

DEADLY D • E • L • V • E • S



Rescue from Tyrkaven

by Dale C. McCoy, Jr.

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DEADLY D • E • L • V • E • S

Rescue from Tyrkaven

2nd-Level Adventure



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ENTERPRISES**

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Book References

APG Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced
Player's Guide

B1 Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary
NPCC Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: NPC Codex

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Adventure Background

Over four hundred years ago, the Cult of Tyrkaven was so hated that they dared not set up a shrine in the nearby town of Rivercrest, not even in secret. Instead their dark priest, Ginspit Silverhammer, consecrated his evil shrine to the minor deity of assassination, murder, and theft in a little-known cave just outside the forest. It was not far from the road, allowing the followers to leave town on the road and make their way to their meeting place with none in the town being the wiser.

Silverhammer created a ritual that he believed would make his assassin followers even more powerful, giving his cult unstoppable power. For a time, this was true. One time, however, he performed the ritual incorrectly, angering Tyrkaven. Their deity smote and murdered the cult's followers, turning them into walking dead which Silverhammer could not control. His final act was to cause an earthquake in the cave. When that failed to crush all of the zombies and left a chasm inside the cave, Silverhammer begged Tyrkaven to erect powerful magical barriers to keep the zombies inside. Still seething with profane anger, the deity created the barriers, but trapped Silverhammer inside with the ravenous undead. It was there that the cult leader died, by the sword of the cult's now-zombified high defender, Jeverax. Unable to escape, the zombies retreated across the chasm and laid in wait to kill, conquer, and feed. The zombies are unaware that Tyrkaven let the barriers dissipate less than a century later; nothing now prevents them from leaving the cave, except their own lack of awareness. Tyrkaven himself forgot about the cave and his undead minions, since the mindless

zombies cannot perform any unholy rites in his name.

A few months ago, a group of hobgoblins moved into the cave. They keep quiet within the areas they have secured, and are wary of what is causing the sounds of moaning and shuffling beyond the chasm. The rushing river inside the cave complex drowns out much of the noise, but does little to stay the hobgoblins' superstitions. So whenever Lieutenant Deathbringer orders them to go on raids, there are plenty of volunteers. Yesterday, the hobgoblins raided a caravan loaded down with barrels of fine wine. They took six barrels as well as nine prisoners. This is by far their largest theft, but Lieutenant Deathbringer does not believe the humans have enough will to fight back and is not expecting any kind of reprisal.

To this day, the remnants of the Cult of Tyrkaven that escaped the cave that day have watched their old shrine entrance ever since, knowing that their god-smitten compatriots may yet emerge. The hobgoblins concern them, however, and they wonder if these newcomers will arouse the walking dead that remain in the cave.

Adventure Summary

The adventurers are hired to retrieve the missing crew from the caravan attacked by the hobgoblins and, if possible, the six barrels of stolen wine. They track the hobgoblins back to their lair and a battle ensues. During the fight, the zombies hear the sounds of battle and begin jumping across the chasm, ready to slaughter and devour any living creature they find. The adventurers must contain or destroy the horde of zombies, or they will see the whole countryside devoured by this new menace.

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Evening light settles across the land, illuminating an old sign that reads "Rivercrest, 1 mile ahead." Traveling along the road, you come across a sleepy little town whose sign proclaims it as Rivercrest. The stone wall surrounding the town comes up to a human's waist, or the top of a halfling's head; you notice fresh mortar in the wall's cracks. On the left side of the road is a prominent building scarred by old scorch marks on the corner of the structure closest to the entrance break in the town wall. The carved and painted letters on the sign hanging over the steps leading onto the porch and up to the front door declare this building to be the Dusty Roads Inn and Tavern. The building just across the street, the Shodden Shoe Stables, shows similar burn marks. Part of that building has been replaced with timber so fresh it has not been properly sanded yet.

The adventure begins with the adventurers arriving in Rivercrest. At the same time, Bridget Urigson, the inn's owner, steps out the door to dump a bucket of mop water. She notices the adventurers and approaches them. Bridget asks them if they are adventurers. When they say they are, she asks them to go see Lyle Proudbarrel in Proudbarrel Manor, as he has a serious problem and needs help right away. She provides them directions to the large house just outside of town.

As soon as the adventurers arrive on the property, one of Lyle's hired hands, a human named Trevor Gibson, greets them and asks if they are adventurers seeking employment. Once they say they are, he wastes no time in escorting the adventurers to Lyle Proudbarrel. On the way, he asks how they knew to come to the Proudbarrel Manor looking for work. If they mention the innkeeper, Trevor makes a comment about how good it is that Bridget keeps up on all the goings-on in the town.

Trevor brings the adventurers straight away to a halfling named Lyle Proudbarrel. This excited halfling implores the adventurers:

"Oh, it is so good you are here. Over the past few months, a few caravans have gone missing. Always without a trace: no broken wagons, no bodies, no nothing. Yesterday, another caravan, one of mine this time, would have gone missing the same way, but this time there was a survivor to tell the tale. Rurik Steelaxe, the son of my employee Amber, was playing hide and seek at the time of the attack. He described a number of ugly things that were as tall as the humans in the caravan but had a face like the goblins that attack our town from time to time. They killed a few of my people and took the rest, as well as the carts

carrying several barrels of wine. My company has sustained a terrible loss. Can you please recover any of my people that may still be alive... and any wine, too, if possible?"

