



DEATH PIT

THE UNDEAD HAVE AWAKENED AND THEY NEED YOUR HELP!

DEATH PITS

Nerdarchist Dave here from Nerdarchy. For nerds, by nerds. What exactly is Nerdarchy? It is a website, [YouTube channel](#) and a Patreon where we are creating content for Fifth Edition. We play Dungeons & Dragons and other roleplaying games, discuss many aspects of storytelling, worldbuilding and game mechanics, Game Master and player tips, and answer viewer questions about your game in live chats and new videos every week. Collectively, we have nearly a century of gaming experience and we've always loved discussing the RPG hobby — now we just do it in front of a camera! We've made thousands of gaming related videos and there's no end in sight. Then there's [Nerdarchy.com](#) where writers write about gaming and other nerdy topics. So buckle up your armor, sharpen your sword and join us in Nerdarchist Ted's basement!

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— Nerdarchist Dave

The Fifth Edition content this time around is inspired by a video from Nerdarchy the YouTube channel — [Necromancy & Death Pits | Terrible Terrain of Dungeons and Dragons](#). A gruesome facility from our own world with a fantasy twist involving necromantic magic makes a truly terrible terrain indeed. But appearances can be deceiving, or at least misleading. Not every undead entity in the Death Pits aims to spread evil, while some of the civilized living folk are anything but good natured.



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The undead have awakened and they need your help!

The Town of Blackwood

A little village on the other side of the wood from the Necropolis. Shops are available where one can acquire supplies, though the settlement is known for its carpentry and various villagers might try to persuade visitors to buy carved trinkets with no actual use for perhaps a steeper price than they are worth.

Blackwood's inn is called The Blessed Omen, and there is a metal halo affixed to the sign. The tavern-keep is a red hued tiefling who goes by the name **Scarlet**. She is fond of dice games and challenges every patron who comes through to gamble with her. Those who win, she pays in both coin and secrets. And even a small town like Blackwood has many.

Mayor Daeron Lucivax has posted a help wanted poster at the Blessed Omen, looking for adventurers to take care of a bit of a problem he's been having.

"Heroes Needed for Sensitive Matter: Anyone bold enough to undertake a daring job involving the risk of life and limb for the betterment of this humble settlement should see Mayor Daeron Lucivax in the town hall posthaste. Utmost discretion is required. Payment of at least 200 gold coins upon completion."

The town hall itself is nothing particularly special. Everything is neat and organized and it smells strongly of bureaucracy. Although Mayor Lucivax can be persuaded to be honest with the party, on the whole he will try to make it seem as though the trouble in the Death Pit was through no fault of his own. He tells the party there has been a little bit of seepage from the area and the shambling dead have turned up at the gate several times, though not yet in large numbers.

The truth is he suspects **Faenos** has something to do with undead activity, and a character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check surmises he is hiding something. A successful DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation) check will get him to reveal his suspicions. Daeron Lucivax is not a particularly brave man.



Mayor Daeron Lucivax

The Graazek Necropolis

The City of the Dead has been here even longer than Blackwood. **Archaneth** raised it, and with it many of the civilized dead dwelling there.

It is not a bunch of zombies shambling around in this place. Every corpse in the Necropolis is well dressed and comports themselves in a rational fashion.

The Necropolis is vast, but Archaneth's tower has a place of prominence within it and any one of the apprentices would be glad to lead the party there to speak with him to get safe passage into the Death Pit.

Archaneth would firmly (and honestly) deny any known involvement with what's been going on with the town and offer to match whatever the Mayor of Blackwood is paying them to go and check this out. Get to the bottom of it and come report back to him about it. He will also give them the key glyph to get through the ward.

1 The Radiant Gate

The **Death Pit** was once a natural cave system but at one point in its history the walls were filed down and tamed to something smoother and more pliable.

A *radiant gate* fitted into the entryway of the cave system allows no space around the outside. The only way in is to pass through the gate.

The 5 feet on either side of the gate are under the sway of its power, and anything standing within 5 feet of it without a key glyph takes 14d8 radiant damage.

Inside the Death Pit, the undead won't come anywhere near the gate. It is possible to pass through and just deal with taking the damage, if a creature can manage such a thing.

Damaging or dismantling the gate allows the undead inside to spill out.

2 Into the Death Pit

The radiant gate leads into a 35 foot by 70 foot chamber eerily free of undead. A 15 foot wide and 50 foot long corridor on the western wall leads deeper into the compound.

