



# THE UNQUIET DEAD

1ST LEVEL



Uncover a cult's nefarious plot in this adventure spanning 1st to 3rd-level for the world's greatest roleplaying game!



# The Unquiet Dead

**T**he *Unquiet Dead* is intended for four characters with an average party level (APL) of 1. Characters who complete this adventure should earn enough experience to reach 3rd-level. The dead have begun to rise from a family's crypt and figures were seen skulking about in the dark. This campaign takes place in Arden, although it can be set in your own world. Any party composition should be able to finish the adventure with intelligent play.

## Background

Long ago, a devil named Durgon came to our world. He brought with him fire and brimstone, and a cult arose around him. Together, they spread fear and death across the land. Eventually, Durgon was slain by a cleric of the light, a man named Davos. In order to keep the devil from returning to our world, Davos sealed his bones away beneath a temple and placed divine wards on it to prevent Durgon's cultists from reaching them. Many years passed and Davos finally succumbed to old age, his body laid to rest in his family crypt. The cult of Durgon, ever vigilant, saw this as an opportunity to resurrect their dark messiah. They pillaged his skull from its resting place and subsumed it in profane energy, the very act of which caused the dead around them to rise as undead horrors. Now, they work to undo the wards that bar them from their master's bones. Unless our heroes uncover the plot and reach the temple in time, Durgon will return and darkness will envelop the land. For now though, they only know that the dead have risen in an ancient family crypt and there's good coin to be made putting them back down.

## Adventure Hooks

**A Noble Request.** The characters receive a note from a local noble. The skeletons of their ancestors have begun to rise up in their old family crypt and they need sturdy adventurers to put them back down. They're offering 50gp for such services.

**A Posting for Help.** The characters see a posting on the job board in town. Skeletons have begun to rise up in an old family crypt and they need to be put back down. The post is offering 50gp for such services.

**A Matter of the Church.** The characters are contacted by a local member of the clergy. They tell stories of skeletons rising up in an old family crypt. Clearly they need to be put down again. For such services, the church is prepared to offer 50gp

## Graveyard

The journey to the Davos family crypt is uneventful. The path there leads out of town and winds like a snake through the hillside before coming to a stop outside a rusted gate. Beyond it, a small graveyard can be seen, the centerpiece of which is a mausoleum bearing the Davos name.

The gate is unlocked, but it's rusted shut. It requires a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to break it down. Once inside, the characters see piles of bones in ragged armor scraps scattered about. A DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that these probably escaped from the crypt. As the characters approach, the bones rise up and reform, their mouths open in a silent scream.

**Encounter: Skeletons.** The two **skeletons** only have their short swords. They advance mindlessly and swipe at whoever gets close. When they're destroyed, they crumble to dust.

**Treasure: Coinage.** The skeletons each have 2d12 sp on them.

With the skeletons dealt with, the path ahead is clear. The door to the mausoleum is unlocked and ajar.

## Davos Family Crypt

The stairwell down into the crypt is dusty and full of cobwebs, although much has been swept aside by the cultists when they were here previously. There are footprints in the dust on the floor that a character can notice with a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. They lead down into the main chamber. The crypt has the following features unless otherwise noted.

**Ceilings.** The ceilings are made of stone and rise 10 ft. above the floor.

**Floors and Walls.** The floors are made of neatly cut stone while the walls are made of a cobbled granite.

**Doors.** The doors are made of solid oak with metal reinforcements. They're all unlocked unless otherwise stated.

**Lighting.** The crypt is pitch black.

### 1. Hall of the Dead

The walls of this room contain various plaques and coffins bearing the names of deceased relatives.

This large chamber contains no treasure or monsters. A character who can see into room 2 can notice the two **skeletons** lurking in there with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check.





## 2. Eastern Crypt

Two large coffins rest embedded in the northern and southern walls of this chamber. Two skeletal creatures can be seen lurking in the room.

**Encounter: Skeletons.** The two **skeletons** in this room attack anyone who enters. They will pursue the characters if they flee.

**Treasure: Coinage.** The skeletons each have 2d12 sp on them.

## 3. Antechamber

Doors can be seen in all cardinal directions. Otherwise, this room is empty.

A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check can hear the **skeletons** to the north and south dragging their short swords along the stone floor. Additionally, the western door is locked. It can be picked with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check with Thieves' Tools or broken down with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check.

## 4. Southern Crypt

Like the first two chambers, this one contains various coffins and plaques along the walls. Three skeletal creatures can be seen skulking about the room.

**Encounter: Skeletons.** The three **skeletons** attack anyone who enters the room. If the characters flee, they will pursue them, however, they cannot open doors.

