

DEAD ENDS

A Lower Levels One-Shot Adventure

USING THIS GUIDE

This module is intended for a party of 3 to 5 1st-level 5e adventurers. The GM should read through this document before playing. Treat each NPC like a real person, even the monsters, by playing on their goals and quirks. In this way, your players will find a more believable world and may be more inclined to interact with things in creative and weird/fun ways! Even so, there's no way to run this the "wrong" way. Adding your twists and tweaks to things is the spice of running the game!

STORY

Grungus the Ghoulish was once a petty necromancer, more nuisance than nightmare. His greatest crime? Attempting to raise an undead army using scavenged bones leading to the infamous "Skeletal Vermin Uprising" that terrorized farmers for a whole two weeks. He was hunted down, entombed in his crypt alive, and left to rot.

The legend of Grungus was a joke until the last group of adventurers who sought to loot his crypt never returned. A local hedge-witch claims to hear "whispers of something wrong in the swamp," and strange, half-rotted creatures have begun lurking at the edges of nearby settlements.

It seems Grungus may not be as dead as everyone thought.

THE SUNKEN CRYPT (A)

- **Dungeon Door.** A partially collapsed stone archway leads into the crypt, its one sealed door now jammed shut. Any number of creatures pushing for a combined **strength score of 25 or higher can crack the door open**, or a single very **DC 15 athletics check** (after which if failed more gunk piles up).
 - Once opened, putrid gunk sloughs out requiring a **DC 10 dex save or get stuck in the muck** and unable to move. After which, **leeches!**
 - Anyone ending their turn in the gunk must succeed a **DC 12 constitution save or take 1 piercing damage from the leeches.**
- **Gunky Hallway.** Entering the dungeon, the entryway goes long and deep into the earth until splitting off to the left into a pool of tepid swamp water (that leads to another

hidden room) or to the right into a crypt room (**hall of bones**), its walls lined with mummified bodies.

- **Ambush!** Once one party member gets to the middle of the entrance two slimy skeletons emerge from the muck and attack the party! This can be avoided if a player **investigates the room** before anyone enters (**DC 8 Investigation to uncover the skeletons under the muck**). Or, a **Perception check of 12**.
- **Puggles Squats Long.** Psh will sneakily follow the party into the dungeon after their first encounter with the skeletons. Once they have defeated the skeletons he will sneak in to chew on the bones. If they retreat Psh will be sitting on a stump watching the party.

PUGGLE SQUATS HOLDING AKA “PSH” - THE MAD DOG HEADED HERMIT

- **SOMETHING NEW!** Psh is only half mad, living in the swamps after a hag gave him the head of a dog. He’s very concerned about the party and doesn’t want to miss out on something new.
- **The sanctity of nature.** Psh doesn’t want to intrude and believes that all creatures should be left to their natural ways.
- **Follow your nose.** Psh is infatuated with new smells and will prioritize exploring new olfactory experiences over all else.

THE HALL OF BONES (B)

Blood Stealers. Skeletal bats, outfitted with wicked looking siphons and a glass vial built into their bodies, attempt to steal blood and fly it back into the failed phylactery chamber.

Leech gunk. The floor is covered in watery gunk filled with leeches. Any living thing that falls prone in the gunk must succeed a **DC 10 Constitution Save** or take 1 piercing damage at the end of their turn.

Walls of bones. The walls have cavities carved into them to house the bones of the dead. Just enough to grant purchase to hold onto and avoid the waters but the bone bats hide there!

BONE PIT (C)

This room has four coffins of the honoured dead and bones covering the floors. The walls have more cavities of bones and a gold trimmed marble offering bowl, filled with fresh coals, sits in the back end of the room on a shrine to Kelemvor, god of death.

Skeletal Ambush. Skeletons lie in wait in three of the four coffins in this room. Once all the skeletons have been destroyed they will reanimate after 1 hour so long as no offering is made.

The Offering Bowl. If an offering is made and lit, the skeletons will stop reanimating. The offering bowl is valuable, worth about 75gp weighing 10 pounds.

Grated Door. Grungus can see into the room but cannot open the door himself. So he can taunt and cast spells at the party if he is alerted to their presence.

DEEP CHAMBER (D)

This room has a single burial pit filled with countless bones. Above it sits a heavy copper brazier supported by a single rusty iron chain to the ceiling. Oil drips from it, alight with a ghastly green flame.

Skeletal Ambush. A single skeleton is already animated in the bone pit and will rise from it. Grungus can animate one more skeleton from the pit.

Grungus. Grungus wants to escape and find more bodies to animate. Skeletons are fine but zombies are much more interesting. The bodies of the party will make for great additions to his undead army.

PHYLACTERY CHAMBER (E)

The pool of tepid water, brimming with leeches stuck after wandering in from the swamp above, feeds a large and lazy Ochre jelly. This creature has stripped the flesh away from everything in this crypt and is eager for non-leech meat.

Hidden Ooze. The water looks yellow, but it is the Ochre Jelly in hiding. When any character comes within range it will lash out of them and attempt to consume them. It is a mindless creature and can easily be distracted by any meat.