If the adventurers agree, Lyle offers them 100 sp for each of his people they bring back alive, as well as 50 sp for each full, untapped barrel of wine also brought back. If the adventurers want to see Rurik, Lyle will agree, but he will ask the adventurers to be kind to the child and keep their questions brief since he has been through enough already. He brings the adventurer to a room where a dwarf no older than nine years is lying on a bed quietly. A shadow of a beard is on his red puffy face as if he were crying but stopped not long ago. He can impart additional information as follows:

- Rurik can provide a better description of the things that attacked. "Well, they walked like us, but they didn't talk like us. They were as tall as you." Rurik points to a Medium-size adventurer. "They were ugly, like *goblin ugly*. But they had red faces." A DC 11 Knowledge (local) check reveals the monsters to be hobgoblins. If questioned about their numbers, Rurik says, "I don't know. I only looked a few times. I didn't want them to see me. But there were more of those uglies than there were people in the caravan." Lyle says there were eight people in the caravan—nine counting the boy.
- Rurik can also describe the attackers' weapons: "They used a sword as long as this," and he spreads his hands out, "but it was curved"; a DC 10 Craft (blacksmith) check identifies the described weapon as a scimitar. If asked how he managed to escape, he answers, "I don't think they saw me; I was behind the caravan when they attacked, and I'm really good at hiding."
- If the adventurers ask for the boy to describe what happened, Rurik answers, "They came out of the forest, yelling loud things... *sniffle* ... Kerig tried talking to one of them, while Jenna held out a coin purse, but another one came and kicked him in the leg. My mom yelled out in Dwarven for me to stay hidden and run back to Lyle. Then the ugliest of them all walked up to her and hit her in the face." Rurik sobs again for a moment. Lyle gives the boy a moment by interjecting to explain that Kerig Silversmith spoke Goblinoid and Undercommon, and Jenna Samone, the caravan's keeper of coin, would have tried to pay off any would-be attackers. Lyle always supplies the caravan crew with enough money to pay off anyone who might threaten them, and any potential threats have always



left them alone accordingly, until now. By this point, Rurik has gotten ahold of himself and is sitting up straight. Any dwarf will recognize this as something all dwarven parents teach their children to do before telling the young one to “do your duty,” and sending the kid to do something unpleasant, like studying or cleaning. The boy continues with his story. “The uglies put chains on them and led them away. I waited until they were gone, and then I climbed out of the hole I was hiding in.”

After a few questions, the boy’s voice trails off and he begins to sob, and Lyle insists that they end the interview. Before they leave the room, Rurik asks the adventurers to please bring his mother back, whether she is alive or not.

After leaving Proudbarrel Manner, the road they need to take passes through Rivercrest. They pass several townsfolk who wish them luck on their journey. They also pass by a wizened-looking beggar who reeks of liquor and limps towards the adventurers. “Going into the forest, are you? Have a care. Things far worse than gobbies live in there. Things that look like men but are not men are said to dwell where light does not shine.” The old beggar immediately stops talking to the adventurers and turns his head, having an argument with nobody (and losing). If the adventurers ask the beggar anything, such as his name (“Evan”, sometimes called “Evan the Mad”), he stops his arguing, answers quickly, and goes back to arguing. Before the adventurers can get much information out of the beggar, Constable Martins, the town’s only law enforcement official, approaches them; he apologizes for Evan and escorts him away. If the adventurers want to question Evan further, the constable lets them do so after escorting Evan to the town’s holding cell

to sober up. By this time, however, Evan’s moment of lucidity has completely passed and he only gives nonsensical answers, no matter what the adventurers ask.

The adventurers set off down the road where the attack occurred. They should have a random encounter on their way (see Random Encounter Table sidebar). Finding the ambush location is not difficult. A human and an elf lie dead on the side of the road where several carrion birds are pecking at their corpses. Following the hobgoblins’ tracks requires a DC 15 Survival check. Every failed check produces a random encounter (to a maximum of 3 failed checks). The tracks skirt along the outside of the forest.

Mouth of the Cave CR 1

When the adventurers get closer to the cave, they are attacked by a pair of hobgoblin guards who are well-hidden in the underbrush.

Hobgoblin Fighters (2) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Hobgoblin ^{B1}

hp 17

Morale If the hobgoblins are not killed within the first round of combat, one will retreat into the cave to warn the main force, while the other hobgoblin will hold the adventurers off as long as possible.

