

THE DM TOOL CHEST

# RISE OF THE RAVEN PRINCE



STOP AN UNDEAD NECROMANCER FROM RAISING AN ARMY  
IN THE CATACOMBS OF AN ABANDONED TEMPLE



## RISE OF THE RAVEN PRINCE

**R**ise of the Raven Prince is a Fifth Edition adventure intended for **three to five characters of 1st to 2nd level** and is optimized for a party of four characters with an average party level (APL) of 1. Characters who complete this adventure should earn enough experience to reach 2nd level. An undead necromancer is raising minions in the catacombs of an abandoned temple. This adventure takes place in the [FREELANDS CAMPAIGN SETTING](#) but fits into any existing campaign with an ancient temple and catacombs with only a few modifications.

### BACKSTORY

Razhul was once a vibrant young man who lived a simple life learning magic with the shaman of a nomadic tribe living in the Sargoth Plains. The tribe affectionately dubbed him the “Raven Prince” because he was the chieftain’s son, and his raven familiar Lucious never left his side. The orc raiders that tore through the tribe shattered this idyllic life, and he became the sole survivor of his people, barely escaping with his life. For years he sought a way to gain the power he needed to hunt down the orcs and enact his revenge.

The young mage eventually joined forces with a party of adventurers, learning what scraps of spells he could find as they traveled across the Freeland. While clearing a tomb, Razhul and his companions came across a nest of necromancer cultists raising undead minions. After narrowly defeating the cult, Razhul

discovered a tome of necromantic rituals, and he began to study the dark art in secret.

The new necromancer eventually gained enough knowledge and skills to put his plan into motion—he would become undead himself and raise an army of minions to strike back at the orcs and have his vengeance. His adventuring party friends caught him in this dark ritual and attempted to stop him, but it was too late. The now undead necromancer slew two of his companions and drove another to insanity in the process. Razhul raised his former compatriots as his very first minions. Embracing the title of Raven Prince to honor his fallen tribe, he has now made his lair in the crumbling catacombs of a ruined temple, gathering the bones of the interred to begin to build his army.

### ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here are a few ways you can get the characters hooked into this quest:

**Strange Noises.** The characters’ favorite tavern buzzes with fearful rumors of strange lights coming from the old temple ruins on the nearby hill. Some are saying the dead have risen and will come to kill them all. Do the characters think they could take a look?

**Shine a Light.** A local cleric of Sylvanis, the goddess of light, has become aware that one of the goddess’s former temples has fallen into darkness. They plead with the characters to dispel the evil that has taken root in their once hallowed ground.

**Heroes for Hire.** Local hunters have come to the city guard telling of sightings of undead roaming the ruins of the old temple by the nearby lake. The guard

captain is not willing to risk her men and wishes to hire the characters to clear out the ruins instead. She offers a reward of 25 gp each to visit the ruins.

## THE CATACOMBS

The entrance to these catacombs sits among the rubble of a temple overlooking a small lake. An earthquake decimated the building and cracked the underground catacombs beneath the temple, creating vast chasms and flooding parts of it. The priests abandoned the temple, and it lay empty for decades before the Raven Prince claimed it for himself. With the help of Skaldrot Embermaul, the necromancer has slowly begun to exhume the skeletons of the interred to raise them as undead minions.

### GENERAL FEATURES

These general features are prominent throughout the catacombs unless otherwise noted in the area descriptions.

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The catacombs are built with stone tile floors and mortared brick ceilings and walls. The ceilings are 8 feet high and curved in the hallways and 12 feet high and flat in the rooms. Some walls have collapsed in places, with roots and dirt poking through the broken mortar throughout.