Loose bones litter the stone floor, some nearer to the *radiant gate* charred and splintered.

The farther one gets into the Death Pit, the more the miasma of necromantic energy presses in. Once you have walked 15 feet inside, the **Death Pit Nexus** takes effect.

While within the Death Pit Nexus spells and effects that deal radiant damage are weakened. When making a saving throw against a spell or effect that deals radiant damage, a creature has advantage. Creatures and objects within the Death Pit Nexus have resistance to radiant damage.

Necromancy spells are cast as if the caster used a spell slot 1 level higher. Creatures and objects within the Death Pit Nexus make saving throws against necromancy spells with disadvantage.



Radiant gate

3 The Well of Shamblers

This large circular chamber is 70 feet across east to west and 75 feet north to south. Bones and scraps of decayed flesh litter the floor here, though this is hard to see because the entire room is flooded with the shambling dead.

Many of the **zombies** and **skeletons** in this room still wear the finery of the Necropolis, having been transported directly from there to here with only minor wear and tear to their clothing during the transport. Many of them, however, have been here long enough to have had those fine clothes torn and tattered by the constant necromantic energy and the lack of care being shown to this part of the facility.

There are functionally an unlimited number of undead beings in this room. They will continue to press in and attack anything moving through to get to the other chambers. There are two open hallways on the north end that the shambling dead don't seem interested in crowding, and one on the southwestern end. There is also a secret door on the southeastern end of the room.

This room is meant to function as a gauntlet. Any attempt to clear the room will be a fool's errand as the aberrant necromantic energy here passively pulls the shattered bodies of the shambling dead back together and brings them back to a state of clawing and biting after two rounds. However, once one has passed into a different hallway, the shamblers will not pursue them further.

Any creature that ends their turn in the Well of Shamblers will be subjected to an attack from each adjacent tile that does not contain an ally. The shamblers are all either zombies or skeletons, at your discretion.

4 Faenos's Lair

This chamber lies at the end of the narrow corridor on the northeastern side of the Well of Shamblers. It sits at the end of a 5 foot by 10 foot hallway, and is 60 feet east to west at its longest point, and 40 feet north to south. At the direct north end of this hall is an assortment of large rocks clearly rolled here from elsewhere due to the crushed bones and drag marks around them. These rocks have been used as a makeshift table of sorts, and on top of them are a number of shirts and pairs of trousers, those of which could have been folded. All of them are torn and dirty, though it appears as if whoever left them here has tried to keep them in as decent a shape as possible.

Shunted up against the northeastern corner of the room is a bedroll and a pile of fabric crudely sewn together into a patchwork blanket of several different kinds of cloth. Anyone rummaging through this pile of fabric might come across a crude bone needle and a little satchel of reclaimed thread from other sundry cloth items.

In the southeastern corner of the room sits the remains of a fire pit, with a carved bone spit lying on two rods, also fashioned of bone. The remains of many cooked rats litter the area.

Faenos is in this room when the PCs enter, but he's hiding. If they sound like they mean to harm **Sable**, he will attack them but he will wait until they're in the **Well of Shamblers** to do it. Faenos' clothes are made from the clothes the shambling dead wear,

and he smells like the dead, so the zombies and skeletons in the room won't attack him. If he doesn't attack the party, he will continue to follow them in silence and won't reveal himself until they catch him or arrive in **Sable's Den**.

5 The Rotting Chamber

At the end of the corridor on the northwestern side of the Well of Shamblers, the pungent scent of rot is particularly poignant. It was already strong, but here the scent of death clings so heavily to the walls and the air it's hard to breathe.

Each creature entering the corridor must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw against poison. On a failed save the creature is poisoned as long as they remain in the corridor or chamber ahead and spends its action that turn retching and reeling. Creatures that don't need to breathe or are immune to poison automatically succeed on this saving throw.

The chamber itself is a deeper pit than the rest of the cave system has been, 60 feet east to west at its longest point and 40 feet north to south. This particular pit is full of rotting corpses that no longer even try to animate. Many have been reduced to bones but an unsettling amount have not.



Faenos

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that many of these corpses have had parts harvested from them before they were thrown down here and a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Medicine) check shows many of the bodies have been dragged out specifically to harvest parts from.

