 hit point, regardless of total damage inflicted.

**Flesh-Eating Zombies (40):** Init -4; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4); AC 9; HD 3d6; hp 14; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP flesh-eating, un-dead; SV Fort +4, Ref -4, Will +2; AL C.

**Victory conditions:** The anti-life ley lines surrounding this section of the village will deactivate if one of two conditions is met. First, If the PCs kill all 40 zombies in the New Cemetery, the ley lines putter out. Alternatively, if any PC manages to accumulate 4 active chitterling curses and survive into the subsequent round, that PC becomes a bad luck charm, drawing all the anti-life arcane power out of ley

lines, deactivating them. Afterwards the quadrice-cursed PC loses all of his curses and receives +1d6 points added to his Luck ability score.

## WORMTOOTH ABBEY

**Area 1-3 — Wormtooth Abbey:** *The putrid presence of the recently risen, combined with the thick redolence of gore dripping from mutilated villagers, is enough to force the remnants of your stomach up and out with one violent retch.*

*Escape seems impossible as you survey widespread carnage unfolding before you, but then a familiar symbol catches your eye. The Temple of Justicia lies just a short distance away, and it's as if the goddess herself has willed the path clear and free of the shambling dead! Making your way to what you hope to be a refuge from the un-dead, you find your eyes wandering to the bell tower as you cross the temple courtyard, catching a strange sight. The bell is bathed in an eerie cerulean glow! Surely this is a portent. Perhaps ringing it will bring the goddess and her army of celestial warriors!*

The Temple of Justicia is both a boon and a curse to the characters entering its doors. Before reaching the steps to the entry, have each player make one DC 15 Intelligence check using the highest modifier of the characters that they control. Success means spotting an odd sight and a small clue to what lies beyond the door. The flower beds that lie to either side of the steps have been freshly dug up in a haphazard manner, with a strange slime coating the soil and gardening tools. Two hand trowels (1d3 dmg) and a shovel (1d4) remain and can be used as makeshift weapons.

Once the PCs go inside the temple read the following:

*Several pews form two rows in this main area of worship. Windows line both the East and West wall, constructed of ornate colored glass. Each stained glass window depicts a scene of the merciful goddess descending from the heavens, assisting the sick and vanquishing the many faces of evil. The far end of the temple gives way to a raised dais upon which rests a podium carved from oak and trimmed in gold. High above it, a large statue hangs from the ceiling in the visage of a beautiful woman — the goddess Justicia! Then the brief moment of peace you've begun to feel is suddenly replaced by cold chills running the length of your spine. Blood curdling shrieks pierce the calm of the temple, seemingly coming from the floor above you. Two sets of stairs lie on either side of the dais, possibly leading to the source of the pitiable screams.*

Both sets of stairs lead to a landing which leads in turn to the quarters of the priests that tend the temple. Once characters reach the landing, they hear the screams of more than one man mixed with loud laughter amid the sounds of an obvious scuffle. Once the master stairwell is ascended read the following aloud:

*Acrid bile rises from your stomach to your throat as you witness the horrific scene unfolding before you. Two priests struggle desperately against eight of their cackling brothers, held down against a long table resting in the center of the room. Each pinned monk is held by arms and legs while one of their brothers straddles the poor soul while holding a set of pliers. A gurgling scream*



pierces the air as the pliers rip a tooth from its shrieking host complete with a meaty pulp of nerves attached. As the poor man screams, another of his brothers scoops a writhing mass of what appear to be glowing worms from a bowl, cramming them into his mouth, momentarily stifling his screams. The violent scene pauses for a brief moment as your presence is discovered. The monks slowly move away from the table towards you, their bloodied mouths grinning insanely, an odd glow emanating from each toothless maw.

**Un-Dead Blight Worms** - The priests have been infected by un-dead blight worms. These anti-life invertebrates from another plane manifest during times of great suffering, attracted to the foul taint of the un-dying. Once a nest of blight worms has found a suitable host, they burrows into the brain, destroying and infecting it with a mind controlling mucous. The worms then command the poor host to rip out his remaining teeth so that the slimy wretches can burrow down into the jaw and begin converting the living host into one of the un-dead.