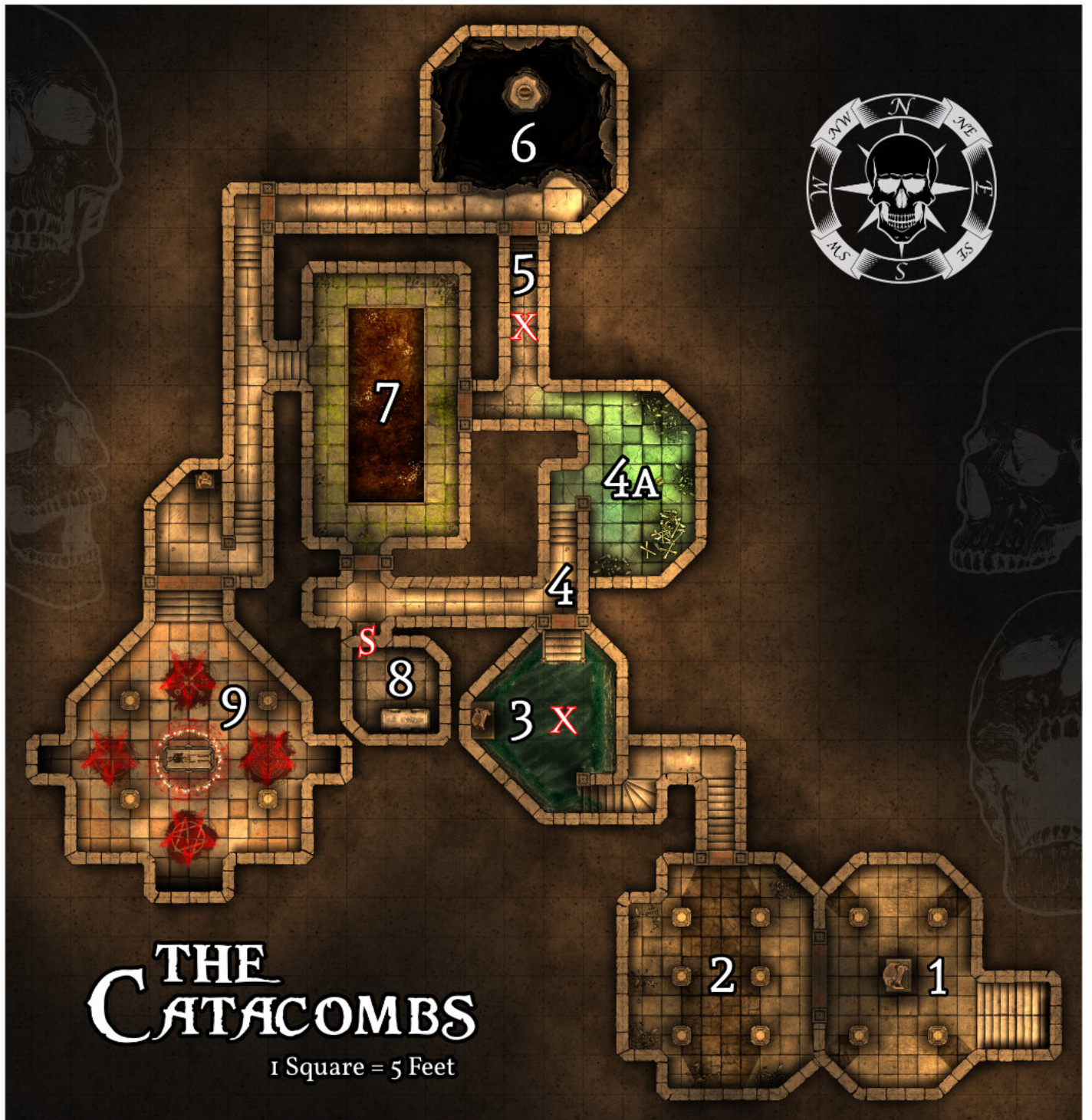
**Doors.** Doors in the catacomb are typically made of crumbling wood and bound in iron. They each have an AC of 15, 18 hit points, and are immune to poison and psychic damage. Locked doors can be opened with thieves' tools and a successful DC 12 Dexterity check. Stuck doors can be forced open with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. Secret doors can be discovered with an active search and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

**Lights.** There are no light sources in the catacombs. Skaldrot Embermaul carries a rusted lantern enchanted with a green *continual flame* spell. This is the light that the nearby villagers have seen peeking through the collapsed ground.

