

TOMB OF THE BLACK SUN

AN ADVENTURE FOR 7TH TO 9TH LEVEL CHARACTERS



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OMB OF THE BLACK SUN IS A FIFTH Edition adventure for **three to six characters of 7th to 9th level**, optimized for a party of **four 8th level characters**.

An old prophecy decrees that the Black Sun, once the Supreme Vicar of the Mesh'tek'haan empire, will rise from his tomb as a Death Sovereign after 5000 years of slumber. Can the party brave the horrors of the Black Sun's tomb to destroy the mummy lord and claim his treasure? This adventure is set in the Marahk desert in the Siothas campaign world but can be easily adapted to fit any game with an ancient tomb in a barren desert.

BACKGROUND

The Mesh'tek'haan empire was the proudest and most prosperous civilization to ever conquer the wastes of the Marahk desert. At the height of their power, the Mesh'tek'haanis were led by Supreme Vicar Annoub Emon-Rah, a man also known as the Black Sun for his efforts to expand the empire beyond the desert and across the continent of Azesh. Emon-Rah's connection to the gods was said to be so potent that he himself was immortal, a divine vessel for their presence among the mortal races. Upon Emon-Rah's physical death, the royal clergy entombed the body so that it would be prepared for the spirit's eventual return. Using a powerful ritual that lasted 30 days and 30 nights, the clergy created a spell of such powerful necromancy that it threatened to change the course of history. It was divined that after 5000 years of slumber, Emon-Rah would take back his body and rise as a Death Sovereign poised to continue the glory of the Mesh'tek'haan empire. After Emon-Rah's burial, the empire carried on as all empires do, and over the centuries, fractured to infighting, overexpansion, and natural disaster before eventually disappearing beneath the sands and into annals of history. Now, almost 5000 years later, Emon-Rah's resurrection is at hand. If not stopped, the potential Death Sovereign may raise his people from the sand and lead them towards a new conquest in an unfamiliar world.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The characters may be drawn to the tomb of the Black Sun for various reasons. A few of these reasons are outlined below:

Whispers of Prophecy. The party has heard of an ancient prophecy that foresees the Black Sun's rise in the near future. Compelled to crush this ancient evil before it has its chance to inflict its influence on the world, the party travels

into the desert to find the tomb and destroy the Black Sun where he lies.

A Lucrative Opportunity. A local sage and historian has learned of an ancient relic called the Black Sunshield, a legendary artifact rumored to be entombed with the Black Sun that was once used against the powerful priest in a failed coup attempt. He is willing to compensate the party 1000 gp if they can bring him the shield, and they welcome to keep any other relics or treasure they find within the tomb for themselves.

A Suspicious Journey. A nefarious group of religious fanatics calling themselves the Children of the Black Sun have all left at once for an expedition into the desert. A local cleric has heard news of an apparent prophecy and is deeply suspicious of what he assumes to be a potentially dangerous cult. The cleric offers to pay the characters 300 gp to covertly pursue the cultists into the desert and find out what their intentions are.

OVERVIEW

The tomb of Emon-Rah had been abandoned for centuries until the recent arrival of the Children of the Black Sun. Unless otherwise stated, its features are described as follows: Ceilings, Floors, and Walls. The tomb has been constructed of limestone that has become browned with age. Most of the hallways and rooms have 20-foot ceilings. Walls are two feet thick.

Doors. Doors are made of heavy slabs of stone and open inward on their hinges. They have AC 17 and 25 hit points. Locked doors can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

Light. The interior of the tomb is unlit and shrouded in darkness.

Unsafe Stonework. In some places, the ceilings and walls aren't structurally sound. As a result, some spells might have disastrous effects. A spell like *fireball* or *thunderwave* has a 25 percent chance to cause a ceiling collapse within the spell's area, dealing 16 (3d10) bludgeoning damage to creatures in the area. This collapse might block or bury objects or exits.

Secret Doors. Secret doors were built throughout the tomb, contributing to its complexity. They are well-crafted, requiring a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice.

The following locations are keyed to the provided map of the Tomb of Emon-Rah.

I. VESTIBULE

Eight stone pillars carved with hieroglyphs are arranged into two vertical rows along the length of this chamber. Two stone benches flank the west wall near the entry



doors. A pair of double doors exit to the east, while another door exits to the north.