Entering the Cave CR 1/2

You enter the dark cave, the torch light illuminating a few walls. The air feels stale and the moisture makes it almost hard to breathe. The cave opening appears to have been a natural formation, but the passage quickly become stalactite-free, allowing for easy passage into its depths. A layer of calcium over the rock wall reveals this stone to have been worked long

Random Encounter Table

1d6 Random Encounter

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 1d2 wolves ^{B1} (hungry and mean) |
| 2 | 1d3 young giant ants ^{B1} (run away after being hit once) |
| 3 | 1 giant spider ^{B1} (fights to the death) |
| 4 | 1d4 stirges ^{B1} |
| 5 | 1 goblin ^{B1} (snacking on a fish, instantly surrenders when he notices the adventurers) |
| 6 | 1 horse ^{B1} with saddle and pack, being chased by a pig farmer ^{NPC} |

Tyrkaven Cavern



ago. The long-since eroded wall carvings gleam beneath your light with a thin layer of water. The floor is muddy, but several wooden boards, possibly pieces of a wagon, are firmly stuck in the mud, making entering and exiting without slipping rather easy. You hear multiple sounds coming from all directions in this cave. Possibly the shuffling of feet and the grating of armor. Possibly muffled voices of someone speaking. Possibly your own voices echoing through the cave and returning through a different tunnel.

Two things are obvious to the adventurers the moment they enter. First, this cave is a natural echo chamber. Determining the direction of any sounds requires a DC 15 Perception check, or else that adventurer will think it came from multiple directions at once. Second, the walls are lined with glyphs. Most of them are glazed with calcification and unreadable, but fragments can still be read if an adventurer can read Infernal or succeeds on a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check. Words and phrases along the entrance say "obedience," "loyalty," and "total dedication to" while the rest are simply unreadable. However, a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that these glyphs also possess a necromantic significance. Any necromancy spells cast in this cave receive a +1 bonus to the spell's DCs. Unbeknownst to both the adventurers and the hobgoblins, the glyphs glow green when such a spell is cast, alerting the zombies beyond the river chasm that there are others in their cavern.

CREATURE: Three passages branch off of the entrance, but a blind alcove nearby hides a hobgoblin. If a hobgoblin guard from outside ran in, this one will be ready for the adventurers. If he hasn't been warned, he will yell, "Intruders!" as loud as he can as soon as he sees the adventurers.

Hobgoblin Fighter

CR 1/2

XP 200

Hobgoblin ^{B1}

hp 17

1. The Lieutenant's Quarters

You enter a small gallery with a canvas cloth hung over the opening as a makeshift door. An aura of death and despair hits you in a wave as you step over the room's threshold. A crude bed of straw and animal hides rests in the far corner. The carved walls show less calcification than those in the rest of the cavern. Unlike the other caves, the glyphs here are stark and almost fresh, as if they have been recently renewed.

Lieutenant Deathbringer's quarters are separate from the main troop's barracks (areas 2, 3, and 6). If one of the hobgoblin guards from outside

Tyrkaven Glyphs

A series of glyphs is drawn upon the walls of almost every room in the cave. The glyphs are written in a simplified version of Infernal and can be read without a check, given a few minutes due to the wear and calcification on the walls. However, these glyphs are specifically chosen for their religious significance, so they can also be read with either a Knowledge (religion) or a Linguistics check. The specific DC for someone to read it that is not able to read Infernal is listed in each room. The difficulties vary depending on the words' complexity and how much time has eroded and covered up the words.

As soon as one of the adventurers (or the hobgoblin cleric in room 6) casts a necromancy spell, describe the closest glyphs glowing green and the glyphs on either side of them glowing green as well, spreading outward like a fire burning uncontrollably. The glow leaves the room almost as fast as the adventurers can track the light with their eyes, spreading through every glyph in the whole cavern. If the hobgoblins are engaged with the adventurers, they stop fighting and look worried. One round later, a terrible cry of anger and excitement echoes through the cave from throats that have not spoken for hundreds of years.

From this point on, everything changes. The hobgoblins are focused on exiting the cave as fast as possible and will only engage the adventurers if the adventurers attack first. One hobgoblin warrior, however, will stand with the adventurers to face whatever is to come.

Five of the cursed zombies come across the chasm to attack the players. Warmaster Urden does not come across to attack. He and the rest of the zombies will stay behind to defend the shrine and the treasure that is hidden within.

made it inside, he will be here as well, helping the lieutenant into his chain shirt. If a hobgoblin guard from outside failed to make it inside and warn the others, Lieutenant Deathbringer has heard the sounds of battle already but hasn't had enough time to change in his chain shirt and is wearing only leather armor. In either case, he chooses to make his stand here, defending the secret entrance to his own private torture chamber.

Long ago, this room was used to hold initiates into the Cult of Tyrkaven before being brought into the secret chamber. A DC 20 check to read the runes translates the Infernal glyphs as saying, "The Unworthy Wish for Death, but Never Find It" in a simplified version of Infernal. Initiates were

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tortured in this room. Those who remained silent through the agony passed the test, while those who screamed in pain were only tortured further and killed by the senior cultists. All of the pain and death that once occurred in this room has left a permanent taint here, a miasma of misery that Lieutenant Deathbringer finds comforting.

CREATURE: Lieutenant Deathbringer makes his stand here. If one of the hobgoblin guards from outside ran inside, he will be here as well.