**Sounds & Smells.** The air in the catacombs is stale and reeks of rot and mold from the stagnant pools of water that have poured in from the nearby lake. The sound of Skaldrot's mad muttering as he taps away at the tombs for bones echoes throughout the catacombs.

**Unholy Ground.** The Raven Prince's rituals in the catacombs have turned them into desecrated ground (see Wilderness Hazards in the DMG). All of the undead in this area have advantage on all saving throws.





## KEYED LOCATIONS

The following descriptions correspond to the keyed locations on the provided map of the catacombs.

### 1. ENTRANCE

Crumbling stone steps lead into a musty chamber that reeks of rot and decay. A broken statue covered in black ichor stands on a pedestal in the center of the room and is missing its head and limbs. A raven sits on top of it, staring eerily in your direction. As it shifts around, you realize that half its skull is exposed, and pieces of flesh are missing from its body.

The statue is Sylvanis, goddess of light, to whom the temple above was once dedicated. Razhul desecrated the grounds to secure and strengthen his new lair. The statue is cursed, and anyone who steps within 10 feet of it will sense emanating darkness.

**Lucious.** The **undead raven** (use the **raven** stat block and change the type to undead) is Lucious, Razhul's undead familiar, placed here to keep a lookout on the entrance. Lucious alerts Razhul of the characters' presence, and he quietly keeps an eye on them. He moves with them from room to room with a *dodge* action readied at all times while Razhul completes a ritual he is working on in the Ritual Chamber (area 9). If the characters attack Lucious, the raven dashes deeper into the catacombs towards the Oubliette (area 6), where he will set a trap for them (see Trap: A Cry for Help in area 5).

**Hazard: Cursed Statue.** Any creature who is not undead that steps within 5 feet of the cursed statue must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or gain 1 level of exhaustion. A *detect evil and good spell* or a Paladin's divine sense ability will reveal the statue to be desecrated. A flask of holy water poured onto the statue will remove the cursed aura.

### 2. CRYPT

Shattered headstones and bits of broken coffins litter the floor under gaping holes in the walls of this large room. Suddenly, a pair of skeletal figures lurch from the shadows with a clatter of bone and metal.

Skaldrot plundered these tombs for their bones and he left nothing of value behind.

**Encounter: Undead Guards.** Two **skeletons** were raised by Razhul from the bones taken from these coffins and are now guarding this chamber. They are standing still in the dark and do not move until they sense movement from intruders.

### 3. WATCH YOUR STEP

A trickle of water filtering through cracks in the eastern wall fills this room with a pool of rancid lake water.

Anyone listening or peeking through the door to the Split Hallway (area 4) can see the light from Skaldrot Embermaul's enchanted lantern (see the Appendix) and hear his voice coming from around the corner of a short hallway. He's muttering to himself as he uses his maul to bash tombs open for their bones.

**Hazard.** The dark water hides a 5 foot wide and 30 foot deep pit (as noted on the map of the catacombs). If a character falls in, they also knock loose a large stone that pins them to the ground at the bottom, dealing 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and forcing air out of their lungs, reducing their amount of held breath by half. Anyone other than the pinned character can lift the stone with a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check made with disadvantage.

### 4. SPLIT HALLWAY

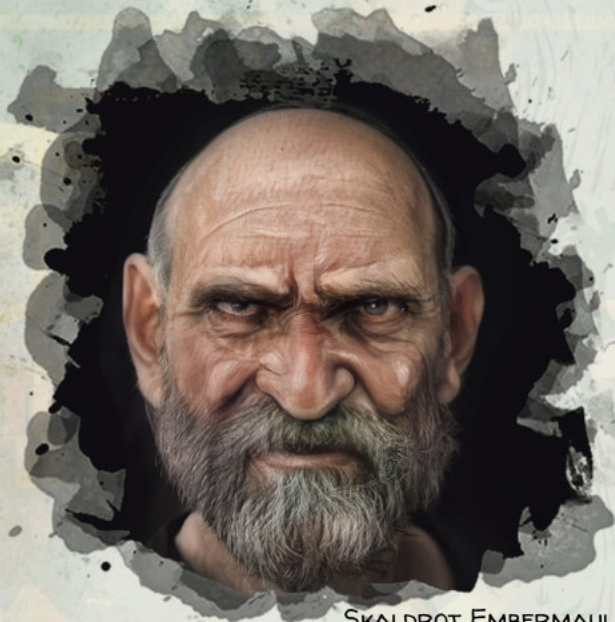
This hallway splits off to the north and the east. The eastern branch is 30 feet long and ends with a closed door on the northern wall and a niche on the southern wall. The niche holds a headless statue of a hooded priest with a raised arm missing its hand. The northern branch is 20 feet long and ends with a short flight of stairs and an open doorway on the western wall. There is a green light and the sounds of tapping and muttering coming through from the room beyond.