Anyone foolish enough to jump into the pit of bodies will have to make yet another DC 16 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion, along with spending its action that turn retching and reeling. However, they will also find 75 sp in the pockets of the various dead bodies.

6 The Laboratory

At the southeastern corner of the Well of Shamblers is a secret door clearly built into the Death Pit before it became so overcrowded.

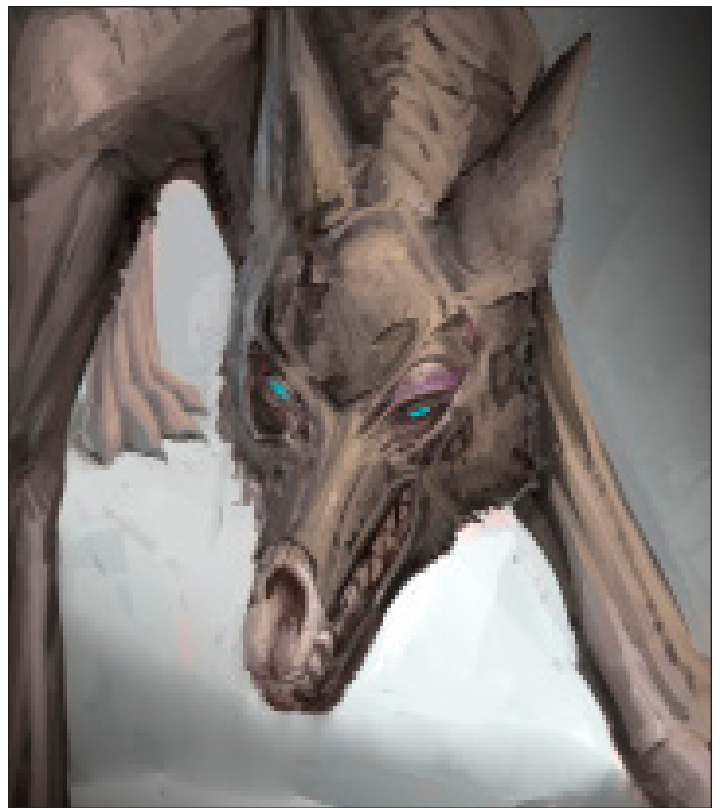
Characters who succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check discover that a little bit of pressure on the wall causes a section of it to roll away, revealing a narrow corridor leading down into a room farther inside. The door closes itself after 1 minute of no one touching it, but can be easily opened again from the inside.

The chamber at the end of the corridor is 60 feet east to west at its longest point, and 40 feet north to south. The room is full of stone tables and other pieces of furniture made from the bones of some of the bodies in the rotting chamber.

There are a number of beakers and bowls, and even a mortar and pestle crudely crafted from carved stone in this room, and many tools made from bone. A single book sits on the table in the middle of the chamber.

Examination of this book will reveal someone has been trying to figure out how to bring intelligence back to the shambling dead, to turn time back on them to before they lost their minds in the first place.

A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check while examining the



Sable

book discovers notes on terrible experiments to create an elixir capable of giving sentience to the shambling dead. Many living test subjects became zombies themselves during these experiments.

In a half broken down wooden crate beneath the table there are two potions in crude stone bottles, stoppered by chunks of bone that were cut to measure and fit the holes of the bottles.

The liquid inside smells foul. Anyone that drinks the potion will have to make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or immediately die and rise as a zombie, albeit one of the civilized awakened dead rather than a shambler.

7 Sable's Den

This chamber lies at the southwestern end of the Well of Shamblers. A large shaggy furred creature can be seen outlined near the back of the chamber, chest rising and falling in a slow cadence that could pass for sleep. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check shows this is not the case, and the creature watches the entrance to its den.

