

D2

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Mini-dungeon Module D2

Crypts of Kardak

by Matthew E Kline

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 2-4



A repentant necromancer is quickly approaching the time of his death. Terrified of being reanimated to serve another as an undead minion he's asked for help retrieving an amulet that will prevent this from occurring.

Crypts of Kardak is the second in a series of mini-dungeons designed to drop into existing adventures or campaigns. Use them as side quests or a way of getting in a quick adventure when you're short on time.



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Dazegoneby

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Writing, design, layout: Matthew E Kline
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Dungeons of Dazegoneby

Mini-Dungeon Module D2

Crypts of Kardak

A dying necromancer, plagued by nightmares of being reanimated to serve another of his ilk, seeks to employ a group of adventurers to retrieve a magic amulet. This amulet gradually makes the wearer immune to spells of reanimation. It's currently buried with a former owner in a series of crypts hidden beneath the city.

About This Product

Although it can be scaled by the Gamemaster for groups of other sizes, Crypts of Kardak is designed for 4-6 adventurers of level 2-4. This product is part of a line of mini-dungeons designed as quick, drop-in adventures. They're ideal for use as short side quests, or for gaming sessions where you're pressed for time. You could even string them all together as a mini dungeon campaign.

Gamemasters should feel free to adjust this adventure to suit their group's style of game-play or level of difficulty.

It's recommended that the Gamemaster read through this product at least twice in order to familiarize themselves with the adventure prior to playing. They should also take note of any new monsters or magic listed at the end of the document.

This product requires the use of the *Swords & Wizardry* rules. More information can be found online at www.swordsandwizadry.com

On the pages that follow you'll find boxes like the one surrounding this text. These boxes hold suggested descriptions of the rooms that can be read out loud to the players.

After most of the room descriptions you'll find one or more of the following symbols:



This symbol indicates that there's a monster or monsters in the room.



This symbol indicates there's treasure in the room.



This symbol indicates that there's a dangerous obstacle in the room.

A description of the monsters, treasures, or obstacles encountered follows after each symbol.

About Dungeons of Dazegoneby

I can remember a time in my distant past when I could head to the local mall walk into one of the two bookstores they had at the time, plunk down around five dollars, and walk out with a brand new Dungeons & Dragons module. Our *Dungeons of Dazegoneby* line is a tribute to old school gaming, paying homage to a time filled with graph paper maps, wandering monster tables, hand-drawn character sheets, and lazy afternoons filled with adventure and wonder. We hope you enjoy playing these products as much as we enjoyed making them.

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Gamemaster's Eyes Only:

Kal Draxxus spent a lifetime reanimating corpses to do his bidding. Now, cursed with visions of his imminent death and enslavement to another of his vocation, he's had a sudden change of heart and sworn off the dark arts for good.

Turning all his research towards finding a way to ensure his eternal rest, he's discovered the existence of Kardak's Seal, an amulet that grants its wearer protection from reanimating magic.

Kardak was a necromancer that developed the same fear as Draxxus; becoming another's undead servant. He managed to create an amulet that upon the wearer's death gradually made the corpse immune to necromantic spells. The amulet currently lies interred with Kardak in a secret crypt hidden below the city streets.

Kardak knew others would come looking for his amulet so he created a number of safeguards that would become active upon his death, safeguards that a now powerless Draxxus would find difficult to overcome.

Draxxus however is not completely without his resources. There are those who owe him favors for past services, a network of eyes and ears throughout the city. He's instructed those still loyal to him to seek out a group of heroes capable of entering the crypts and retrieving Kardak's Seal.

One of his allies believes she's discovered such a group and leads Draxxus to them one fateful stormy night...

Set Up

The adventurers are relaxing in a tavern within a large city on a stormy night when they notice one of the barmaids eyeing them suspiciously. The barmaid slips out into the rain slicked streets and returns

several minutes later with a cloaked and hooded figure in tow.

The figure drops his hood in front of the adventurers and introduces himself as Draxxus an ex-necromancer who wishes to hire the party. He offers a fee of 1000gp and a potion that will offer protection from one fatal blow if the party retrieves the amulet from the hidden crypts.