**Un-Dead Blight Worms (9):** Init +1; Atk +1 grapple (blood drain 1 HP/round); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 6, 2, 3, 5, 1, 3, 2, 6, 2; M 30'; Act 1d20; SP brain dead (hosts no longer feel pain due to the blight worms corroding the host brain; hosts take ½ damage from normal weapons); SV Fort +1, Ref 0, Will +2 AL C.

Destroying the host will cause the un-dead parasites to flee the host's mouth, dropping to the floor in a wriggling pile (treat as prone), where the PCs may stomp them with a sickening pop of pus and blood. One uninfected monk lies dying on the table, spared the mind destroying attack of the blight worms. He tries to smile toothless in gratitude when the players reach him, and in his death throes he points to an opening in the back of the room, motioning for the group to go before dying in one last blood-choked gasp.

The opening leads to a small set of stairs that ascend to a trap door. Opening the door leads to the bell tower that caught the groups attention before entering the temple. Read the following aloud once the group ascend to the bell tower.

*The warm cerulean glow that first caught your attentions now bathes you in a peaceful light. You feel as if the goddess herself has placed the glowing bell here intentionally for you in this time of need, and you watch miraculously as any wounds on you and your friends begin to close, until you're all restored to full vitality.*

As long as each character spends at least one round within five feet of the bell they will be healed up to their maximum hit point total. The bell will continue to glow and should a character decide to ring it, read the following aloud.

*Bravely, you grasp the rope and give a hard pull in hopes of further aid from the benevolent goddess. The clapper strikes the bell as each of you hold your breath saying a silent prayer to Justicia. The gong reverberates through your very souls as an undulating energy washes over you and outward to the courtyard below! The few shambling dead making a snack of an unfortunate villager pause to look up, just before indigo waves of energy envelope them, causing them to burst into clouds of ash. The waves*

*of energy continue reaching outward until reaching nearby ley lines. It's as if the two forces collide momentarily in a shower of unearthly sparks erupting in a dark cloud of brimstone. When the violaceous cloud clears, the ley line appears to have been destroyed! As you cheer your stroke of good fortune you notice the bell has begun to melt away, its form slowly flowing onto the wooden floor. It remains liquid only momentarily before reforming into a shield and a mace, each holding a trace of the familiar blue glow.*

The shield and mace are minor magic weapons gifted from Justicia in this great moment of need. Only lawful characters may wield them. Chaotic, or neutral characters will be unable to pick up the items, or hold them should another decide to hand one to them. Each magic item bonds permanently to the lawful PC who wields it. If the wielder is subsequently killed, the shield or mace melt away into nothingness.

**Shield of the Merciful:** The shield grants its user a +1 armor class bonus, and against un-dead the bonus increases to +3. The shield also gives a warning pulse should an un-dead presence be within 15'. The powers of the shield come at a price as its owner must pass a DC 12 Will save to resist stopping to aid those that plead for help.

**Mace of Justice:** The mace grants the user a +1 to both hit and damage rolls. In addition, the critical threat range is increased to a natural 19 or 20 against un-dead creatures. Using the item comes with a price. Its owner must pass a DC 12 will save to resist helping an innocent threatened by un-dead.

## THE BLOATED DEAD

**Area 1-4 — The Bloated Dead:** *As the screams of your neighbors being ripped apart by the un-dead wail all around you, you attempt to find refuge from the chaos by fleeing to the waterfront to potentially escape by sea. To your horror, you see the necromantic ley lines extend out into the bay as well, blocking your escape. Even more alarming are the bloated corpses you see rising from the ocean. Unlike their shambling land-based cousins, these pruned and water-logged un-dead seem to be more alert. Indeed, they seem to be taking direction from a large, 8-foot tall specimen with jet-black eyes, wearing a short coat made of barnacles, a soaked leather tricorne hat, and wielding a cat o' nine tails.*

*With a low haunting keening not unlike whale song, the un-dead captain motions to the others to attack your group.*