**Treasure: Coinage.** The skeletons each have 2d12 sp on them.

## 5. Northern Crypt

Like the first two chambers, this one contains various coffins and plaques along the walls. Three skeletal creatures can be seen skulking about the room.

**Encounter: Skeletons.** The three **skeletons** attack anyone who enters the room. If the characters flee, they will pursue them, however, they cannot open doors.

**Treasure: Coinage.** The skeletons each have 2d12 sp on them.

## 6. Family Shrine

A small dais rises up against the western wall. On it rests an ornate coffin, the lid of which has been smashed. In the corner, a creature lies hunched over a fresh corpse.

The coffin was the final resting place of Davos the cleric. If the characters investigate it, they notice that the skull is missing. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals it was cut free recently.

**Encounter: Ghoul.** The creature is a **ghoul**. It's currently feasting on the corpse of a cultist who unfortunately did not survive the rise of the dead. The ghoul will ignore the characters unless they disturb it or make any noise.

**Treasure: Dead Belongings.** The coffin contains a *+1 weapon*. Feel free to choose one your players can use. The cultist's corpse has been partially devoured. All that remains is a small satchel containing a journal. The journal has the following information in it.

- The cultist's name is Gorgus.
- He is a member of the Cult of Durgon
- They are working to bring their master back from the dead.
- They need the skull of the cleric Davos to complete the ritual.

Additionally, there is a map tucked in the back of the journal. It shows a route to the cult's hideout in the city. If the characters succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence (Religion) check, they know that Durgon is the name of a devil that once terrorized this area many years ago and that he was banished from the realm by the cleric Davos.

If the characters do not wish to follow up on the map as a lead, they can return to whoever gave them the quest and receive their reward of 50 gp. They will earn enough experience points to reach halfway to 2nd-level. However, if they decide to investigate further, continue with the adventure below.

## Back to Town

The journey back to town is uneventful now that the dead have been laid to rest. With the map in hand, it's easy to locate the basement door marked on it. A strange symbol is carved into the wood.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check identifies the symbol as the symbol of the Cult of Durgon. The door itself is unlocked and opens to reveal a staircase that goes beneath the seemingly abandoned building above.





# Cult Hideout

The cult has setup their hideout in the basement of an old warehouse. The area around has long since been abandoned and this part of town is known to be a den for thieves and cutthroats. The hideout has the following features unless otherwise noted.

**Ceilings.** The ceilings are made of wood and rise 10 ft. above the floor.

**Floors and Walls.** The floors are made of rough cut stone while the walls are made of a cobbled granite.

**Doors.** The doors are made of solid oak with metal reinforcements. They're all unlocked unless otherwise stated.

**Lighting.** Candles cast the rooms in a dim light.

## 1. Entrance

This room contains various tables and crates repurposed as chairs. Candles line the walls casting the room in a dim glow. Two figures, hooded and robed sit in the corner discussing something.

A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the two men are discussing the following.

- The upcoming ritual to summon Durgon back to our world.
- They're excited the expedition to recover the cleric's skull went smoothly.
- They are worried though that the spells they've been using have been reanimating the dead.
- Poor Northam deserved to rest in peace, but since he rose as a ghastr they had no choice but to lock him in room 8.

**Encounter: Cultists.** The two **cultists** are surprised when the characters enter the room. It takes them a round to act. They're so startled that they forget to flee.

**Treasure: Coinage.** The cultists each have 3d6 sp on them.

**Secret Door.** There is a crack in the eastern wall. A slight draft can be felt by anyone who stands within 10 ft. of it. Anyone who notices the draft can find a mechanism to open the wall with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

## 2. Smuggler's Cache

This chamber is full of cobwebs and dust. Assorted crates sit against the wall. A map hangs from the eastern wall showing various trade routes.

**Treasure: Alchemy Jug.** There's 100 gp worth of assorted trade goods in the crates (iron ingots, wool, etc.). Every 1 pound is worth 1 gp. There is also an *alchemy jug* wrapped in hay inside a sealed crate. The crate can be opened with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check.

## 3. Empty Room

This chamber contains racks with robes and assorted chests. A lantern sits snuffed on the floor in the corner.

The robes here are various sizes. The characters can easily find one that fits them. The lantern has no oil in it but is usable. The chests are empty.

## 4. Meeting Room

A large table sits in the center of this room. Candles sit atop it and four hooded robed figures sit around it.

A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the four men are discussing the following.

- The bones of Durgon are sealed away under an abandoned temple.
- The cultists need the skull of the cleric Davos to break the wards protecting it.
- The cult leader has already left for the temple to conduct the final ritual.
- He left his second in command with further orders.

**Encounter: Cultists.** The four **cultists** need a round to get their weapons ready. These cultists are fanatics and will fight to the death.