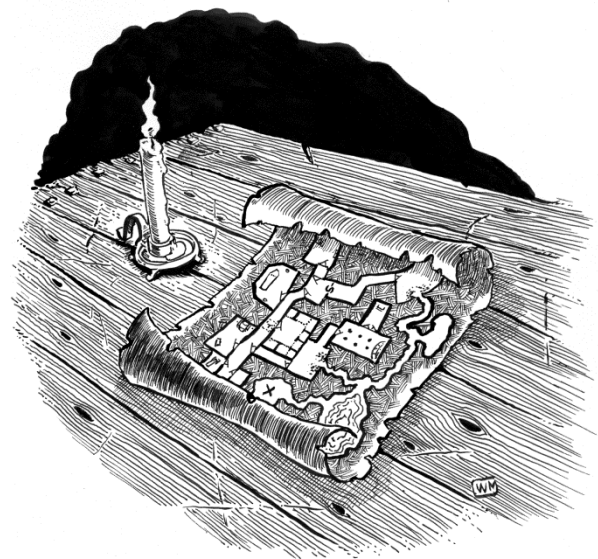
If the party agrees he'll hand them a map of the sewers beneath the city showing directions to the crypts.

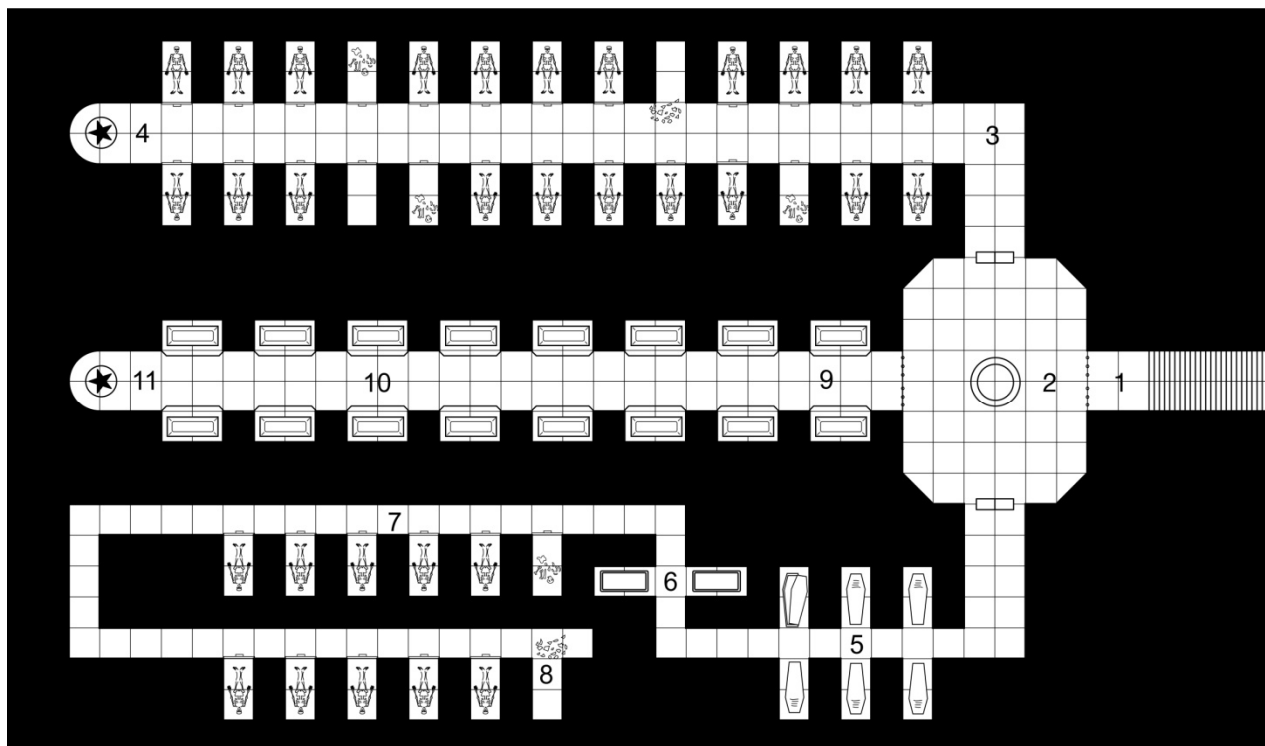
"You'll have to search through c-coffins for the amulet." Draxxus offers nervously. "A lot of coffins..."

A Note to the Gamemaster

The set up described here is only a suggestion. Feel free to introduce this scenario to your group in any way you see fit.

Perhaps a party member owes Draxxus for a past favor and is contacted directly.





CRYPTS

Key to the Hidden Crypts

After following the map through the sewers the party discovers a half open stone door and a set of stairs leading down into darkness.