### The Docks on the Waterfront

The PCs have run to the docks on the waterfront, only to find the shifting necromantic ley-lines have blocked their exit back to the city, while also extending about 40 feet into the ocean. If a PC attempts to swim beneath a necromantic ley-line he will suffer the same effects of crossing one on land. There are small and medium-sized fishing and merchant boats tied up along the docks, as well as equipment used for the loading, unloading, and transporting of goods and repairing ships. A PC who uses an action to search for something to use as a weapon can make a luck check and find one example each of the following items: nets (DC 12

entangle), rope (50'), barrels, 15-foot push poles (1d5 melee), hooks (1d4 melee), cloth to make sails (DC 10 entangle), and hammers (1d3 melee).

**The Nelus (Bloated Un-Dead)** - While they may appear to commoners as simple water zombies, the necromantic un-dead epidemic has emboldened the belligerence of an aquatic subspecies of vampire known to mermen and sahuagin as the nelus. Unlike their land-dwelling, sun-fearing counterparts, the nelus do not suck blood from victims via a bite, but drain humans of all their moisture with their hollow claws. Legends tell of men attacked by nelus being desiccated within minutes into withered corpses only to be left looking like the dusty bones typically found in lost ancient catacombs. Similarly, the nelus have no fear of daylight, but can only spend a limited amount of time on land. For each round a nelus spends on land, there is an increasing 10% chance of them taking 1 hp of damage (10% on first round, 20% on second round, etc.). Therefore, most nelus will make rushed, darting attacks on land, always attempting to drag their prey back into the water. PCs killed by a nelus have a 1-in-6 chance of becoming a nelus themselves.

The nelus appear like drowned corpses, with boils, barnacles, and sea slugs attached to their skin. When they first appear to the party there will be large chunks of flesh missing from their frames, exposing their bleached white bones. With each successful moisture-drain attack on a PC, new mucous-like flesh will start forming on their bones.

Given their un-dead nature, normal weapons will only do temporary damage, and they will eventually regenerate to full hit points once they return to water (1 HP per round spent in the water). The only way to kill a nelus permanently is to keep them pinned down on dry land until all of their hit points have drained from exposure to the air, and then burning their bodies to ash. Sailors tell horrifying stories of fools that have merely buried nelus corpses in crypts only to have them become re-animated when the tombs flood. If a nelus falls to the mundane attack of a PC, another nelus will break off their attack and use their next round to throw their fallen comrade back into the water to eventually rise again.

**The Nelus (Bloated Un-Dead) (5):** Init -2, Atk claw +2 melee (1d4 plus moisture drain); AC 12, HD 2, hp 6, MV 15' or swim 25'; Act 1d20; SP moisture drain (DC 12 Fort save or permanent 1d6 Stamina damage as moisture is permanently drained from the PCs body, along with appropriate cinematic effects of skin become parched and brittle, eyes, become sunken, tongue turning to leather, etc.), un-dead traits, vulnerable to being out of water; SV Fort +1, Ref -1, Will +0; AL C.

**Captain Fulton (Nelus Brute)** - A former pirate who sailed these waters centuries ago, Captain Fulton leads this band of nelus after being transformed into one himself. While he's largely forgotten what it was like to be human, he does still wear his jaunty tricorne pirate hat and likes to flog his victims with his cat o' nine tails. He shouts his orders in an other-worldly whale song that carries well in water, but is

indecipherable to humans without magical assistance.

**Captain Fulton (Nelus Brute):** Init +1, Atk cat o' nine tails +3 melee (1d4) and claw +2 melee (1d4 plus moisture drain); AC 14, HD 4, hp 20, MV 15' or swim 25'; Act 1d20; SP moisture drain (DC 12 Fort save or permanent 1d6 Stamina damage as moisture is permanently drained from the PCs body, along with appropriate cinematic effects of skin become parched and brittle, eyes, become sunken, tongue turning to leather, etc.), un-dead traits, vulnerable to being out of water; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2; AL C.

Note: on a critical hit, Captain Fulton immediately drains the victim of all moisture with no saving throw. The PC will then rise as a nelus in 3 rounds.