Lieutenant Deathbringer CR 2

XP 600

Male hobgoblin ranger 3

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +7

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 30 (3d10+9)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee rapier +5 (1d6+2/18-20), mwk handaxe +5 (1d6+1/x3)

Special Attacks combat style (two-weapon), favored enemy (humans +2)

TACTICS

Morale: Lieutenant Deathbringer has faced adventurers before and is overconfident in his own abilities. He will fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

Feats Endurance, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Climb +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (geography) +6, Perception +7, Stealth +12, Survival +7; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ favored terrain (forest +2), track +1, wild empathy +2

Combat Gear alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** +1 chain shirt, mwk handaxe, rapier, 34 gp

TREASURE: In addition to Lieutenant Deathbringer's weapons and armor, the adventurers will find in this room: a second set of armor (either the chain shirt or the leather armor, whichever set he was not wearing), a key, 10 gp, and a journal written in Goblin (see Handout 1).

DEVELOPMENT: Finding the secret door in the room requires a DC 15 Perception check. Alternatively, any of the hobgoblins can tell the adventurers where the secret door is located as long as the players spare the hobgoblin's life (they will only

cooperate after Lieutenant Deathbringer has been killed, however). The secret door leads to a small passageway that ends in another door, a stone wall with a handle which allows it to be easily pulled inwards.

2, 3, 6) Troops Barracks CR 3

Several beds of straw and animal hides are scattered across this square room. Some appear to have lain undisturbed for weeks. Others look like they were slept in mere minutes ago. Your lights reflect off the water leaking into the room from a number of tiny cracks in the ceiling, giving the chamber a brilliant sheen. The wall farthest from the curtained opening has the most legible writing on it. Even this writing, however, bears the scars of time.

Reading the words on the walls of rooms 2 and 3 requires a DC 20 check. If successful, the words, "Hail Tyrkav" can be clearly read in that same variant of Infernal. Room 6 has a long stretch that can be read with a check of DC 17. A successful





check reveals the words, "Give yourself freely to Tyrkaven and bathe in his power, or be dragged down to Oblivion and watch your soul be torn asunder."

CREATURES: No one is in rooms 2 and 3. Room 6 holds several hobgoblins awaiting the adventurers. A total of two hobgoblins and one hobgoblin cleric are waiting here, but if the adventurers missed the hobgoblin wandering the halls of the cave, that hobgoblin will choose this time to strike from behind.

Hobgoblin Fighter (2) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Hobgoblin ^{B1}

hp 17

Hobgoblin Acolyte CR 1

XP 400

Female hobgoblin cleric 2

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +2

Aura evil

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 20 (2d8+8)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk morningstar +2 (1d8)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 4/day (DC 12, 1d6)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

5/day—*bleeding touch*, *touch of evil*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

1st—*cause fear*^D (DC 13), *cure light wounds*, *doom* (DC 13), *sanctuary* (DC 13)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 12), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *stabilize*

D domain spells; **Domains** Death, Evil

TACTICS

During Combat The hobgoblin acolyte tries to send one of the adventurers fleeing with fear by casting *cause fear*, activating the runes on the walls.

Morale The hobgoblin acolyte will flee once the zombies start attacking.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Feats Combat Casting

Skills Knowledge (religion) +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Goblin

Other Gear masterwork chainmail, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork morningstar, 2 gp

DEVELOPMENT: The hobgoblin cleric's first action is to cast a necromancy spell on the closest adventurer. If none of the adventurers have cast a necromancy spell before now, go to the **Tyrkaven Glyphs** sidebar.

4. The Torture Chamber

As the stone door closes behind you, it lines up flush with the wall, leaving it impossible to tell where the door is had you not previously known its location. The only light within is the light you bring. In the darkness, you hear the rattle of chains and a dry throat attempting to speak.

DEVELOPMENT: Amber Steelaxe, the missing dwarf, is chained to the wall in this room. Her face is bruised and puffy from being repeatedly beaten, and her arms show many dagger cuts. She appears physically weak, but defiance still burns in her eyes. She is chained to the wall so as to force her to stand, but she must stand on her toes in order to reach the floor (Deathbringer did not do this on purpose; the chains were hung on the wall to hold taller persons). Either the key found in Room 1 or a DC 12 Disable Device check will open the lock on Amber's chains. Alternatively, the chains can be ripped out of the wall with either a single DC 20 Strength check or two concurrent DC 15 Strength checks.

Once Amber is free, she will offer her help in the fight. She does not look to be in good condition. A DC 15 Heal check reveals that she could die after a single blow, and having her help out without healing her first will more than likely lead to her death. If the players seem unsure what to do about her, the GM might hint that Amber can tell the adventurers how to find the other captives (if they have not yet been located), or that she can guard any freed captives outside the cave until the adventurers emerge.

Freeing Amber Steelaxe earns the adventurers an experience bonus equal to a CR 2 encounter.

5. The Brewery

The walls here are lined with similar carvings as those in the previous room, but that is where the similarities end. This room contains six barrels. One sits separately from the other five; a coating of honey and dried blood adorns its rim. Another barrel has been tapped. The other four are still in their wagons and appear untouched. The decapitated body of a human rests in the far corner.

When the hobgoblins brought their captives back to the cave, they were informed they would live

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as long as the barrels had some wine left in them. When the first cask was emptied, they brought the largest of their captives to be killed, using him to make their bloodmead.