1. Entryway

A set of wide stone stairs descend 30' ending in a 10' x 10' room. There's a man here working feverishly at a lock on a gate comprised of iron bars that blocks entry to the crypts. A large darkened room is visible beyond the bars. Something big and immobile stands near the center of it.

If the group questions the man he'll introduce himself as Tamil Tarken. He states that he's on a quest to kill an ex-partner of his that was transformed into an allip and now haunts the halls of this

crypt. The two of them were thieves who ran together and now he can't stand the thought of his friend's soul not being laid to rest. He's brought a +1 *silver dagger* along to help him with his task. He offers to help the party with whatever endeavor brought them to the crypts in exchange for their assistance with the allip.

Tamil is actually a wererat, currently in human form. He's lying about the allip. He was a former ally of Draxxus who received word of the necromancer's search for heroes. After being infected with lycanthropy he became a member of a group of wererats that inhabit a network of tunnels beneath the city known as the Ratway.

He managed to acquire the key to the crypts and only pretends to pick the lock to the gate.

He knows the Ratway enters the crypt somewhere to the south of the entryway

but he's not sure where. He will attempt to lead the party to the Ratway where an ambush awaits. He seeks to infect members of the party in order to add to his group's ranks.

Once he reaches **Area 8**, or if the party attacks him along the way, he shifts to his wererat form and attacks.



Tamil (Human): HD 3; HP: 15 AC: 6[13]; Atk 1 weapon (1d4+1); Move 12; Save 13; CL/XP 3/90; Special: Thief Skills. Gear: Leather Armor, +1 *Silver Dagger*

Tamil (Wererat): HD:3; HP: 15 AC: 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (1d3), 1 weapon (1d4+1); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Controls rats, lycanthropy, hit only by magic or silver weapons. Gear: Leather Armor, +1 *Silver Dagger*



As noted Tamil owns a +1 *silver dagger* and the key to the entryway portcullis. He also carries a belt pouch containing 40gp and 3 gems worth 30gp each.

2. Main Chamber

Four braziers spring to life as the gate opens, each illuminates a corner of the large chamber before you. A statue of two serpents entwined dominates the center of the room. The head of one points towards a stone door to the north while the other head points to a door to the south. A portcullis bars passage to the west.

The wall in each diagonal corner of the room is covered by a mural depicting a noteworthy act preformed by a noted person buried here. One corner shows an

image depicting a great battle between a human army and an army of undead warriors. The figure of a necromancer stands on a hill overlooking the battle, arms raised in a gesture of either triumph or summoning. Another shows a fighter in full armor slaying a dragon. Some remaining flecks of color suggest it was a gold dragon. Another depicts a joust where a black knight unseated a white knight. A portion of the black knight's shattered lance sticks out of white knight's chest. Another shows a group of demons surrounding a powerful sorceress, their heads bowed in respect.

The stone doors to the north and south are sealed tight and cannot be open by normal means. Investigating the statue of the serpents reveals the following; the serpent's teeth are razor sharp and they're coated with what appears to be dried blood. To open a stone door a character must put their hand in the corresponding serpent's mouth. The jaw will snap shut dealing 1 point of damage to the character and hold them for 1 round, draining blood and dealing another 1 point of damage. After this the serpent's mouth, along with the corresponding stone door, will open.

Placing an object in a serpent's mouth will cause it to close for 1 round but the doors will not open unless the statue receives blood as well.

Once a door opens it will remain open until the entryway gate has been locked.

Two keyholes sit beside the portcullis to the west, one surrounded by a copper panel on the right and one surrounded by a silver panel on the left. This portcullis can only be unlocked with the copper key (found in **Area 4**) and the silver key (found in **Area 7**.)

Once the braziers have been lit the party will attract the attention of a grey ooze lurking just inside the portcullis to the west.



Grey Ooze: HD 3; HP 16; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 strike (2d6); Move 1; Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Acid, immune to spells, heat, cold, and blunt weapons.



The eyes of the serpent statues are set with four gems worth 120gp each. They can easily be pried out however once they're removed the jaws of the serpents deal 1d4 points damage and stay shut for the same number of rounds, draining 1 point of blood each round.

3. Hall of the Fallen

This wide hall stretches to the west into darkness. Small alcoves are set into the walls at 5' intervals.

This wing of the crypts contains the bodies of those who fell while serving Kardak and his allies. A small copper plaque located near each alcove bears the name and cause of death of the remains it holds.