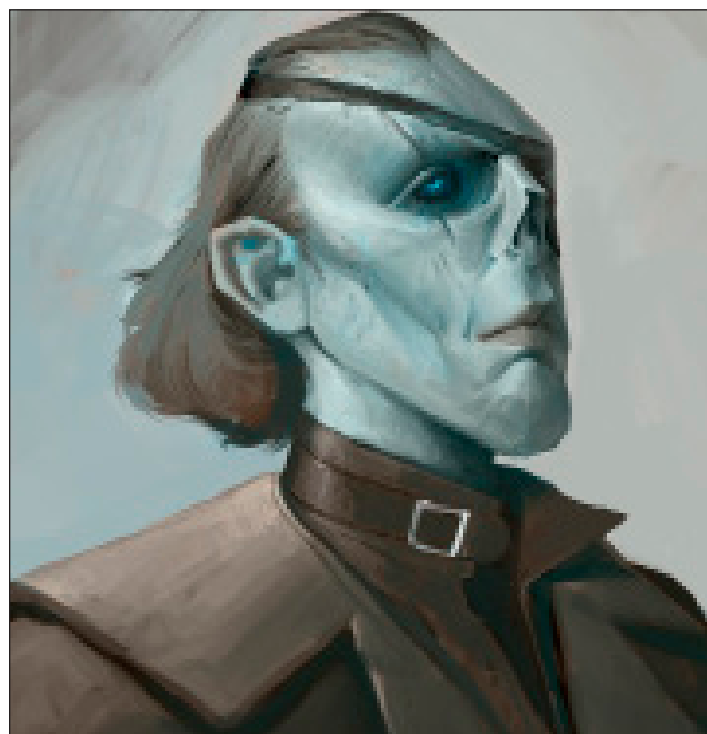
Bones litter the floor of this chamber and crunch under foot. Whenever a creature approaches within 15 feet of **Sable** she will open her eyes and initiate communication. Those eyes are witchfire blue and flicker like it. All of this time stewing in necromantic energies has left her both powerful and intelligent. She wants the dead to be free.

If the party hasn't already fought Faenos, and attacks Sable, he will attack from hiding. If the party makes it seem as though they mean her dead ill will, Sable attacks the party. She responds well, however, to calm questions.

8 The Choice

If Sable is killed, much of the necromantic energy the Death Pit has accumulated will dissipate with her. If Faenos is still alive when this happens, it will coalesce into him and he will begin the work of repairing and freeing the shambling dead all over again. Regardless, both Mayor Lucivax and **Necromancer Archaneth** will pay the party.

If Faenos is freed, he will go silent for about a week before killing Mayor Lucivax.



Civilized awakened undead



Mindless shambling undead

If Archaneth is informed of the research to try and restore the shambling dead, he will gladly get involved and assist. If Sable is spared, the two will get along swimmingly together. This may one day prove to be disastrous for the town of Blackwood.

If the party aids Sable in bringing down the *radiant gate*, she will owe them a favor and give them a whistle carved of bone. If they blow it, once, she will emerge from the shadows to aid them.

The shambling dead emerge from the Death Pit and scatter, many wandering to the Necropolis and many others to Blackwood. In this case, Archaneth will pay the party, but Lucivax will be furious and hire bounty hunters to go after them with the money he would have used to pay the party (if he lives).

But isn't it ironic that the dead Mayor Lucivax is responsible for creating come clawing at the gates for revenge?

Death Pits of the Necropolis



Friend or Foe

Archaneth Nalifeaux



Archaneth Nalifeaux

Master Necromancer. Archaneth has been with the Necropolis as long as anyone can remember. He is as much of a fixture here as the Hall of Skulls or the Arc of Arms. He is a skeletal figure in a dark robe with no flesh left to speak of, though somehow he has gotten his long grey beard to persist through death. That beard is the subject of much speculation among the apprentices.

Necromancers come to the Necropolis to be educated, and Archaneth is pleased to oblige them. He is quite a calming figure for a dead man and though he is overall what one might consider to be an evil creature he does legitimately care about the apprentices in his care, and he only takes three at a time to be sure he can teach them properly.

The other denizens of the Necropolis are typically the undead, both those crafted by Archaneth and those drawn to the area for the potent necromantic energies radiating off of it.

Father of the Dead. As malevolent as Archaneth's physical look would have him appear, he cares very deeply for his unliving family.

He considers both his apprentices and the Civilized Dead to be his people and tends to act in an almost fatherly capacity towards them.

In return, most look to him as someone they trust and follow without fuss. The shambling dead, however, are not as welcome within the Necropolis, and it was for this reason the Death Pit was created.

Archaneth Nalifeaux

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 20 (+5) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) |

Damage Immunities Necrotic

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Bring Out Your Dead. Within the Necropolis, Archaneth can call out the Civilized Dead to rally to his cause. As a bonus action, Archaneth summons 3 skeletons and 3 zombies, each with an intelligence of 12, who arrive in unoccupied spaces within 60 feet of Archaneth at the end of his turn. They remain until Archaneth dismisses them as an action.