The light from Skaldrot's enchanted lantern flickers in the northern doorway, filling that part of the hall with bright light. If Lucious is still following the party, the undead raven flies ahead towards the Oubliette (area 6) through area 4a, where he will set a trap for the characters (see Trap: A Cry for Help in area 5).

### 4A. THE MAD MAN

When the characters reach the door, read aloud the following:

A sickly green light from a rusty lantern casts flickering shadows across the walls of this room. A pile of broken tombstones and coffins sit to one side, a heavy maul leaning against the stack, and there is an exit to the north. Kneeling amongst the debris is a wild-eyed bald man with a gnarled grey beard. He wears stitched hide armor caked in mud and filth and is sifting through the scattered bones. "Yes, yes, this will do nicely!" he mutters to himself while examining a femur bone before it joins the others in a pile to the side. Suddenly, he realizes he's not alone, and



SKALDROT EMBERMAUL

his face splits into a wide grin, exposing a set of black and rotting teeth. With a blast of nauseating breath, he says, "Oh hello, Adonis! Have ye come to help ol' Skaldrot? And ye brought some friends? Oh yes, we will pick the bones together? The Prince will be most pleased!"

**Encounter: We're All Mad Here.** The madman Skaldrot Embermaul (see the Appendix) sees one of the characters as his old companion Adonis (a zombie in area 9) sent by Razhul to help him. He will be overly friendly with this character, patting them on the back and giving them a good whiff of his unwashed body. Any character who poses a question to Skaldrot must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check, or he will start to get suspicious. After two failed checks, Skaldrot realizes the characters are phonies and will attack. If the characters help him sort through the bones of the disturbed tombs, they can earn an extra failed check before this happens. Skaldrot knows the following helpful information:

- He is the great warrior Skaldrot Embermaul, slayer of the Demon of Targon, and hero of Port Mercy.
- He is collecting bones to make new warriors for the Prince.
- Adonis and Merle are his friends and fellow adventurers.
- The Raven Prince is his friend, an honorable mage from the Sargoth Plains.
- They seek vengeance for the death of the Prince's people.
- The Prince is preparing a new warrior for their army right now.

Skaldrot will not leave his duty of collecting the bones and gets upset if the characters do not help. If the characters attempt to leave him without assisting him in sorting bones for at least 10 minutes, they must succeed on a group DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check, or he will attack. He has no intention of leaving this area and continues to pick through the pile of bones if left on his own.

**Treasure.** Skaldrot has a rusty lantern enchanted with a green *continual flame* spell as well as a pouch containing 10 gp and a small iron key that unlocks the door to the Rotten Room (area 7)

**Secret Door.** The secret door (see General Features) to the High Priest's Tomb (area 8) opens by pulling down on the upraised arm of the statue in the niche, causing the wall behind the statue to swing outward and reveal the tomb.

## 5. COLLAPSING HALLWAY

A short flight of stairs leads to a slightly open door to the north, and there are exits to the east and west.

**Trap: A Cry For Help.** If Lucious (see area 1) is alive, he hides just inside the doorway to the Oubliette (area 6). He uses his mimicry ability to create the sound of a small child crying to draw the adventurers across the hallway's unstable ground, as described below.