**Treasure: Coinage.** The cultists each have 3d6 sp on them.

## 5. Empty Room

This room is empty, save for two standing candelabras at the eastern end.

A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals signs that this area has seen heavy foot traffic. Characters listening at the eastern door can hear chanting coming from the other side.





## 6. Dark Altar

The focal point of this chamber is a small altar against the eastern wall. Three figures stand before it chanting. The center figure's robes are more ornate than his companions'.

The cultists are chanting the following in Infernal.

"Oh Durgon, lord of fire and death. Grant us your wisdom and strength. May our hearts burn with your fire."

**Encounter: Cultists.** There is an **acolyte** and two **cultists** in this room. They're currently chanting at the altar. The acolyte is the cult leader's second in command and the man currently in charge of the hideout. The acolyte begins combat by casting *bleed* on himself and his companions. He'll then rely on *sacred flame* as his main source of damage. All three will fight to the death.

**Treasure: Acolyte's Belongings.** The cultists each have 3d6 sp on them. The acolyte has 3d10 gp, the key to room 8, and a letter from the cult leader. The letter requests that he join him at the abandoned temple the following night for the ritual. It also includes a rough map to the temple.

## 7. Empty Room

This room is dominated by three rusted iron cages against the southern wall. Corpses of tortured humanoids lie inside them.

There is nothing of note in this room.

## 8. Dead Chamber

This room contains various half-chewed bodies of fallen cultists. A statue stands at the northern end of the room. In the corner, a creature stands hunched over one gnawing at its flesh.

The door to this room is locked. It can be opened with the key from room 6 or picked with a successful DC 14 Dexterity check with Thieves' Tools. When the door opens, anyone who enters must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for one hour.

**Encounter: Ghast.** The creature is a **ghast**. It was originally Brother Northam, but when the cultists started manipulating dark magic, he was reanimated as an undead horror. He fights intelligently and to the death.

**Treasure: Gems.** The statue has eyes made of rubies. They can be pried free with a DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. They're each worth 25 gp.

Once the characters finish clearing out the hideout they reach 2nd-level. If they don't want to proceed, they can end the adventure here. Otherwise, continue with the adventure below.

## Into the Swamps

The crude map drawn in the letter leads south of the city and into the swamps. The journey is long and tiring, but uneventful. After a few hours, the muddy path ends at the ruins of a stone temple. Overgrowth covers what little remains and footprints can be seen heading inside.

The temple has partially sunk into the swamp and has since been reclaimed by nature. The footprints lead to a stone door in the floor that's slightly ajar. Opening it requires a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. Once the door is open, a stone stairwell can be seen leading deeper underground.

## Abandoned Temple

The temple was once a holy site, but nature has since overtaken it. A storm destroyed the upper levels, however, the lower levels have survived. The temple is pitch black and water drips from the ceiling. The temple has the following features unless otherwise noted.

**Ceilings.** The ceilings are made of damp stone and rise 15 ft. above the floor.

**Floors and Walls.** The floors are made of moldy stone while the walls are made of a cobbled granite.

**Doors.** The doors are made of solid oak with metal reinforcements. They're all unlocked unless otherwise stated.

**Lighting.** The temple is pitch black.

### 1. Entrance Hall

Large stone pillars dominate this space. Water drips down from the ceiling settling in puddles on the ground.

There is nothing of note in this room.

### 2. Northern Chamber

The walls of this chamber contain murals of clerics battling dark creatures.





### 3. Chamber of the Warrior

Pillars encircle the center of this chamber. In the middle of it, a statue of a warrior in armor stands tall.

**Encounter: Animated Armor.** The statue uses the stat block for an **animated armor**. It attacks anyone who enters the circle of pillars. It fights to the death and crumbles to dust when defeated.

### 4. Reliquary of the Warrior

This small chamber contains a gilded coffer and a tapestry showing a great battle.

**Treasure: Coffers.** The coffer contains a silvered longsword worth 50g gp.

### 5. Chamber of the Thief

Pillars encircle the center of this chamber. A statue of a roguish looking man sits in the middle of them.

**Encounter: Spy.** The statue is actually a **spy**. It waits for the characters to cross the room before making a sneak attack against one of them. It then fights to the death, crumbling to dust when defeated.

### 6. Reliquary of the Thief

This small chamber contains the remains of a tapestry, ruined beyond repair, and a small gilded coffer.

**Treasure: Coffers.** The coffer contains a silvered dagger worth 50 gp.

### 7. Southern Chamber

The walls of this chamber contain murals of clerics summoning angelic creatures.

There is nothing of note in this room.