TREASURE: The adventurers find four full wine barrels. The fifth wine barrel is almost empty, but there is enough wine in there for the adventurers to each have a drink. One last barrel is fresh bloodmead that does not yet have a significant alcohol content.

DEVELOPMENT: There is a secret door out of this room that leads to the torture chamber, but none of the hobgoblins have found it yet. Locating it requires a DC 20 Perception check.

7. The Prison Hold

The carvings of the previous room continue along the walls here. As you round the corner, you see six of the missing prisoners chained to the wall. They appear weak, but relieved to see you. One of the prisoners clutches a folded-up piece of paper in her hands.

When the hobgoblins brought the prisoners to the cave, they were informed that they would live as long as the wine lasted. A few days ago, Lieutenant Deathbringer and one of the other hobgoblins were about to unlock two of the smaller prisoners when Kerig volunteered to take their place. He asked Jenna, the senior employee of the caravan that was taken prisoner, to take the note he wrote to his husband.

If the adventurers want to rest, this room would be a good defensible location from which to do so.

TREASURE: Jenna is clutching the letter that Kerig left in her care. If asked, she will give the note to the adventurers (See Handout 2).

DEVELOPMENT: The hobgoblin guarding the prisoners is the cook. He does not resist the

adventurers attempting to free their people, offering them the key. He wishes to live with honor, and taking defenseless prisoners, in his opinion, is not honorable. He will die with honor if the adventurers choose to kill him; however, he will leave the cave peaceably if they spare his life. Award the adventurers experience for a CR 2 challenge for freeing the prisoners, regardless of whether the adventurers kill the hobgoblin or not.

8. The Armory

The wooden planks that line the hallway lead to a canvas curtain that stinks of mildew and has turned gray and black in a few spots. Pulling back the curtain reveals a half-dozen crude weapon racks, as well as a number of stands used to hold suits of armor. Many of the runes carved into the walls have eroded over time, but they are still legible, if difficult to read.

Four centuries ago, this room held shelves where cult members could leave their ceremonial robes away from prying eyes, allowing the cult's members to travel to the shrine in clothing that would not attract unwanted attention. A DC 15 check to read the runes reveals the words, "Prepare Yourself. You Are Entering the Home of the Brimstone Baron."

Today, the hobgoblins use this room to store their weapons and armor. Several slats of wood, nailed together to form a cross, lean against the walls. All the fully functional armor is gone now.

TREASURE: Three broken suits of studded leather armor hang from their cross slats. Someone proficient with leatherworking tools can take the unbroken portions of two of the suits and work them together into a single functional suit of studded leather armor (requiring several hours of work and a successful Craft (leather) DC 15 check). The studs from the third suit can be removed and the armor reworked into a functioning suit of leather armor (also requiring several hours of work and a successful Craft (leather) DC 15 check).

9. Training Area

More than any other room in this worked cavern, this expansive room has the least amount of cleared space. Stalactites and stalagmites, marked with recent cuts and more than a few arrowheads, litter the ceiling and floor. The wood planks beneath your feet continue on through this whole area, but the floor is lined with unbound hay bales, wood splinters, and other pieces of destroyed targets.

The Cult of Tyrkaven felt this room served them better if left uncarved. It served as a practice area for the cult to practice their murderous arts. As an

added benefit, it provided a false room for those investigating the cave without the cult's knowledge to get lost in and possibly have their exit cut off, since it was directly ahead of the cave entrance. The hobgoblins now use this expansive room as a training area to keep their fighting skills in peak performance. Captured hay bales from caravans became targets for archery practice when the negative energy elemental is not around.

TRAP: In days long gone, the cult would routinely summon cacodaemons as a way of teaching new members to endure pain and fight on in spite of their terror. To this end, they set a trap that would automatically reset itself every few hours to handle the summoning for them. When Tyrkaven was angered by his cultists, he forbid his cacodaemons from answering the summons of the trap henceforth. Now, when the trap activates, it summons negative energy elementals instead.

Summon Elemental Trap CR 3

XP 800

Type magic; **Perception** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (alarm); **Reset** automatic(1d4 hours)

Effect spell effect (*summon monster II*, summons 1 small negative energy elemental, see page 14)

TREASURE: Among the detritus strewn about the room are a dozen arrows and a pair of spears.

10. Broken Ledge CR 1

Before you is a fissure that leads down to a noisy waterway. The echoes from the water make conversation difficult. The other end of the chasm lies a short distance away; in front of you, the tunnel continues on into the darkness.

Crossing the chasm requires a DC 10 Acrobatics check to jump across. Alternative means can work, given enough time.

CREATURE: A spider clings to the wall below the ledge, waiting for a creature to approach the edge in hopes of nabbing its dinner. If any creature ends their turn standing on the ledge, the spider will attack. Additionally, any adventurer that is attacked while standing on the ledge must succeed at a DC 10 Acrobatics check or suffer 1d4 points of damage from hitting rocks before falling in the water, landing in Room 11.