**Unstable Ground.** The floor in the northern part of this hallway is crumbling and ready to collapse into a sinkhole. The cracked floor can be noticed by a character with an active search who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. A 15 foot section of hallway collapses when more than 20 pounds of pressure is applied to the space in the middle of the section (as noted on the catacombs map). Any character standing in the hallway who succeeds on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw can grab onto the nearby walls to escape falling. Those who fail their saving throw take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from falling 10 feet into the newly formed pit.

## 6. OUBLIETTE

The floor of this large chamber has collapsed into a sinkhole, and water trickles through cracks in the wall. The wind howls through holes in the ceiling twenty feet above. A single stone spire stands in the center of the room, holding a stone pedestal upon which rests a small iron coffer edged in gold.

**End of the Line.** If Lucious (see area 1) is here, he stands on the iron box and eerily stares at the characters as they enter the room. He escapes through a hole in the ceiling if he is attacked, if a character manages to jump to the spire, or when the characters

leave the room. He then joins the swarm of undead ravens in the Ritual Chamber (area 9).

**Slick Walls.** The walls of the sinkhole are slick with water and a character climbing them must succeed on a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check every 10 feet climbed or slip and fall the remainder of the distance into the 30 foot deep sinkhole.

**Treasure.** The iron and gold coffer (5 gp) contains a rotten leather pouch with 30 sp and a *spell scroll* of *cure wounds*.

## 7. ROTTEN ROOM

The door leading to this room from the Collapsing Hallway (area 5) is stuck (see General Features), and the Split Hallway (area 4) is locked, and the key is with Skaldrot (area 4a). When the characters enter this room, read aloud the following:

A pool of rank water sits in the center of this room, with a slime-covered walkway circling it. Slick roots push their way through cracks in the walls and ceiling.

**Hazard: Slippery Floors.** Anyone walking on the slimy walkway must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw for every 5 feet of movement. A failed save results in falling into the water and being knocked prone. Characters who move at half speed have advantage on this save. The ground under the 3-foot-deep pool of water is thick with gnarled roots and uneven stones, making it difficult terrain.

**Encounter: Creepy Crawlers.** A swarm of insects lives in the pool of water and attacks when someone enters the water.

**Treasure.** A skeleton sits at the bottom of the pool wearing a gold chain necklace with an engraved gold sunburst medallion worth 10 gp.

## 8. HIGH PRIEST'S TOMB

This small tomb sits untouched by the earthquake that ruined the rest of the catacombs. When the characters enter the room, read aloud the following:

This bare room holds only dust and a stone coffin against the southern wall. In the center of it is an engraved plaque that reads, "Here lies High Priest Harold. May Sylvanis keep him for eternity in her warm embrace."