**Victory Conditions:** In order to prevail, the PCs will need to determine how to permanently kill a nelus as described above. The judge should offer clues by describing the behavior of the nelus during the melee (throwing their fallen comrades back into the water, never straying far from the ocean, and periodically jumping back into the water for a round or two if their time out of the water starts land-flaying their flesh.) So long as the nelus can easily return to water, they are nearly immortal, and therefore fearless. That said, under Captain Fulton's leadership they are capable of recognizing when they are outmatched. If Captain Fulton is killed, the surviving nelus must make a morale check at -4 penalty or flee back into the water. If the PCs destroy all the nelus, including Captain Fulton, or by killing Captain Fulton force the survivors to fail their morale checks, the ley lines surrounding the waterfront deactivate, allowing the PCs access to the next section of the adventure.

## A WALK IN THE PARK

**Area 1-5 — A Walk in the Park:** *The city park has been transformed from a place of tranquil repose to one of chaos and eldritch horror. The small hill dominating the center of the park now has gaping fissures crossing it from side-to-side with tendrils of purple smoke rising up from them. The large statue of an female wizard that always stood atop the hill has been toppled onto the edge of a large crevice, balanced precariously above the subterranean void. The moat around the base of the hill has turned black from the peaty debris of the sundered hill.*

*Two 18' tall skeletal figures stand beside the mound. One giant skeleton is dressed in a loin cloth and is hurling wagon-sized rocks at panicked villagers trying to cut through the city park. The other un-dead giant has long brittle strands of once-red hair spilling from the cowl of her tribal robes, as her boney hands move in a series of complicated gestures, releasing great gouts of violet flame towards the hapless citizens.*

### History of the City Park

The focal point at the center of the city park has long been a towering, weathered statue depicting a cloaked woman clutching a glass orb in her hand. The apocryphal story goes that centuries ago, the woman memorialized by the statue was instrumental in defeating the strength and magic of a pair of chaos giants. Kaarle was a giant warrior of great



strength and savagery, while his giant twin sister Dabria was an accomplished tribal mystic. Together the pair posed a great threat to the then small settlement. It was then that a mysterious woman came by ship from the south wielding a glass orb with great magics, and she used the orb to capture the giant's life essence, slaying them and saving the town. The slain giants were buried in the dirt of the small hill as a memorial to the event.

Judges should allow Luck checks or Intelligence checks (DC 12) for PCs to recall the story surrounding the statue, and possibly a clue to more successfully defeating this encounter.

**The Skeletal Giants** - With the anti-life apocalypse upon the city, the pair of long-dead giants, Kaarle and Dabria, have risen again, thirsting to exact retribution for their defeat centuries ago on whoever crosses their paths. They attack any who pass near the memorial hill.

Kaarle uses the stone debris peppering the hillside to hurl boulders at targets in range. He will focus on any that appear intent on crossing the moat. If any citizens successfully crossing the moat, Kaarle will pick up the remains of a small stone pillar to use as a club and close to melee range calling to Dabria as he does so.

Dabria will use arcane magic to wage her assault on the people in the park. She will use a variety of spells from bursts of fiery energy to stringy strands of web to slow targets down for Kaarle. If she receives warning from Kaarle that a group has made it across the moat, she will focus her spells on those people.

Dabria knows that the glass orb held by the statue was used to end their lives centuries ago, though she knows not what power it has. She has warned Kaarle that the pair must keep anyone from reaching the glass orb and using it against them once again.

The tendrils of smoke provide a rejuvenating necromantic energy to the skeletal giants. When one of the skeletal giants kills a PC the skeletal giant regains the amount of hit points the PC had remaining.

**Kaarle (Skeletal Giant):** Init +2, Atk club +8 melee (2d6), thrown stone +3 ranged (3d6); AC 14, HD 6, hp 36, MV 35'; Act 1d20; SP regenerates 1d6 hp/round; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.

**Dabria (Skeletal Giant):** Init +4, Atk slam +2 melee (1d8); AC 13, HD 4, hp 27, MV 35'; Act 1d20; SP spellcasting (spell check +6, spells known (level 1) flaming hands, magic missile, (level 2) spider web, regenerates 1d6 hp/round; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +0; AL C.