### 8. Chamber of the Cleric

Pillars surround a statue of a man in robes holding a holy symbol. Tiny spirits swirl about him.

**Encounter: Acolyte & Spirits.** The statue uses the stat block for an **acolyte**. When the characters enter the room, the spirits manifest as six **cultists** around the acolyte, except they each only have 1 hp. Both the acolyte and the spirits fight to the death. When the spirits are defeated, they vanish into nothingness while the acolyte crumbles to dust if defeated.

### 9. Reliquary of the Cleric

This small chamber once held a tapestry that has long since dissolved. A small gilded coffer sits against the wall.

**Treasure: Coffers.** The coffer contains a silvered mace worth 50 gp.

### 10. Chamber of the Mage

In the center of the room, surrounded by pillars, is a statue of a man hunched over in pain. The bodies of men in dark robes surround him.

**Encounter: Mage.** The statue uses the stat block for a **mage** except he only has 1st-level spell slots left and 30 hp. He was attacked previously by the cultists as they barged through the room. He attacks the characters when they enter the room, fighting to the death and crumbling to dust when he is defeated.

### 11. Reliquary of the Mage

This small chamber is a mess. The tapestry on the far wall is torn revealing a door behind it. Broken glass litters the floor.

The door is unlocked but closed. Anyone who doesn't make an active attempt to avoid the glass shards must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check or the creatures in room 13 are alerted to the presence of someone in room 11.





## 12. Antechamber

This chamber appears quite old, older than the rest of the temple. Light filters in from the room to the north.

If the characters failed their Dexterity (Stealth) checks in room 11, one of the cultists from room 13 is in this room.

## 13. Hidden Shrine

A dais rises up against the northern wall. Atop it sits a small altar. A hooded figure stands chanting before it. Shadows seem to move along the edges of the room.

This is where the cult's leader is conducting the ritual to free Durgon. The characters arrive just as the ritual completes. As it does, the altar sinks into the floor revealing a staircase going down.

**Encounter: Cult Fanatic.** The cult leader is a **cult fanatic**. He's joined by two **cultists**. As they've finally completed their ritual, they fight to the death to protect their master.

**Treasure: Profane Skull.** The cult fanatic has a *profane skull* and 6d12 gp. The cultists each have 3d6 sp.

**Profane Skull** *Wonderous item, Uncommon, (requires attunement by a spellcaster)* This skull once belonged to the good cleric Davos. It has since been corrupted by dark magics. Once attuned to the skull, a creature can, as a bonus action, suffer one Hit Die of necrotic damage to recover one spell slot of 3rd-level or lower. Once this feature has been used, it cannot be used again until the user has taken a long rest. If the skull is soaked in holy water for 24 hours, it's purged of the corrupting influence and no longer inflicts damage when used to recover a spell slot.

As the cult leader dies, he mutters the following.

"You're too late. Our master is freed. Soon he will come!"

The ritual has freed Durgon, but it will take him approximately twelve hours to fully reconstruct his form in the chamber below. Until then, he is immune to all damage, spells, and conditions.

## Hidden Ritual Chamber

### 1. Main Chamber

Cracked stone pillars hold up the ceiling of this chamber. In its center, a magic circle lies shattered and broken. A creature nearly six feet tall with purple skin, jet black hair, and wielding a large glaive can be seen within swirling red mist.

Read the following if the characters enter the chamber after twelve hours have elapsed.

Suddenly, the mist disperses and the creature lets out a roar! It readies its weapon and assumes a combat stance.

**Encounter: Bearded Devil.** The creature is Durgon a **bearded devil**. He is disoriented from his summoning and it takes him a round to shake off the effects. His first round of attacks are made at disadvantage. If the characters don't want to fight him, they can attempt an appropriate DC 18 Charisma skill check to convince him not to attack. They could lie saying that they're there to serve him, or try to intimidate him claiming they have the power to send him back to the Abyss. If they succeed, he lowers his weapon. At this point you can roleplay the scenario out however you want. If the characters subsequently attack Durgon, give them a surprise round.

If Durgon is defeated, he collapses into a pile of smoldering ash and soot, his final roars fading as he's sent back to the Abyss.

### 2. Treasure Chamber

This small chamber contains a large stone coffer set atop a dais.

**Treasure: Coffin.** The coffer contains an *immovable rod*, 200 sp, and a holy symbol worth 50 gp.

## Aftermath

With Durgon dealt with, the world is safe from his cruelty once again. The characters, if they haven't been paid yet for their work, receive not only what was promised, but also an additional 250 gp for dispersing the cult and destroying the devil. If they return the skull of Davos to his family, they also receive a jar of *restorative ointment*.

Lastly, the characters gain enough experience points to reach 3rd-level.





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