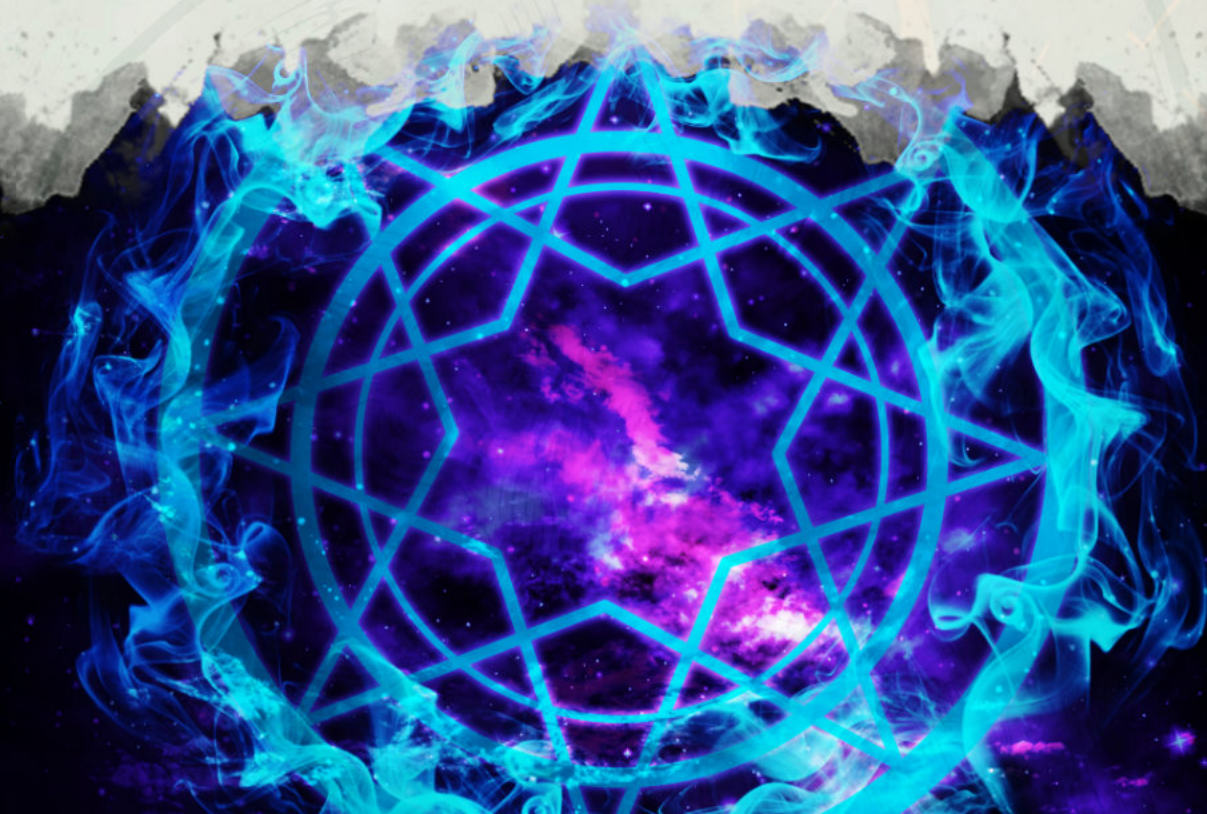
The stone lid to the coffin can be lifted by a character who succeeds on a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check or if multiple characters succeed on a group DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Treasure.** Inside the coffin is a dusty skeleton wrapped in a faded white cloak bearing a golden sunburst on the breast. Around its neck is a gold medallion bearing a sunburst symbol that is an *amulet of faith*, granting the wearer a +1 bonus to Religion skill checks.

## 9. RITUAL CHAMBER

Any character listening at the door to this chamber who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check will hear a dry voice intoning in a ritualistic manner. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check will determine it to be an *animate dead* spell. When the characters enter the room, read aloud the following:

Arcane symbols written in chalk and blood cover the walls and floor of this chamber. An altar sitting in the center of a ring of lit candles and charred bone holds a skeleton laid across it. Magical energy sparks across and into the skeleton, making it shake and rattle against the stone. The



energy arcs back to a staff held by a hulking figure dressed in a ragged black cloak covered in raven feathers. A beaked raven mask covers its face, and its eyeholes burn with twin green flames. Suddenly, the energy dissipates from the skeleton, leaving it lifeless, and the necromancer grunts in frustration. Throwing back its cloak to reveal bare bone where flesh should have been, he roars, “You dare to interrupt the Prince of Ravens? To deny me my revenge!?” A sudden flare of green light from his staff reveals a pair of shambling figures in the darkness behind him, and a conspiracy of undead ravens cry as one in the rafters above. “I will crush you and bring you back as my pets!”

**Encounter: The Raven Prince.** Razhul the Raven Prince (see the Appendix) is in this chamber with two zombies—his former companions Adonis and Merle—and a swarm of undead ravens (use the swarm of ravens stat block and change the type to undead). If Lucious escaped through the ceiling in the Oubliette (area 6), he is among the undead ravens. Even though he knew the characters were in the catacombs, Razhul wanted to finish his ritual before dealing with them, so he was not prepared for their arrival. While the zombies and undead ravens attack, he casts *fog cloud* first to fill the room. The zombies and swarm will fight to the death, but once Razhul reaches one-third of his hit points, he will cast *misty step* and *expeditious retreat* to attempt an escape. If the Raven Prince is killed, he shrieks that he will have his vengeance before his undead body clatters apart.