### **Memorial Hill**

Simply reaching the hill and navigating it is not without challenges. The stone bridges have collapsed into the black water of the moat as swirling whirlpools move about. The destruction in the city has also ripped great clefts into the hill that a PC could easily tumble into if they cannot jump across or find other access.

### **The Moat**

Prior to the mayhem in the city, the moat was filled with slowly circulating clear water. Today the moat surprisingly retains water now tainted black, but moving much faster with eddying whirlpools. The stone bridges that previously crossed the moat in two locations have crumbled into the water.

The moat is 10' wide with water 12' deep. A PC could try to jump across the moat (requiring a DC 12 Strength or Agility check, whichever is higher) or rig a temporary bridge out of resources found in the park. Crossing anything makeshift should require an Agility check, difficulty set accordingly by the judge. Failure of either of these checks will result in the PC falling into the water.

PC's falling into the water must make a DC 12 Strength check to see if they can swim and clamber up the moat wall. While in the water, the judge should have PCs make a Luck check every two rounds to determine if a whirlpool catches them. A failed Luck check results in the PC then needing to succeed on a DC 15 Strength check to avoid being pulled under the water and drowning.

### **The Hill**

The fissures in the hill pose a problem to the PCs trying to close to melee with the skeletal giants or trying to reach the statue towards the top of the hill. The skeletal giants can simply step over many of the fissures giving them much freer movement about the hill.

The judge can choose when a fissure is encountered as the party traverses the hill. When one is encountered a PC can either try to leap across the fissure or rig a method of crossing it.

### **The Fallen Statue**

Retrieving the glass orb from the fallen statue is not without difficulty. The statue, about 12' high when standing upright, lies wedged in a fissure headfirst. Reaching the glass orb requires a DC 12 Agility check to maintain balance to reach the outstretched arm holding the glass orb. The fall has made the orb easier to remove requiring a DC 10 Strength check to free. Another DC 10 Agility check is required unless the party has taken efforts (a rope attached to the person retrieving the orb, etc). Should a PC fail the Agility check the judge has the option of allowing the PC a luck check to avoid falling completely into the chasm and making it merely a close call.

**Victory Conditions:** The ley lines surrounding the park will not deactivate until both skeletal giants have been killed. The skeletal giants' un-dead regeneration ability will make this difficult in normal combat. Success lies in retrieving the glass orb from the fallen statue at the top of the hill. Striking a skeletal giant with the glass orb (+5 attack) will deal 2d6 damage to the giant and forever cancel its ability to regenerate hit points.

## THE SINKING SEWERS

**Area 1-6 — The Sinking Sewers:** *As you flee the city park, you spot a large iron drainage grate sunken into the cobblestone street. The gongfarmer among you shouts as he has a sudden realization. He says, "Our town was originally built on the ruins of an older city. This leads to the ancient sewer system that was built before our village even existed. If we can get into it, it leads all the way out of town and empties into the river south of here!" Hemmed in by the deadly ley lines and still surrounded by hordes of un-dead roaming the streets, this suddenly seems like an excellent idea. Beyond the grate is a shallow 5' by 5' shaft leading downward. Iron rungs, rusted but thick, are set into the wall of the pit. A noisome odor wafts up from the darkness below.*

### Entry via the Iron Grate

Opening the iron grate requires a DC 12 Strength check; a suitable tool (such as a crowbar) grants a +1d bonus on the dice chain to the attempt. Only two PCs can effectively work together; the weaker PC adds a +2 bonus to the stronger PC's check. If both have suitable tools, the check is made with a +2d bonus on the dice chain. The iron grate is easily drug back into place should the PCs wish to discourage pursuit by the un-dead above.

The main sewer tunnels are 30' below street level. PCs can only climb down the iron rungs in single file. Elves must succeed in a DC 10 Fort save or be unable to hold on to the raw iron, dropping for 1d6 falling damage into the sewers below.