Carved Pillars. The pillars in this room are carved with imagery that tells the life story of the Black Sun, from his noble birth to his celebrated death, with his expansion of the Mesh'tek'haan empire in between. A character can correctly interpret the images with a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation or History) or Wisdom (Insight) check.

2. PREPARATION CHAMBER

A dagger and washbowl rest on a stone table in the middle of this chamber. Stone countertops along the east and west walls hold urns, pitchers, jars, and measuring cups. Two life-sized bronze statues of ancient warriors flank the southern doorway.

This room was used as a preparation and embalming chamber. Linen remnants are the only materials that remain; any oils have long since evaporated, and herbs have crumbled to dust.

Treasure: Dagger. The dagger on the table has a gem-inlaid hilt and is worth 25 gp.

3. PRAYER ROOM

A life-sized bronze statue of a woman reading from a scroll kneels in front of a cistern full of water in the middle of the room. A group of robed figures stands around the cistern while one washes the head of a live lamb in its waters. Six carved pillars line the room and support the ceiling above. Against the walls are four bronze busts mounted on stone pedestals. Doors exit to the north, south, east, and west.

Encounter: Children of the Black Sun. Eight Children of the Black Sun cultists are in this room, including a **mage**, two **priests**, and five **acolytes**. The mage leads the group and is currently preparing the lamb for slaughter in sacrifice to the Black Sun. The cultists may share a few tense words with the party, but the mage will quickly order his adherents to seize them, as they consider them trespassers on holy ground. The

cultists surrender and attempt to flee once it is clear that they are bested. If the cultists are interrogated by the party or are otherwise convinced to talk, they can share the following information with the party:

- The Black Sun will resurrect 5000 years after his burial as a Death Sovereign — the time for resurrection is nigh.
- The Children of the Black Sun make a pilgrimage to the tomb every 14 years to perform a sacrifice in worship to the Emon-Rah, the Black Sun.
- The Black Sun was the glorious leader of the famed Mesh'tek'haan empire at the height of its power.
- The lower chambers of the tomb, where the Black Sun is interred, hold one death trap after another.

The water in the cistern was brought by the Children of the Black Sun, for the desert environment is too arid to keep the cistern filled naturally. The bronze busts in the room are artistically impressive but of little value.

4. SLAVES' TOMB

This room is divided into three separate alcoves, each filled with a simple sarcophagus.

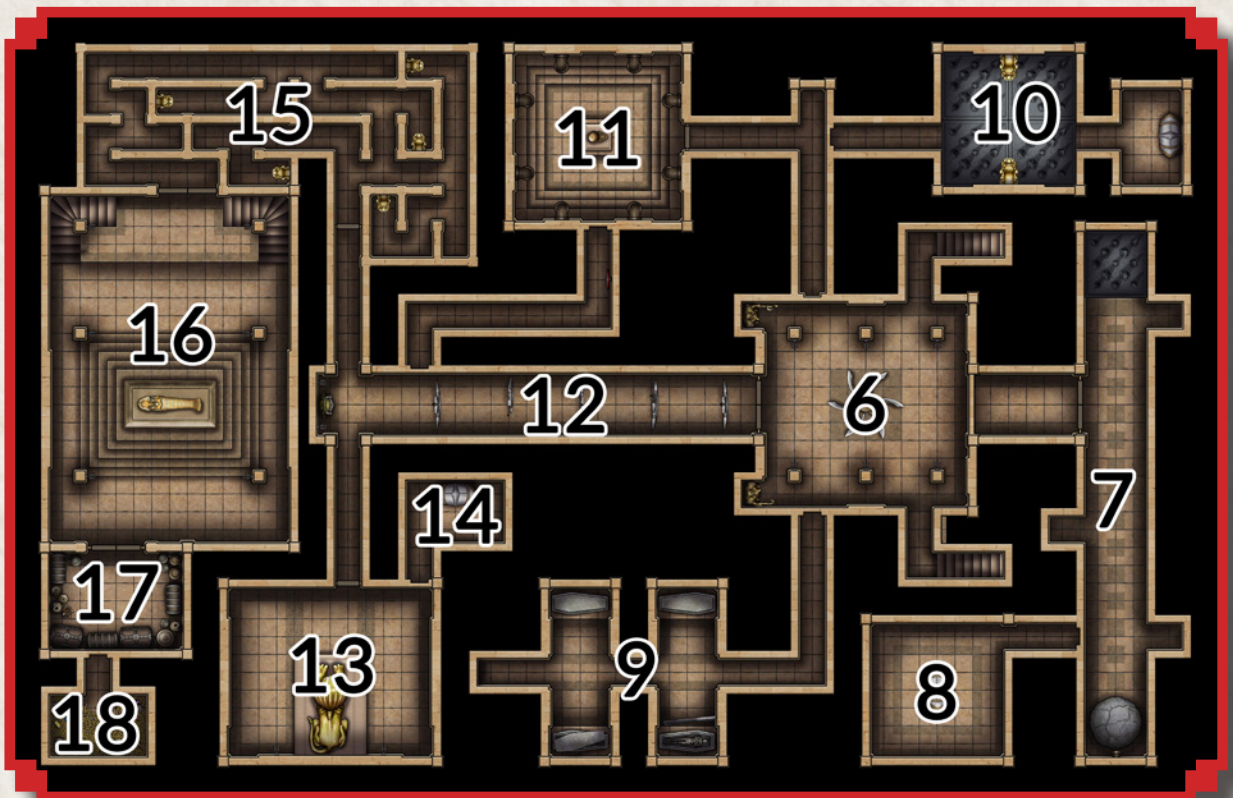
The sarcophagi in this room are mundane and undecorated, having been used for the servants to the Black Sun. They are empty of valuables.