Actions

Bone Whip. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 44 (8d10) slashing damage and 22 (4d10) necrotic damage.

Mass Siphon Life (Recharge 6). Archaneth targets every creature of his choosing within 20 feet of himself. The creatures must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 22 (4d10) necrotic damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one. Archaneth then then regains hit points equal to half the damage dealt.

The Three Apprentices

Apprentice Necromancer

Medium humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (Academic Support)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 11 (+0) |

Damage Vulnerabilities Radiant

Damage Immunities Necrotic

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Academic Support. When an apprentice necromancer is within 10 feet of another apprentice necromancer, their AC increases by 1 for each apprentice in range.

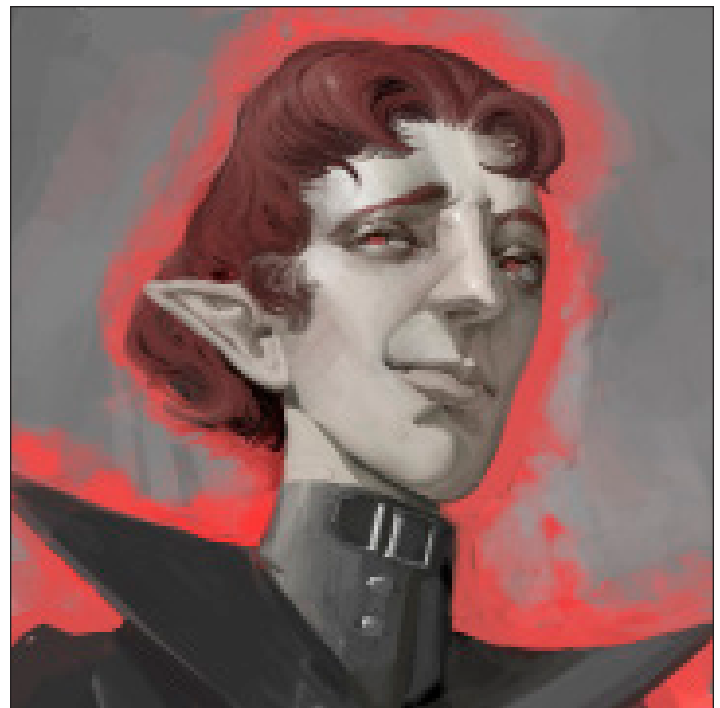
Actions

Bone Whip. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (4d10) slashing damage and 11 (2d10) necrotic damage.

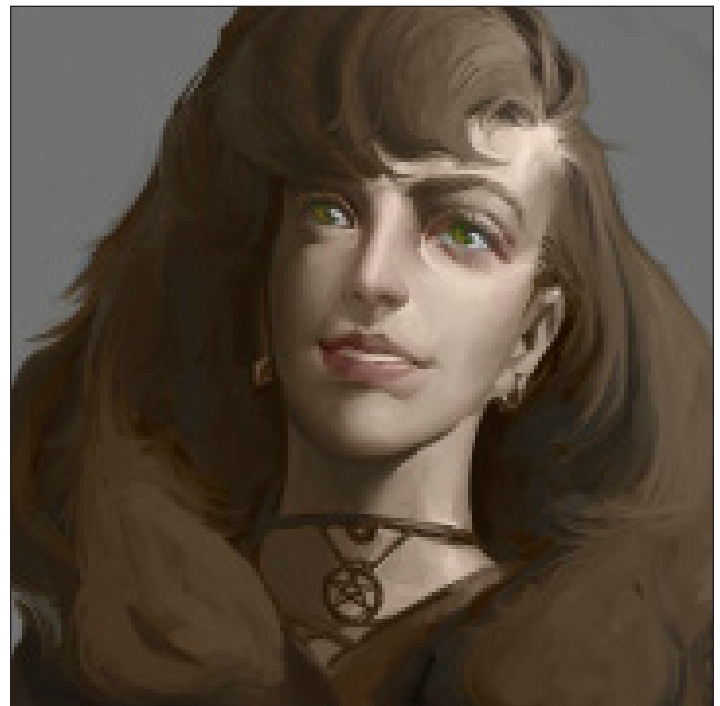
Siphon Life (Recharge 5-6). The apprentice necromancer targets one creature within 20 feet of itself. The creature must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 16 (3d10) necrotic damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one. The apprentice necromancer then regains hit points equal to half the damage dealt.