Giant Spider CR 1

XP 400

Giant spider
hp 16

The Fight Across the River

As mentioned in the **Casting a Necromancy Spell** sidebar previously, the casting of any necromancy spell within the cave alerts the zombies to the presence of the adventurers and the hobgoblins. However, Rooms 12 and 14 are written with two different quantities of zombies. The first quantity is present if someone casts a necromancy spell earlier in the adventure. The second quantity tells how many zombies are in the room if no one cast such a spell.

If no one casts a necromancy spell, then place one zombie in each room standing guard while the others are lying down, randomly spread across their individual rooms. One round after the zombie standing guard attacks an adventurer, half of the zombies stand up and begin fighting. The other half of the zombies stand up the following round. By staggering the zombies, this keeps the difficulty of running such a large fight manageable for the GM (and perhaps a bit more survivable for the adventurers!).

If a necromancy spell has been cast before now, the remaining zombies will be standing already and prepared to attack anything that comes through the door.

11. The Chasm River

The freezing water seizes your muscles the moment you plunge into it. The current is not too strong, and the waterline rises just slightly above your ankles, but the slime-covered rocks make getting a solid foothold difficult. The scent of lime and death fills your nostrils.

There is a slight crevice along the river bed. Incredibly small creatures could fit inside and keep descending for several miles. However, anything halfling-sized or larger is only in danger of slipping on the rocks and hurting themselves when they land. A few feet downriver, the area opens up into a small pool. Anyone entering this area will find the remains of several rats that hid among the hobgoblins; the spider wrapped the rodents in webbing and discarded them here after draining all sustenance from them. The river flows onward through a crack in the wall.

TREASURE: A month ago, one of the hobgoblins came to the Broken Ledge and was attacked by the spider. The hobgoblin retreated to the cave proper and the spider returned to its chasm wall. During the fight, the hobgoblin dropped a pouch of gold coins. The pouch fell into the river, and most of the coins are lost in the depths. However, a dozen of

Rescue from Tyrkaven

the coins were caught among the rocks and are easily retrieved. A DC 13 Perception check reveals 5 gold coins to an adventurer, while a result of 18 or better reveals all 12 coins.

12. The Shrine of Tyrkaven CR 2 or 4

While the runes on the walls of the cave you have previously seen are as tall as a finger or sometimes a hand, the runes that line the walls of this room are as tall as a human, and they are as clear and easily readable today as when they were first carved. A circle in the center of the floor boasts rows upon rows of tiny sigils. At the center of the ten-pointed star in the circle is a tiny heart pierced by two daggers. Along the far wall sit the time-ravaged remnants of a small shrine.

The shrine of Tyrkaven is a summoning circle with the evil god's symbol placed in the center. In this room, the failed ritual that turned the cultists into the undead horrors they are today occurred long ago. The original ritual involved murdering an innocent in the center of the circle while performing the rites flawlessly. Each time the cultists performed the ritual, they were given extraordinary power to slay their next victim. The flawed ritual angered their patron deity, however, and he claimed the souls of much of the cult and preserved their bodies as his eternal soldiers.

CREATURES: Several of the cultists that were turned into zombies hundreds of years ago are in this room (see the **Fight Across the River** sidebar to see what they are doing and how many are currently standing).

Tyrkaven-Cursed Zombies (3 or 6) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

NE Medium undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 Dex, +1 natural)
hp 9 (2d8)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee 2 slams +3 (1d4+1)

Special Attack scream

TACTICS

Before Combat The cursed zombies emit horrid screams, bolstering each others' attacks. The profane bonus is already included in the cursed zombies' slam attack modifiers.

Morale Tyrkaven's zombies do not flee. Ever.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Feats Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +6

Languages Common (cannot speak)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Scream (Su) Once per day as a standard action, a Tyrkaven-cursed zombie can let out a terrifying scream that is also a rallying cry. All undead within 30 feet gain a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls. This bonus lasts for 2 minutes.

13. Dark Sanctuary CR 4

Setting foot in this room makes your feel like you are entering the private domain of a dark deity. Anger and oppression flood your heart the moment you step over the room's threshold. Where the shrine in the previous room is rough and worn by time, the shrine in this room is intricately detailed and painstakingly, possibly magically, preserved to appear as if its sculptor finished only yesterday. Even the pierced hearts carved into the candles aflame upon the altar appear distinct; they must have been recently carved. Rather than runes, sigils resembling hearts pierced by double daggers are carved along these walls.

The Cult of Tyrkaven staged their dark rituals in the previous room; here, they maintained a dark sanctuary that only a handful beyond the cult's priests ever saw, and fewer still assisted with the sinister rites performed here. Although the altar is no longer attended by the cultists, Tyrkaven preserves it for his own future dark desires.

CREATURES: After killing the high priest, Warmaster Urden took up residence in the shrine's sanctuary. While the zombie that Warmaster Urden became has little use for books and writing, he carefully placed the cult's blasphemous tome on top of the altar for the next dark priest Tyrkaven designates to perform sacrifices here. Whether alerted by a necromancy spell or the sound of





battle from the other room, the warmaster is fully animated and dressed in his battle armor, ready for a fight. He stands ever ready to defend this sanctuary from enemies of his patron deity.