### Main Sewer Tunnels

The ancient sewer tunnel before you is 20' wide and vaulted to a height of 15'. Its walls and ceiling are tiled in crumbling yellow brick. It runs roughly north to south. There is only a 5' wide walkway on one side of a channel of sluggishly-moving filthy water. One of your number probes the sewage channel with a long stick and it appears to be roughly 3' deep. You head off down the sewer tunnel to the south, as you believe that is the direction leading out of town.

The sewer tunnel is divided into sections that are 60' long, with a large barred iron gate blocking access to the next section. Unless otherwise noted, there is a weighted rope and pulley system present that allows the gate to be raised with a DC 10 Strength check. Also at the end of each section the walkway stops on one side and begins on the other side, with a flat stone slab 3' wide (with neither curb nor rail) acting as a bridge to the other side. A DC 5 Reflex save is required to cross the bridge without slipping on its damp surface and falling into the sewage channel. Those falling in the raw sewage take 1 point of poison damage from accidentally gulping a small amount of the fowl flow.

Random objects and flotsam gets caught up by the flat stone bridges. Roll 1d14 on Table 1-4 to determine what is trapped underneath the stone bridge for each section of the sewer encountered. Each item (including creatures) can only be found once.

**Table 1-4: Random Sewer Flotsam**

d14	Flotsam Found
1-6	Nothing.
7	A shopping cart from another plane of existence. Its right front wheel is wonky.
8	A rotting human corpse covered with mystical tattoos. It is actually a ghoul (DCC RPG rulebook, pg. 414).
9	A tangle of cordage. It is part of a fishing ship's net, about 10' across. There are several large rents, allowing escape with a DC 10 Reflex save.
10	1d3 giant rats (DCC RPG rulebook, pg. 424).
11	A slit belt pouch. 1d5 sp and 2d3 cp still remain within.
12	A mass of old leafless branches, covered with a harmless orange fungus.
13	A mutilated corpse, which writhes ineffectually and snaps its teeth at any who comes near. It is easily dispatched.
14	Although befouled, there is a suit of chainmail here! Due to many rents, AC bonus is only +3, and Fumble die is 1d16.

### Sinking Sewer Encounters

Each of the following sewer encounters should be run in the order presented.

#### No Passing Zone

*Ahead, you can see a portcullis with thick iron bars barring the way. The lean, leathery bodies of the un-dead press against the bars, straining to reach you! There must be nearly a dozen of the things, prevented from reaching you only by the iron bars. As you draw closer, they begin to howl and spit a filthy green fluid at you.*

While the sewer zombies cannot reach through the iron gate far enough to directly attack any PCs trying to access the portcullis pulley system, they can use their spit attack to any who approach within 10' of the gate, including near the pulleys. The PCs have little choice but to raise the gate and battle these un-dead creatures if they wish to proceed.

**Sewer Zombies** - Sewer zombies are emaciated, with skin as tight and hard as old leather. Their numbers include those who were improperly disposed-of corpses, the remains of those living folk who use the sewers for shelter, transit, resources, or who work therein: beggars, the homeless, thieves, gleaners who seek for valuables mistakenly thrown away, as well as sewerjacks. Any PC who dies in the sewers arises 1d5 rounds later as a sewer zombie.

Before closing to melee, sewer zombies will use a ranged attack and spew a line of filthy water at any targets in range (10'). Targets hit by this attack must succeed in a DC 10 Reflex save or be blinded for 1d3 rounds (-4 to hit, any attack has an equal chance of being against any possible target in range). In melee, their bite carries a rotting disease that causes 1 extra point of damage per hit unless a DC 10 Fort save succeeds. A DC 15 Fort save when bitten or three successful saves during subsequent encounters negates this disease.

**Sewer Zombies (12):** Init -4; Atk bite +3 melee (1d3 plus disease); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 7 each; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead, spew blinding filth, disease; SV Fort +4, Ref -4, Will +2; AL C



## The Un-Dead Crocodile

*This section of the sewer seems empty and almost too quiet as you enter it. Suddenly, the sewer channel in front of you explodes in a shower of raw sewage as a gigantic 18' long ivory-colored crocodile leaps forward to attack your group. Its albino hide is rotted away in sections showing tainted flesh and rotting bones underneath.*

**Un-Dead Crocodile** - An un-dead crocodile lurks in this section of the sewer tunnel. It charges as the PCs approach, gaining a surprise round unless the players are taking extraordinary precautions. When it is slain, the body convulses, and a sewer zombie the crocodile had previously swallowed rips free of its belly.