Rasven Snowbright

A high elf and Archaneth's oldest student, who has been studying at the Necropolis for 20 years. Still a young man for an elf, Rasven is a pale youth with hair once the color of beaten copper darkened to the black of the night sky over the course of his studies at the Necropolis. Rasven retains an arrogance both quintessentially elven and also wizardly. Anyone attempting to manipulate him by appealing to his ego has advantage on the check. However, he is also incredibly prideful. Anyone attempting to scare him into compliance does so with disadvantage.



Rasven Snowbright



Lilla Carpenter

Lilla Carpenter

A human female of about 19 years, Lilla has been studying at the Necropolis for four years now, having stumbled in as a lost adolescent after her parents were killed by bandits. Archaneth will never admit this out loud, but Lilla is his favorite apprentice.

Lilla's hair is the brown of a hunting hound, and her eyes brown green, and of the three apprentices she is the only one who won't hesitate to smile. She responds well to friendly conversation, but if someone spills her blood Archaneth will know and he will come to handle it in person.

Mardosh Ellenvyr

A half-orc woman who was raised but never truly accepted by her human grandparents. Over the course of the past year she's found a home in the Necropolis, though she hasn't quite learned how to be herself just yet. She doesn't quite know what 'herself' is.

Mardosh is fiercely protective of her new family and she isn't trying to hide this. She responds well to any plan involving what's best for them, and violently to any plan that might do them harm.

The Mayor of Blackwood

Daeron Lucivax is a noble quickly closing in on 60 years of age, and has been the mayor of Blackwood town most of that time. At this point, his age and the stress of his job have worn his hair down to flecks of black amid the gray rather than

the other way around. He is a severe looking man with steady hands and a stern voice, and he cares much what happens to his town.

Unfortunately, about 20 years ago Daeron made the decision to start using the Necropolis's Death Pit as a place to get rid of particularly troublesome prisoners when his people stopped accepting hanging as means of execution.

It wasn't explicitly against their treaty after all...

Denizens of the Death Pit

Sable

Once upon a time the Death Pit was an ordinary cemetery, a ravine set aside and consecrated as a final resting place. Sable was a black hunting dog who was buried there first, and served as the churchgrim to the plot for years before the Necropolis ever moved in. But that was hundreds of years ago, and the only record left of who was buried in the Death Pit before it became the Death Pit resides deep within the vaults of Blackwood's town hall.

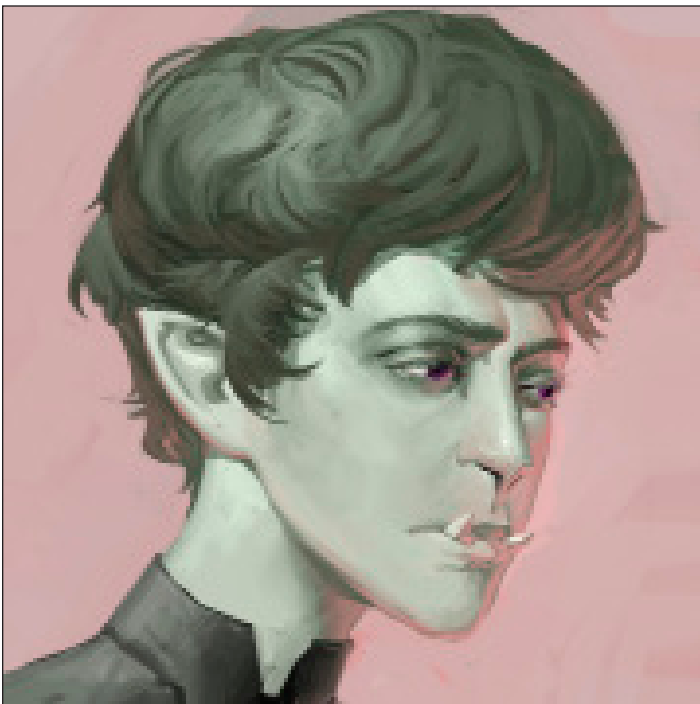
Now, Sable's coat breaks in places to show some of the bone and musculature beneath it. Her eye sockets glow witchlight blue. She is roughly the size of a workhorse, and still takes guardianship over her charge seriously. Unfortunately, she's also quickly coming to the conclusion that the best thing for those under her charge will be to eventually break them out.