Warmaster Urden

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

NE Medium undead

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 natural, +2 shield)

hp 37 (5d8+15)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee mwk bastard sword +9 (1d10+4/19-20), slam +3 (1d4+2)

Special Attack scream

TACTICS

Morale Warmaster Urden will defend the dark sanctuary with his unlife.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 8, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

Skills Intimidate +11, Perception +11, Stealth +12

Languages Common (cannot speak)

Other Gear +1 leather armor, masterwork bastard sword, masterwork large steel shield

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Scream (Su) This is the same ability as that which is possessed by the Tyrkaven-cursed zombies. This bonus lasts for 5 minutes.

TREASURE: In addition to Warmaster Urden's gear, several items lie on top of the altar. These include several minor gems (a DC 20 Appraise check reveals they are worth 50 gp), a golden holy symbol of Tyrkaven (worth another 30 gp to a collector or a priest of Tyrkaven, if the adventurers can find one; if melted down, it can be made into 5 gp), and a leatherbound tome called the *Book of Dark Obedience* (see sidebar). If the adventurers remove the candles from the altar, the instantly melt down into a puddle of wax and disappear, as they should have done hundreds of years ago.

14. The Living Quarters

CR 1 or 3

Even with their age, the everburning torches in this room still glow just as bright as they did

hundreds of years ago. Unlike other rooms where the runes are repeated over and over again, the runes here appear to form a single sentence and nothing more.

If the adventurers have previously succeeded in reading the runes on the walls of any other room in the caverns, these runes are automatically readable (no check required). The runes are crisp and clear, having been maintained by the zombies of this room over the many centuries. They read, "For every life you take, you gain back your own."

CREATURES: The cultists that were not as close to the inner circle in life were kept away from the shrine in their afterlife. However, these zombies are just as loyal to their deity even after all this time, and will fight to their end.

Tyrkaven Cursed Zombies (2 or 4) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 9 (2d8) (page 11)

TREASURE: All the wood and metal of this room has long since turned to dust. However, one of the zombies that lived in this room kept a gold ring away from moisture and other decomposing sources. Although its gems are long gone, the ring could fetch a price of 20 gp to a collector of such an old jewelry design.

15. The Dying Quarters

CR 3

If the sense of death and dread that permeates this cave complex has a source, this would seem to be it. The overwhelming taint of this chamber presses in on you, making it hard to breathe. The room itself remains otherwise unremarkable. Even the runes that adorn every other room in this cavern thus far are otherwise absent from the walls here.

When the cult controlled the cave, they would dispose of the bodies of their victims here. A large collection of spiders would happily digest the remains of the slaughtered innocents. Hundreds of years later, both the spiders and the bodies are gone.

CREATURES: Sherl Tinderfoot knew too much and was thrown in this room while she was still alive. She was devoured by spiders and slowly digested over several weeks. The agonizing torture she experienced formed the raving spirit that she became. During the hundreds of years since she was brutally killed, she has never found a way out of this room and has long since been driven mad. The adventurers are the first living creatures she has encountered in a very long time. She is very interested in talking, but has lost all sense of how to hold a conversation. She wants to leave more than anything else,

though, and begs the adventurers to help her escape the caverns. If they help her leave, award the adventurers experience as if they defeated her.

Sherl Tinderfoot CR 3

XP 800

Female half-elf ghost expert 3

CN Medium undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +14

DEFENSES

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+3 deflection, +1 dodge)

hp 26 (3d8+9)

Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee corrupting touch +3 (3d6, Fort DC 16 half)

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 11, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 16

Feats Ability Focus (corrupting touch), Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Knowledge [local]), Weapon Focus (corrupting touch)

Skills Fly +14, Knowledge (arcana, history, religion) +7, Knowledge (local) +10, Linguistics +7, Perception +14, Stealth +14, Use Magic Device +9; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, Elven, Infernal, Sylvan

Gear none

DEVELOPMENT: Among Sherl's mad ramblings about spiders eating her alive, she can tell the adventurers about the cult's structure and activities four hundred years ago, as well as explain the origin of the zombies. Her ghost witnessed all that transpired when Ginspit Silverhammer botched his final ritual. However, little else of what she says should make any sense; play up her madness by inserting gibbering rants about crawling, biting spiders into every sentence she speaks.

ADVANCEMENT: If the adventurers encountered everything in the cave, they should be close to level 3.

Concluding This Adventure

Once the adventurers leave the cave, their return to Rivercrest is uneventful. When the

Book of Dark Obedience

Aura faint abjuration and necromancy; **CL** 3rd
Slot —; **Price** 39,000 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Under close examination, this leather-bound tome is revealed to be made from human skin. The pages contained within this book describe several rituals dedicated to the dark god Tyrkaven. These rituals include ways to give living creatures the strength of the undead, slowly drain the life from someone (with notes on how to best use this excruciating process to extract information from the subject), and create zombies at a lower level than an *animate dead* spell would require. The *Book of Dark Obedience* also contains more mundane rituals including sacrificial rites to Tyrkaven, how a follower should cleanse before and after killing a target, and prescribed punishments for a follower that fails to kill their target.