**Un-Dead Crocodile:** Init -3; Atk bite +5 melee (3d4); AC 15; HD 3d8; hp 14; MV 30' or swim 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -3; AL C

## Where Waters Come Together

The PCs can hear the echoing roar of this place from at least 60' away. The sewage in the channel seems to flow faster as this place is neared.

*The sewer empties out here into a wide area, a circular chamber some 50' across, fed by many pipes and sewage tunnels. All of the raw sewage falls roaring into a reeking pool 30' below you. The chamber rises 20' over your heads, allowing even more sewage from lesser clay pipes to empty here. From the southern-most tunnel, only 5' above the surface of the pool, comes a sickly greenish radiance and... can that be music?*

The catwalks around the pool are slick, but any PC can reach the far tunnel (or vice versa) with a DC 5 Agility check (DC 10 if running). Failure means falling into the pool, where something slimy grabs hold beneath the surface. Unless the other PCs throw a rope (or similar) immediately, the character is pulled under and lost. Even with something to hold, the character must succeed in a Strength check or be lost (DC 10 to hold on; DC 15 to break free).

## The Dancing Dead

*Peering into the next tunnel section, you see an eerie sight: a half dozen skeletons dance and cavort to the music of a dead fiddler, their fleshless feet splashing in sewage three inches deep, which covers the entire floor of the walkway. The fiddler's eyes burn with a malevolent green radiance, but the sickly green light illuminating this place comes from farther up the tunnel, so that the dancers cast weak and flickering shadows upon the walls.*

**Dancing Skeletons** - The dancing skeletons attack with clawed hands while they dance. If they succeed in an attack, they pull their target into the dance, which requires a DC 10 Will save to escape. A skeleton dancing with one PC cannot switch targets, even if attacked, without freeing the entrapped PC. A dancing PC can take normal actions, but moves at half speed as directed by his "partner" toward the fiddler.

Any PC brought within 10' of the un-dead fiddler must succeed in a DC 10 Will save or his skeleton leaps free from

his fallen body and joins the fray! These effects continue as long as the fiddler continues to play. If the fiddler stops playing, the skeletons continue attacking for 1d3 rounds, and then sink into true death with a sigh. The fiddle is AC 13 and has 3 hp.

**Dancing Skeletons (6):** Init +1; Atk claw +0 melee (1d3 plus dance); AC 10; HD 1d6; hp 3 each; MV 30' (15' while dancing); Act 1d20; SP un-dead, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons, dance; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.

**Un-Dead Fiddler:** Init +3; Atk burning gaze +1 ranged (1d4); AC 13; HD 3d6; hp 12; MV 10' (0' while fiddling); Act 1d20; SP un-dead, fiddling, burning gaze can target foes up to 30' away; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +5; AL C.

## The Green Star

*As the last of the dead fall, so too fall the shadows from your eyes. Now you can see the source of the sickly glow - in the next section of sewer is a sphere of faintly pulsing yellow-green luminescence floating above the filth like a dirty green star. Somehow, the pulsing light seems fouler than the sewage itself.*

If the PCs dare approach, they hear a female telepathic voice say "I am the Emissary of Nimlurun, the Unclean One, Lord of Filth and Decay. Serve me, and I shall grant you great power."

Any PC who agrees to serve the Emissary gains the Mark of Nimlurun, a dark green spiderweb of obscene runes which spread like a stain across their face, an unclean blot for all to see. The new adherent is also granted the ability to command up to 4 HD of un-dead within 60' and can cast both *Paralysis* as a cleric and *Chill Touch* as a wizard. In both cases, the character uses 1d16 for spell checks (disapproval rules apply to the clerical spell). The Emissary's first command to any newly-minted acolytes is to slay those who refused her offer. The Emissary's second command is to lure others into the sewers, so that their bodies may add to the rising un-dead population.