The alcoves along this hall hold a total of 21 undead. They animate, climb out of the alcoves, and attack once a party member reaches the statue at **Area 4**, or if any of their bodies are disturbed.



Skeletons (16): HD 1; HP 8,7,7,7,7,7,6,5,5,5,4,4,4,2,2,2; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None. Gear: Short Sword, Shield.

Zombies (5): HD 2; HP 14,12,10,10,8; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 strike (1d8); Move 6; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Immune to sleep and charm.

4. The Weeping Maiden

A statue of a young woman stands here at the center of a small granite basin. She eternally grieves for those laid to rest here.

This statue was put here as a precaution to guard against the accidental triggering of the undead within the hall. When the dead animate the statue will become surrounded by a glowing white aura. While the statue is glowing, undead within 20' of it are dealt 1 point of damage each round. The statue will glow for 12 rounds. During this time the statue will cry tears that will accumulate in the granite basin at its feet. The statue's tears contain a healing property. For every 3 rounds the statue cries the equivalent of one healing potion will collect in the basin.



As stated above, 4 *potions of healing* will accumulate in the statue's basin. The outer rim of the basin is ringed with 10 gems worth 32gp each. The copper key to the portcullis in the main chamber hangs from a rope around the statue's neck.



5. The Family Crypt

Six zombies are in this hallway, silently standing guard.

This area held members of the Grimm family. There's no indication as far as who they were or why they were interred here, just a nameplate at the foot of each opened coffin. The opening of the main chamber's southern door triggered their reanimation.



Zombies (5): HD 2; HP 12,10,10,8; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d8); Move 6; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Immune to sleep and charm. Gear: Long Sword, Shield



One of the coffins contains a small jewel encrusted gold plaque bearing the Grimm family crest (worth 450gp)

6. Crashing Coffins



The section of stone between these two sarcophagi contains a hidden pressure plate. If triggered read the following.

Two stone sarcophagi spring out from alcoves on either side of the hallway. The lids slide open unleashing a swarm of rat skeletons from the one... and what was left over from the other.

The sarcophagi deal 2d6 damage to anyone unlucky enough to be between them at the time. A character with a strength of 17 or greater can free themselves in 1 round while a weaker character will remain pinned until another character can assist them.

One coffin contains a swarm of rat skeletons while the other contains a

swarm of leech rats (see New Monsters). The skeletal rats dump into the hallway to the north of the coffins while the leech rats dump into the section to the south.

Tamil, if he's still around, is horrified by these rats and appears visibly shaken. This could be mistaken for fear of the rats instead of what's been done to them.



Rat Skeletons (18): HD 1d4hp; HP 3,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,2,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1 AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d3); Move 12; Save 18; CL/XP A/5; Special: Immune to sleep and charm spells.

Leech Rats (18): HD 1d4hp; HP 3,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,2,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1 AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d3); Move 3; Save 18; CL/XP A/5; Special: blood drain (1), +2 to hit bonus.

7. Hall of Loyalty

This hall contains six alcoves along its southern wall. The first alcove was bricked up at some point however now the wall has crumbled away leaving rubble in the hallway. A brazier lights the end of the hall where the corridor turns to the left. Portion of a mural is visible on the western wall.

This wing of the crypt houses the bodies of servants who served the more noteworthy occupants of the crypt in some exemplarily fashion during life. The mural depicts the necromancer, black knight, dragon slayer, and sorceress from the murals in the main chamber, being attended by an apprentice, a squire, a shield bearer, and paramour respectively.

The first alcove once held Kardak's apprentice, Wormrick, left paralyzed by a ghoul attack. Worse yet, Kardak's prized pupil was slowly turning into one of the foul creatures. Kardak sealed him within

the crypt and spent a good deal of time searching for the means to cure Wormrick... until he lost interest.

Wormrick recently finished his transformation, regained his mobility, and clawed his way out of the sealed alcove. He now wanders this section of the crypts, hungry and a bit miffed.

The remaining alcoves contain 10 skeletons that will animate and attack, however Wormrick has been umm... picking at them. As a result each is missing an arm or a leg or both, and won't be as "animate" as the standard models.



Ghoul: HD 2; HP 13; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Move 9; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Immunities, paralyzing touch.

Skeletons (damaged) (10): HD 1; HP 4,4,4,4,3,3,2,2,2,1; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 strike (1d6-1); Move 8; Save 17; CL/XP A/5; Special: None.