**Treasure.** A spell scroll of *animate dead* is on the stone altar next to Razhul’s spellbook, which contains all of the spells he has prepared plus *continual flame* and *find familiar*. The zombies each have coin pouches on their belts containing a total of 52 gp, 83 sp, and a simple gold ring (2gp) engraved with the words ‘Adonis & Merle Forever’ along the inside. A journal is tucked into Adonis’ pouch, detailing the adventurer’s story until their plan to confront Razhul with their suspicions that he was practicing necromancy.

## CONCLUSION

Once the Raven Prince is defeated or driven from the catacombs, the clerics in the nearby town come to cleanse it of the desecration. They seal the catacombs to make sure the dead can rest in peace. If any rewards were promised (see Adventure Hooks), they are paid to the characters happily. If the Raven Prince survived, they now have to look over their shoulders because it will not be the last they see of him.

If the characters were unable to defeat the undead necromancer, he grows in power bit by bit, eventually killing everyone in the nearby town to feed his need for an army. As the Raven Prince’s power grows, so also does his desire for vengeance grow past the orcs that destroyed his people and begins to include all of the living.





# APPENDIX: NEW MONSTERS

## RAZHUL THE RAVEN PRINCE

Once a bright and happy young shaman, Razhul's innocence was ripped away when the orcs raided his tribe and slaughtered them all. In his quest for power to seek vengeance, he turned to the dark art of necromancy. After turning himself into an undead creature, he now aims to build an army of undead minions to destroy the orcs that ruined his life.

**Undead Nature.** As an undead creature, Razhul does not require air, food, drink, or sleep.

**Brittle Bones.** The ritual that turned him into an undead left Razhul as little more than a skeleton, leaving him vulnerable to bludgeoning weapons.

## RAZHUL THE RAVEN PRINCE

Medium undead, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	6 (-2)

**Saving Throws** Int +5, Wis +1

**Skills** Arcana +5, Perception +1

**Damage Vulnerabilities** bludgeoning

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The Prince is a 3rd-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The Prince has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *ray of frost*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *expeditious retreat*, *fog cloud*, *hideous laughter*

2nd level (2 slots): *hold person*, *misty step*

### ACTIONS

**Shocking Grasp.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) lightning damage, and the target can't take reactions until the start of its next turn. The Prince has advantage on this attack if the target is wearing metal armor.

**Ray of Frost.** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) cold damage, and the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the start of the Prince's next turn.

**Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, or 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.



## SKALDROT EMBERMAUL

A loyal companion, a lover of strong ales, and a verbose storyteller, Skaldrot Embermaul sought his fortune across the Freelands with his friends Adonis and Merle. They plundered tombs and fought bandits for years until they came across Razhul in a tavern looking for work. Skaldrot often tried to make the somber young mage laugh with a witty joke but with little success.

One day the trio of friends found Razhul completing a necromantic ritual and watched in horror as he transformed into an undead nightmare. The sight of Adonis and Merle being ripped apart by magic broke Skaldrot's mind, and he has lost his grip on reality. In his insanity, he believes that they are still alive and not the zombies Razhul turned them into. Skaldrot now spends his days doing whatever Razhul tells him, ignorant of what is truly going on around him.

**Enchanted Lantern.** As the only living member of Razhul's entourage, Skaldrot carries a lantern enchanted with a green *continual flame* spell in order to see in the catacombs.

## SKALDROT EMBERMAUL

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

**Armor Class** 13 (hide armor)  
**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

**Saving Throws** Str +5

**Skills** Athletics +5, Intimidation +1

**Condition Immunities** frightened

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Madness.** Skaldrot has disadvantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws.

**Reckless.** At the start of his turn, Skaldrot can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against him have advantage until the start of its next turn.

### ACTIONS

**Maul.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.



# CREDITS

**Author:** TJ Phoenix

**Production & Design:** [THE DM TOOL CHEST](#)

**Ambiance Music:** [McRoMusic](#)

**Cartography:** TJ Phoenix

**Map Assets:** [FORGOTTEN ADVENTURES](#), [TOM CARTOS](#)

**Cover & Interior Illustrations:** Shutterstock, Artbreeder

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