5. FALSE BURIAL

A decorated sarcophagus rests in the middle of this room, its lid pushed aside, and the figure painted onto its lid chipped and dented. Two six-foot-by-three-foot stone tablets are mounted on pedestals against the north and south walls of the room and are etched with an ancient language. Four pillars are arranged equidistantly around the room and support the ceiling. A false wall at the room's eastern end has been pushed aside, revealing a corridor beyond.

The sarcophagus in this room is a fake meant to distract tomb robbers. It is decorated with fool's gold and was originally filled with cheap artifacts that have since been

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lifted by looters. The body inside once belonged to a servant. The false wall in the east end of the room was found and opened by a looter who descended into the lower chambers.

Stone Tablets. A character can interpret much of the text on the stone tablets with a successful DC 18 Intelligence (History) check. The north tablet is inscribed with a prayer in honor of the Black Sun and an apparent deity referred to as Kamuzu, who will bless the Black Sun and facilitate his rise as a Death Sovereign. A character who learns this information and makes a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) or Intelligence (History) check that Emon-Rah may rise as a functional **mummy lord**. The south tablet outlines a warning to tomb robbers, extensively detailing the many plagues that will befall them should one artifact from the tomb be moved out of place.

6. SPINNING BLADES

Six blades, each 10 feet long, extend outwards from a pedestal in the middle of this chamber. A mangled, skeletal corpse lies near the pedestal. Six pillars line the room. Two 10-foot-tall statues depicting ancient warriors stand in the west corners of the chamber. Doors exit to the west.

A casting of *detect magic* in this room reveals auras of enchantment magic surrounding the blades and auras of conjuration magic surrounding the statues.

Trap: Spinning Blades. The blades in the middle of the room are augmented with enchantment magic and will activate as soon as any creature steps within 15 feet of the doors in the west wall. The blades spin in a 10-foot radius surrounding the central pedestal in the middle of the room. When a creature enters the blades' area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, it is impacted by the blades and must make DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A casting of *dispel magic* stops the blades.

Encounter: Guardian Statues. The statues in this room are magical guardians that activate as the blades do; when a creature steps within 15 feet of the doors in the west wall. If possible, they will use a shove action in place of a slam attack to push a character into the spinning blades. The statues fight until they are destroyed. They use **clay golem** statistics, though each statue has 100 hit points.

Treasure: Skeletal Corpse. The skeleton is what remains of a looter felled long ago by the guardians of this room. On its person is an old sword, an explorer's pack, and a *potion of greater healing*.

Secret Doors. Secret doors in this room lead to the north, south, and east.

7. BOULDER HALLWAY

This hallway is over 100 feet long and descends sharply from south to north. It looks to be a dead end.

Trap: Rolling Sphere. A pressure plate hidden in the floor in the middle of this hallway activates a rolling sphere trap. A character can notice the pressure plate with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check and can disable the trap with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Failing this check by 5 or more triggers the trap. If the trap activates roll initiative. On initiative count 12, a hidden wall opens to release a stone sphere that almost fills the hallway and rolls to the bottom of the slope on its turn. Each creature in the sphere's path must make a DC 20 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 22 bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. A character who fails this save by 10 or more is pushed down the slope and into the spike pit. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone. When the sphere reaches the end of the hallway, it triggers the opening of a second false wall at the north end, which the sphere passes through and is carried through a complex system of unseen levers and pulleys to be reset at its original position.