The silver key to the portcullis in the main chamber hangs from a peg sticking in the mural in such a way as to make it look like the apprentice is holding it.

8. Ratway Entrance

The rear wall of this alcove has crumbled revealing a rough 2' by 2' hole leading into darkness.

This hole opens into the Ratway, a series of interconnecting tunnels and warrens which permeate the undercity.

If Tamil has successfully hid his true nature up to this point he will let loose a series of shrill whistles, summoning a swarm of rats lurking within. He'll then change into his wererat form and attack. His goal is to try to infect as many party members as possible. If he manages to

infect at least half the party, or he feels as though his life's in danger, he will attempt to flee, either by heading back towards the main chamber or turning into a giant rat and heading into the Ratway.

If Tamil already has been dealt with there is no encounter here.

Attempting to pursue Tamil or any of the rats into the Ratway is a bad idea. The Gamemaster should do their best to dissuade this action. For starters, without the assistance of magic, only the smallest of the group could follow and would probably have to leave bulky items such as armor behind. The Ratway itself is a twisting labyrinth of passageways. Those without heightened senses to guide them will become hopelessly lost. And then there are the rats...



Tamil (Wererat): HD:3; HP: 15 AC: 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (1d3), 1 weapon (1d4+1); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Controls rats, lycanthropy, hit only by magic or silver weapons. Gear: Leather Armor, +1 Silver Dagger

Giant Rats (24): HD 1d4hp; HP 4,4,4,4,4,4,4,3,3,3,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1,1; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d3); Move 12; Save 18; CL/XP A/5; Special: 5% are diseased.

9. Hall of Honor

In order to gain access to this hall the copper and silver keys must be inserted into their respective keyholes and turned at the same time.

A dozen braziers light as the portcullis rises. They illuminate a long wide hall running to the west. Alcoves along the north and south wall hold stone sarcophagi. A lone figure stands at the far end of the hall.

Even though this hall (unlike **Area 3**) is lit, the statue, at this distance, could be mistaken for a living creature.

10. Sixteen Sarcophagi

Eight alcoves run along the north wall and eight run along the south. Each alcove holds a stone sarcophagus, a total of sixteen in all. There are no markings to indicate who, or what, is buried in them.

The sarcophagi are magically sealed. They cannot be opened without interacting with the statue at **Area 11**.

At this point the Gamemaster should take 16 slips of paper, mark 4 of them with an 'A', 'B', 'C', and 'D'. Mark the rest with 'X' and place them in a container that they can be drawn from. This will create a random way of generating encounters once the statue at **Area 11** is activated.



11. The Angel of Death

The statue of a winged angel stands here. She holds an hourglass before her. All the sand sits in the lower chamber of the glass. A copper nameplate fastened to the statue's base reads "Angel of Death".

Inspecting the statue will reveal the fact that the arms holding the hourglass are designed to rotate. Putting weight against the arms or hourglass will cause the statue to activate. The glass will turn over and the sand will begin to drain through to the lower chamber. The sand will take 1 round to drain at which point the stone lid of a random sarcophagus will open. The arms of the statue will rotate at the end of each round, resetting the hourglass. This causes one sarcophagus to open every round. The hourglass will keep resetting until all sarcophagi have been opened. Breaking the hourglass will not stop this process.

Draw a slip of paper from your container each time a sarcophagus opens. If you draw an 'X' roll on the following table to determine which undead creature emerges:

Roll 1d10	Result
1-4	Skeleton
5-9	Zombie
10	Ghoul



Skeleton: HD 1; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None. Gear: Short Sword, Shield.

Zombie: HD 2; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d8); Move 6; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Immune to sleep and charm. Gear: Long Sword, Shield

Ghoul: HD 2; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Move 9; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Immunities, paralyzing touch.

If an 'A', 'B', 'C', or 'D' is drawn the random sarcophagus that opens contains the following:



A) This sarcophagus contains the remains of Kardak. The face of the corpse is covered with a golden death mask which bears a resemblance to the image of the necromancer in the murals. *Kardak's Seal* is around the corpse's neck.

B) This sarcophagus contains the remains of Sir Kanarr. The face of the corpse is covered with a golden death mask which bears a resemblance to the image of the dragon slayer in the murals. He holds a +1 *shield*, +2 *vs. dragons*.