This book is no mere mundane tome, but a magic item which is protected in several ways. Whoever picks up the book without first speaking the correct passphrase ("The unworthy wish for death") suffers 2d8+3 points of negative energy damage each round while holding it (a DC 13 Will save halves this damage). Additionally, the closest cleric or warpriest of Tyrkaven is mentally alerted that someone 'unworthy' has picked up this book. The *Book of Dark Obedience* cannot be detected with a *scrying* spell, or via a *crystal ball* or similar means of detection, unless the detector has previously killed someone in the name of Tyrkaven.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *alarm*, *inflict moderate wounds*, *obscure object*, creator must be a worshipper of Tyrkaven;
Cost 19,500 gp

townsfolk see that the captured caravan crew have returned, the adventures are welcomed as heroes. Lyle quickly arrives on the scene and asks several of the townspeople to take the freed captives to Proudbarrel Manner; he then sends for the local cleric to minister to their wounds. In addition to his promised payment, Lyle sends down a barrel of his wine to the Dusty Roads Inn for everyone in town to celebrate.

The adventurers are now local heroes. This should curry favor when they purchase goods and services from the locals.

Continuing The Adventure

The warlord that sent the original hobgoblins is not pleased that the hobgoblins failed to return with any goods. He will send a second, more powerful force to investigate their fate, and avenge their fallen soldiers.

The book the adventurers found is the *Book of Dark Obedience*, the book that contains the ritual used long ago, and the current worshippers of Cult of Tyrkaven want the book in their hands. Of course, they do not want to simply ask for it or buy it off the adventurers, admitting to their existence. They attempt to steal it from the adventurers. While the adventurers are celebrating the return of the townsfolk, a cultist sneaks into their room and attempts to steal it.

Appendix: Summoned Monster

Note that when the following monster is summoned by a trap as in Area 9, it does not provide the adventurers any additional experience for defeating it.

Small Negative Energy Elemental CR 2

XP 600

N Small outsider (elemental, extraplanar)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

Aura negative energy (10-ft. radius)

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 13 (2d10+2)

Fort +1; **Ref** +6; **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities negative energy affinity;
Immune elemental traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee slam +6 (1d4 plus 1d4 negative energy)

Special Attacks death throes (10-ft. radius, DC 12, 1d8 negative energy damage)

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 15

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative^B, Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Fly +14, Knowledge (planes) +3, Perception +5, Stealth +12

Languages Shadownspeak

ECOLOGY

Environment Negative Energy Plane

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Throes (Su) A negative energy elemental that is killed explodes in a flash of swirling negative energy that affects all within a 10-foot area. Living creatures within the area take 1d8 points of negative energy damage. Creatures healed by negative energy, such as undead, gain 1d8 hit points. Any hit points beyond the creature's normal maximum disappear in one hour. A successful Will save (DC 12) reduces the damage by half.

Negative Energy Aura (Su) A negative energy elemental radiates a 10-foot aura of pure negative energy around it. Within a negative energy elemental's aura, class abilities that use negative energy, such as negative energy channeling or the Command Undead feat, function as if the user were 2 levels higher. Additionally, spells and spell-like abilities that use negative energy are maximized (as if the Maximize Spell metamagic feat had been used on them, but the spells don't require higher-level slots). Spells and spell-like abilities that are already maximized are unaffected by this benefit. This aura does not affect the negative energy channeling ability of the negative energy elemental using it, and its effects do not stack with those of other negative energy elementals.

Rescue from Tyrkaven

Excerpts from Lieutenant Deathbringer's Journal

(Dated 2 weeks ago)

These humans are weak. Over the past two months we hit three caravans and have yet to see any resistance worth remembering. Some of these fools are stupid enough to travel alone without any notable weapon and no training whatsoever. There just is not enough here for the duty we owe to the Warlord. We may have to move on soon.

(Dated 1 week ago)

I sent my men on patrol again. These simpletons should be practicing. I'm just glad that black elemental that keeps popping up in the large room is easy enough to kill for the fools I am in charge of. It forced them to work together as a team. Instead they keep whining of some moaning they keep hearing from the back ledge. So they are all out looking for something to hit. With so many out, someone is bound to notice.

(Dated yesterday)

Our best hit yet. I will give my men a few days to drink their fill, turn a few of the captives into bloodmeat and then we will head back. But the dwarf woman in the group. I will enjoy doing to her what her people have done to mine.

Handout 1

My Dearest Axlan

If you are getting this message, then I cannot come home and tell you how much I love you so much more than yesterday in person. Always remember that you are the treasure of the gods to me. For the rest of your life, I hope that you are happy and know that my last thoughts are of you. Do not despair for me for I will be with your ancestors in the Great Hall and will wait for you.

All my love,
Kerig

Handout 2



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Dangers of a Forgotten Past Awakened in the Deep

When hobgoblin raiders kidnap a caravan full of workers and supplies, the adventurers set off to get them all back. But neither the raiders nor the adventurers know what terrifying horrors await them in the depths of their cavern hideout. Now, the adventurers must risk it all to prevent the minions of an ancient enemy from visiting death and destruction upon the land. Can the heroes rescue the captives from the hobgoblins and deliver them from this ancient foe—or will they all perish, ushering in the rise of a forgotten deity?

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