Trap: Spike Pit. A creature that moves over the pit must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a successful save, the creature catches itself on the pit's edge. On a failed save, the creature falls into the pit and takes 12 (3d8) piercing damage from the spikes.

Secret Door. A secret door exits to the west near the south end of this hallway.

8. BLACK SUNSHIELD

A decorated chest rests in the middle of this otherwise empty chamber.

Treasure: Black Sunshield. The chest is unlocked. Inside the chest is the *black sunshield* (see page X), an artifact once wielded by a powerful enemy of Emon-Rah who attempted to overthrow him in a violent coup but was ultimately defeated.

9. WARRIOR CRYPT

This chamber is divided into four alcoves, each filled with a decorated sarcophagus on a stone platform.

Encounter: Warrior Guard. Inside each of the sarcophagi is a **wight**. If any of the sarcophagi are disturbed, all of the wights will rise at once and attack the party, fighting until they are destroyed.

Treasure: Sarcophagi. Inside the sarcophagi and on the bodies of the wights is a cumulative 350 gp worth of gems, jewelry, and gold.

10. SILENCING PIT

The entrance to this chamber is hidden by a secret door in the wall of the adjacent hallway.

The door opens into a short hallway that quickly drops off into a 20-foot-by-20-foot spiked pit. Mounted on each of the north and south walls of the pit is a golden dragon head. On the opposite side of the pit is an elevated platform atop which rests a decorated chest.

Silencing Heads. The dragon heads in the wall have each been enchanted with a permanent *silence* spell, preventing any spells with a verbal component from being cast in this chamber.

Trap: Spike Pit. A creature that moves over the pit must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a successful save, the creature catches itself on the pit's edge. On a failed save, the creature falls into the pit and takes 12 (3d8) piercing damage from the spikes. The pit is 15 feet deep and its walls are sheer, preventing most creatures from climbing out without assistance.

Treasure: Chest. The chest in this room is locked and can be opened with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. Inside the chest is 250 gp worth of gems, gold pieces, and small art objects.

11. SAND TRAP

A skull of solid gold is mounted on a stone pedestal in the center of this otherwise empty chamber. Eight fist-sized holes can be seen in the walls, arranged equidistantly around the room at a height one foot below the ceiling.



Trap: Suffocating Sand. A complex mechanical system hidden behind the walls of this chamber will fill this room with sand if any weight is removed from the pedestal in the center of the room. Removing the skull from the pedestal without immediately replacing it with an object of similar weight triggers the trap, causing a stone panel to drop down over the east door (which also closes) and sand to pour forth from the holes in the room, completely filling the chamber within 10 rounds. Characters in the room when it is completely filled with sand begin to suffocate. The panel stone panel that obstructs the door has AC 19 and 25 hit points.

Golden Skull. The skull in this chamber is made of fool's gold and is worthless to any shrewd buyer.

Secret Door. A secret door in this room exits to the south.

12. CORRIDOR OF BLADES

This 10-foot-wide, 55-foot-long corridor is filled with five swinging blades that move between the walls. Any creature that comes into contact with the blades immediately takes 22 (4d10) slashing damage. A character who makes a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check can move through the hallway without coming into contact with any blades. Characters who roll lower than 10 on this check must attempt another roll to bypass the blades. Alternatively, a character who makes a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check can understand and anticipate their swinging pattern to successfully navigate the hallway and avoid the blades.

At the west end of the corridor, hallways extend to the north and south.

13. SPHYNX

A lion-like creature with great feathered wings rests atop a stone dais in the middle of this otherwise empty room. It blinks at you slowly.

Encounter: Gynosphinx. The creature in this room is a **gynosphinx** that was imprisoned by Emon-Rah and forced to protect the tomb under the binding of very powerful magic. Driven near madness by its forced isolation under unjust circumstances, the sphinx openly laments its situation before delivering the party a riddle: "What can bring back the dead; make you cry, make you laugh, make you young; is born in an instant, yet lasts a lifetime?" The answer is "memory." Under the instruction of Emon-Rah, once the sphinx has delivered the riddle, it will not let the characters leave the room until it has been given an answer. If the characters answer incorrectly, the sphinx attacks, fighting until it is destroyed. If the characters answer correctly, the sphinx magically opens the secret door in the north wall of this room.