C) This sarcophagus contains the remains of Sir Madrox. The face of the corpse is covered with a golden death mask which bears a resemblance to the image of the black knight in the murals. He holds a +1 *mace*, +2 *vs. law*.

D) This sarcophagus contains the remains of Lady Ledia. The face of the corpse is covered with a golden death mask which bears a resemblance to the image of the sorceress in the murals. She clutches a +1 *dagger*, +2 *vs. demons*.

Each intricately crafted death mask is worth 800gp (and may or may not be cursed.)



Wrapping Up

The party returns to the tavern to find Draxxus getting good and drunk. He gives the party a sack containing 1000gp in exchange for *Kardak's Seal* then asks a barmaid to retrieve a bundle from behind the bar. The girl returns with a large sack, holding it at arm's length, its contents clacking together as she walks. Draxxus clumsily snatches it from her after 2 tries and produces an orc skull from within. He presents it to the party as a *skull of the martyring spirit* (see New Magic.) The skull contains a spirit that will possess a person and intercept one fatal blow that was meant for them. The sack contains 3 more of these skulls for a total of 4 all together. These skulls were the last items he made using his powers.

He orders a round of drinks for the party and himself, denounces necromancy during a lengthy toast ("I just don't have the stomach for it anymore"), throws up, wipes his mouth on his robe's sleeve, then says his goodbyes and staggers out of the tavern.

Continuing the Adventure

Here are some suggestions for further adventures:

✘ Trying to sell, or simply possessing, the death mask of Lady Ledia attracts the attention of a demon disguised as a human. Lady Ledia used *magic jar* to transfer her life essence into an object. He's trapped on this plane until he can find and destroy the object. He attempts to acquire the party's aid in finding it (or maybe it *is* the mask.)

✘ A party member, or members contracts lycanthropy. The group must enter the Ratway to search for a cure (or perhaps to hunt down Tamil if he's still alive.)

✘ Kardak's Seal contains the life essence of Kardak, waiting patiently to possess to body of another necromancer and continue his dark schemes (uh oh.)

✘ It turns out Tamil wasn't lying about the allip. The group's actions in the crypts inadvertently freed the thing. It now wanders the streets of the city at night. The party feels obligated to hunt down the horror they unleashed. If they don't feel obligated perhaps they're held responsible by the city watch or a victim's loved one.

✘ Wormrick had in his possession a map showing the location of one of Kardak's hidden workshops. It's there that the necromancer experimented with new types of undead and unique configurations of skeletons. His notes must be destroyed (or sold for a great deal of coin.)

✘ A gold dragon catches wind of a group of adventurers walking around with Kanarr the dragon slayer's shield and/or death mask. It seeks out the group, either to enlist as champions, or deal with as potential threats.



NEW MONSTERS

Leech Rat

The answer to the age old question, "Now that I've created all these rat skeletons what do I do with the skins?" rat leeches are the animated bits that are left behind during the process. They were at one time employed by necromancers as a way of quickly draining blood from corpses. Now they're used to scare the bejeebers out of unwelcomed intruders. Lacking a skeletal structure they move by squirming across surfaces, but can coil up and lunge at a target, like a short, stubby, snake. After a leech rat's first hit, it attaches to the target and drains blood automatically at a rate of 1 hp per round. An attached leech rat becomes easier to hit (attackers gain a +2 bonus) however they make quite a mess when they burst...

Leech Rat: HD 1d4hp; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d3); Move 3; Save 18; CL/XP A/5; Special: blood drain (1), +2 to hit bonus.



NEW MAGIC

Skull of the Martyring Spirit

A martyring spirit is usually contained within its former skull, modified to serve as a makeshift bottle with cork. When the owner uncorks the skull, the spirit will flow out and merge with them. As long as the spirit "possesses" the owner, they take 1 less damage from attacks made by undead. If the owner is dealt damage that would result in their hit points being reduced to zero or less the spirit will emerge and interpose itself between the attacker and its host, absorbing all damage from the attack. The spirit disperses after this sacrifice is made and the damage reducing benefit ends.

Art Credits

We'd like to thank the following companies, people, and resources for providing great spot art at low cost. It's due to their efforts that we can afford to keep the price of our products relatively cheap.

Shaman Stock Art provided the Crypts for our cover and inside cover.

The Monster, Treasure, and Obstacle icons were made by Lorc. Available on <http://game-icons.net>

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The Leech Rat to the left was provided by Jacob Blackmon, courtesy of Purple Duck Games.

The map for our "old school" crypts was provided by Oone Games.

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