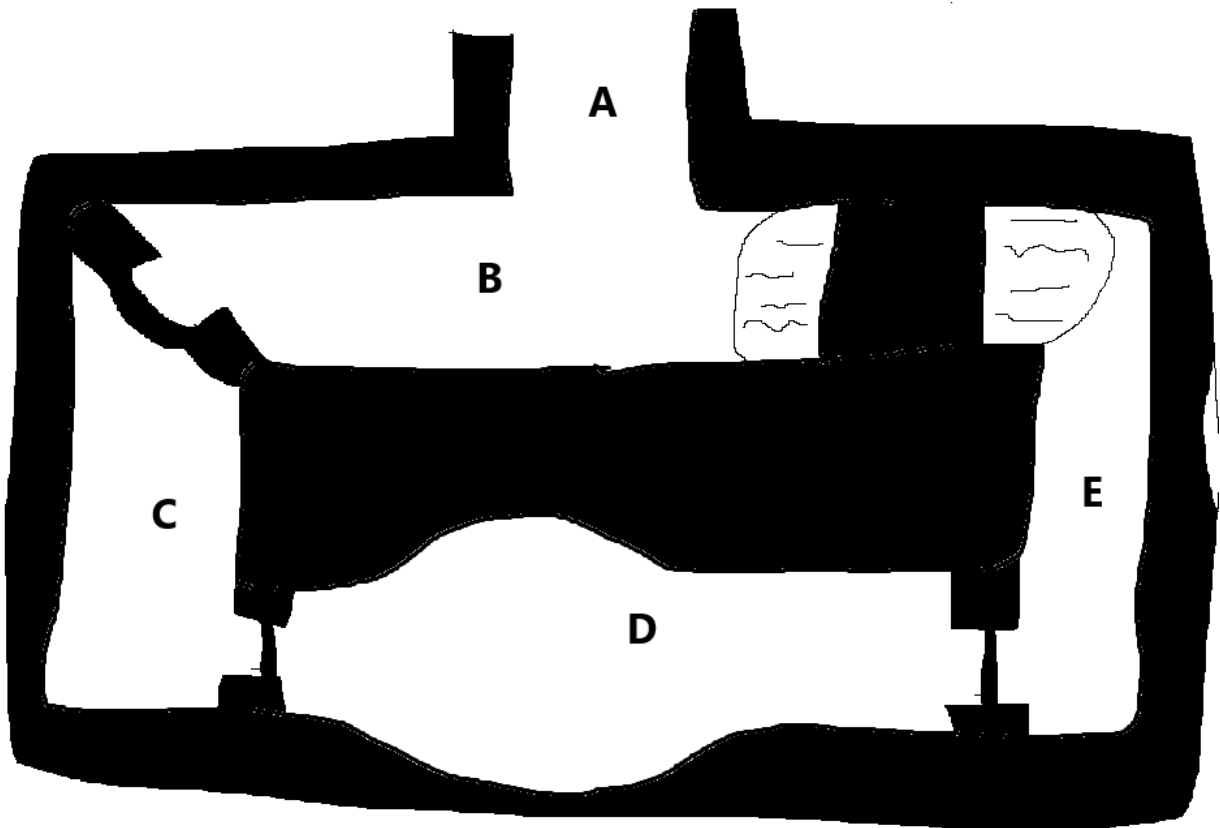
The failed phylactery. In a cavity of this room is a small idol to Kelemvor, god of death, the size of a brick and made of bone, with carvings in Abyssal and obsidian eyes. Any who picks it up must succeed a Charisma saving throw of 13 on each of their turns that they touch it or be moved towards Grungus. Once they reach Grungus, if Grungus is alive they are held in place so Grungus can turn them into an undead servant. Otherwise, it starts to drain their hit points by 1d6 each round and grants it to Grungus's corpse to revive him. This cursed idol could sell for a decent price to the right buyer, about 100gp.

RESOLUTION

Once the party makes it out of the dungeon, they can return home with their mild riches.

DUNGEON ROUGH MAP

- A. Entryway (2 skeletons, leech filled water)
- B. Bone-bat hall (1 bone bat swarm, leech filled water)
- C. Bone pit room (3 skeletons, 1 offering bowl)
- D. Deep chamber of Grungus (Grungus, 1 skeleton)
- E. Phylactery Chamber (Ochre jelly, leech filled water, the failed phylactery)



STAT BLOCKS

ANIMATED SKELETON

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	14(+2)	6(-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages understands the languages it spoke in life but cannot speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 5(1d4 + 2), piercing.

SWARM OF BONEBATS

Medium swarm of tiny undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (small miner's garb)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	15 (+2)	10(+0)	2(-4)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Senses blindsight 60ft., passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space. The swarm cannot gain hit points or temporary hit points.

Bites. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 0ft, one target in the swarms space. Hit 5 (2d4) or 2(1d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

OCHRE JELLY

Large Ooze, Unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 45 (6d10 + 12)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistance acid

Damage Immunities lighting, slashing

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amorphous. The ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Spider Climb. The ooze can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings

Pseudopod. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 9(2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Split (reaction). When the ooze that is Medium or larger takes lighting or slashing damage, it splits into two new oozes if it has at least 10 hit points. The new oozes half of the original oozes hit points rounded down. New oozes are one size smaller than the original.

GRUNGUS THE GHOULISH

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (evil robes)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12(+1)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic, Abyssal

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. Grungus is a 4th-level caster that uses Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13; +5 to hit with spell attacks). He knows the following spells.

Cantrips (at will): light, mage hand, chill touch

1st level (4 slots): cause fear, grease, ray of sickness

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

Master of Undeath. Grungus can animate a skeleton as an action once per day. He can control a maximum of 6 skeletons, any beyond this are mindless and attack anything in sight.

Quarterstaff. Melee Weapon Attack: +1 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND CONTENT

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