Secret Door. A secret door in the wall of this room leads to the north.

14. EXPLOSIVE CHEST

A chest sits in the middle of this barren chamber. It is closed with a heavy iron padlock and appears to shake and vibrate softly.

Trap: Explosive Chest. There is no treasure in this room; correctly answering the riddle from the sphinx only serves to lull the party into a false sense of security. The use of *detect magic* reveals an aura of evocation magic that surrounds the chest. The chest has been enchanted with a *glyph of warding* set to activate when the chest is opened. The chest is locked and can be opened with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. When the chest is opened, a fireball spell (save DC 15) activates centered on the chest.

15. FLAMING MAZE

The entrance to Emon-Rah's tomb is protected by a network of corridors outfitted with flame-spewing statues. Each statue is painted gold and carved to resemble the head of a roaring lion. The locations of these statues are noted on the provided map (area 15).

Trap: Flame Statues. The statues are activated by pressure plates that trigger whenever a character comes within 10 feet directly in front of the statue. Pressure plates can be spotted with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. The use of *detect magic* reveals an aura of evocation magic around each statue. When more than 20 pounds of weight is placed on a pressure plate, the statue activates, releasing fire in a 10-foot line. Each creature in the fire must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) fire damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. Each pressure plate can be deactivated with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Failing this check by 5 or more triggers the pressure plate.

A pair of double doors exit the maze to the south.

16. TOMB OF THE BLACK SUN

As you push open the double doors, you find yourself standing on a raised platform overlooking a decorated and resplendent sarcophagus resting on a stepped dais. Winding staircases lead downwards from the platform on which you stand and towards the center of the chamber. Surrounding the central dais is a circular pattern of glowing purple runes and inscriptions that have been carved into the floor. A soft hissing sound is carried on the air. A pair of double doors exit to the south.

Magical Runes. The runes and inscriptions carved around the sarcophagus are elements of a unique magical ritual started by Emon-Rah and completed by his loyal followers

after he died. The ritual works very slowly, requiring 5000 years of magical incubation after the entombment of Emon-Rah's corpse before his spirit can return to it again so he may raise himself as a Death Sovereign (a powerful version of a mummy lord). A character who studies the runes and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check can correctly interpret their purpose and discern that the ritual is within four years of being completed.

Encounter: Emon-Rah. If the magical runes are damaged, the sarcophagus is disturbed, or the south doors in this room are opened, Emon-Rah's corpse (a **mummy lord**) is shaken from its slumber and attacks immediately. Though Emon-Rah's spirit has not yet returned to the body, it retains a sort of memory of its occupant and a vague awareness of its history. "...I...am disturbed..." it whispers harshly. It fights until it is destroyed.

Treasure: Corpse. Emon-Rah's corpse is dressed with 250 gp worth of gold, jewelry, and small artifacts.

17. FALSE VAULT

This room is filled with chests, urns, jars, and other containers.

False Treasure. All of the containers in this room are filled with fake coins — small pieces of stone carved and painted with gold to resemble real coins. Characters with a passive Perception score of 12 or higher can immediately realize that everything in this room is fake.

Secret Door. A secret door in the south wall of this room leads to the real vault beyond.

18. VAULT

The floor of this 10-foot-by-15-foot room is completely covered in 1 foot of loose treasure.

Treasure: Emon-Rah's Hoard. There is 450 gp worth of loose coins in this room. To determine the rest of its contents, roll once on the "CR 11-16 treasure hoard" table on p. 138 of the DMG.

AFTERMATH

If Emon-Rah's corpse was destroyed, the ritual is foiled, and he will never be able to rise again as a Death Sovereign. If the adventurers for whatever reason left the tomb without destroying Emon-Rah's corpse, he rises after 1d4 years as a Death Sovereign and begins making plans to resurrect the old Mesh'tek'haan empire for renewed conquest. At GM discretion, other cult members of the Children of the Black Sun may find out about the altercation at the tomb and pursue revenge against the party.

APPENDIX

BLACK SUNSHIELD

Armor (shield), rare (requires attunement)

You have a +1 bonus to AC while holding this shield. While holding this shield, you and any allies within 30 feet have advantage on Constitution saving throws. This shield can be used to cast the *darkness* spell twice per day, requiring no components.

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