If all characters refuse, or if only those who refuse survive the ensuing combat, the emissary purrs: "Those who refuse the touch of the Unclean One must die." The glowing sphere then magically uncurls into the Emissary's true form - a gigantic glowing slug - which attacks the party.

**Emissary of Nimlurun:** Init +0; Atk acidic touch +3 melee (1d4 plus slime); AC 18; HD 3d6; hp 12; MV 10' or fly 10'; SP slime; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +8; AL C.

The slime of the Emissary creates an awful smell, drawing all un-dead within 100' to the victim, who will be attacked preferentially. The slime lasts for the next 1d6 encounters.

**Victory Conditions:** Defeating the Emissary of Nimlurun causes a secret stone door to slowly rumble aside, revealing a passageway that inclines upwards. If this happens within 10 minutes of the scheduled ending time of the tournament, the passageway leads up to a wooded area outside of town and all surviving PCs get a survival stamp. Otherwise, the passageway leads back up to Area 1-1 of this adventure.

# HOW TO RUN A DCC RPG TOURNAMENT FUNNEL



The DCC RPG tournament funnel differs from the typical character funnel in several notable ways. It is not intended to function as an adventure through which players will run multiple characters, hoping to level-up the survivors at the end of play. The tournament funnel's primary purpose is to provide a ready format for competitive play, and to give new players a taste of playing in the DCC RPG system.

## TOURNAMENT FUNNEL RULES AND FORMAT

The DCC RPG tournament funnel is designed for 8-10 players, each running a single level-0 PC. The tournament is played for a pre-designated amount of time. Players are scored in the tournament as follows: for each encounter survived, stamp the player's character sheet once with the "I Survived!" stamp, or simply make a large check mark with a blue pen. Unless otherwise noted in the adventure text, an encounter is defined as any time in which initiative is rolled to begin a combat. This includes inter-party combat.

When a PC dies, likewise stamp that player's character sheet with the "Dead" stamp, or make a large red "X" with an appropriate pen. As each PC dies, the controlling player taps out of the game, and a new player rotates into the game with a brand new PC. Players who tap out of the tournament are welcome to re-enter at anytime with a fresh PC when another seat at the table opens up. Remind players to hang onto their character sheets for later event scoring at the end of the tournament.

At the end of the event, the players with character sheets that show the most encounters survived stamps will be ranked, and the top three numerical survival totals will be awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place respectively. Any ties will be settled by a d20 dice-off between the tying players, with the player losing the dice-off falling back to the next placement in ranking.

## TOURNAMENT FUNNEL LOGISTICS

**Use a team of judges** – When run as an event at a convention or friendly local game store, the tournament funnel can be challenging to facilitate for a single judge. Even with a single table of players, having an extra volunteer on hand to manage the line of incoming players and to dole out fresh character sheets will help the event run much more smoothly. If there are multiple tables, consider having a team of co-judges, with one judge per table plus a floating judge who ensures that rulings between tables are adjudicated as consistently as possible.

**Make the event special** – It's not really a tournament unless there are prizes to win! Aside from the usual DCC swag sent out for Road Crew games, trophies and plaques for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place, displayed before and during the event, really get the players competing with each other. And the prizes need not be lavish. Even more economical prizes, such as homemade award certificates or ribbons make all the difference. Most FLGS owners will, if asked, also donate tournament prizes or gift certificates to the event.

**Keep the action rolling** – The wise tournament judge is prepared to keep the action moving at a brisk pace. Adventures that have been specifically written for the tournament format will aid in this by being specifically constructed in a way that discourages parties from splitting up, or that do not challenge players to engage in emergent role playing (normally a worthy goal in a typical adventure scenario).

Later this year, Goodman Games will be coming out with special tournament swag awards that you can also use at these events, such as special tournament pins and buttons. Watch for the kickstarter announcement for these items at [goodman-games.com](http://goodman-games.com).







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# THE SHAMBLING UN-DEAD

Cowlinsport - Encounter Areas