She is currently biding her time until then.

Faenos

Half-elven, Faenos never had a proper place in the human town of Blackwood. In his youth he spent a lot of time alone and got in trouble for stealing things and getting into fights with the other villagers.

He was never formally accused of the couple of cows found partially skinned on the edge of town, but most of the townsfolk have their reasons to believe he did the deed.



Mardosh Ellenvyr

When those cows gave way to a human woman, any quietly held suspicions came to the foreground and soon after Faenos was arrested.

Mayor Lucivax saw the wreck he made of that poor girl's body and knew Blackwood wouldn't accept an execution, so under cover of night he had Faenos thrown into the Death Pit.

Now, he's half-mad with fury and has given himself over in service to Sable. Over time, his murderous ramblings have caused the necrogrim to listen and understand that people are cruel.

Faenos

Medium humanoid (half-elf), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 156 (24d8 + 48)
Speed 30 ft

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) |

Damage Immunities Necrotic
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Elvish
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Bone Salvage. Faenos has a lot of experience working with the materials he's got in the Death Pit. When using a bone to fight with, he does not get the penalties associated with using an improvised weapon, and instead makes his normal attacks with it.

One With the Horde. Faenos is recognized by the shambling dead as one of their own, his aura tricking them into believing he has no heartbeat or will of his own. As a result, they will not attack him when he is in the Well of Shamblers.

Actions

Multiattack. Faenos makes three attacks with his bone shiv or two with his bone club.

Bone Shiv. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Bone Club. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (3d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage and 7 (2d8) necrotic damage.



Lost Lore

Otherworldly Patron — Necrogrim

You have made a deal with a corrupted guardian spirit, filling you with necromantic energies and protecting you from them to a certain extent. The Necrogrim has great compassion for the undead, both civilized and shambling, and desires to return those shamblers to a place of peace and protect the ones that keep their minds. As the Necrogrim was once a graveyard guardian, it still retains some of those desires and you might be expected to defend the resting places of the dead at times, often including the ancient tombs adventurers like to scour.

Expanded Spells

| Spell level | Spells |
|-------------|--|
| 1 | <i>False life, inflict wounds</i> |
| 2 | <i>Blindness/deafness, gentle repose</i> |
| 3 | <i>Animate dead, speak with dead</i> |
| 4 | <i>Death ward, dominate beast</i> |
| 5 | <i>Contagion, raise dead</i> |

Aura of Undeath

Starting at 1st level your patron bestows the ability to make a connection with the undead. You have resistance to necrotic damage. As an action you can project an aura of undeath in a 20 foot radius sphere centered on you for 1 minute. An undead creature that starts its turn or enters the area for the first time on its turn must make a Charisma saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. If a creature fails its saving throw it becomes indifferent about creatures of your choice that it is hostile toward. This indifference ends if the creature is attacked or harmed by a spell or if it witnesses any of its allies being harmed. When the spell ends, the creature becomes hostile again, unless the GM rules otherwise.

Once you use this feature you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Phantasmal Familiar

Starting at 6th level, a spirit being attaches itself to you as your familiar. The phantasmal familiar must have a corpse to inhabit. You can use your action to touch the

corpse of a Medium or larger creature and cause the bones and sinew of that creature to snap and twist and rearrange themselves into the body of a hound, mimicking the image of your patron. This beast uses the **wolf** statistics with the following changes:

- The phantasmal familiar counts as an undead.
- It has extra hit points equal to your warlock level.
- When you cast a spell with a range of touch, your phantasmal familiar can deliver the spell as if it had cast the spell. Your phantasmal familiar must be within 100 feet of you, and it must use its reaction to deliver the spell when you cast it. If the spell requires an attack roll, you use your attack modifier for the roll.

Once you use this feature you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Awaken Undead

Starting at 10th level you gain the ability to awaken the shambling undead and bring them back to some semblance of consciousness. The ritual to awaken a skeleton or zombie takes 1 hour to complete. A skeleton or zombie must remain within a 10 foot radius ritual circle for the entire length of the ritual. If the undead creature leaves the circle, the ritual fails. If the ritual is completed successfully, the skeleton or zombie gains an Intelligence of 10 and the ability to speak one language you know. They are charmed by you for 24 hours. After this time the awakened skeleton or zombie acts as it would have when it was alive, including any adverse opinions about its current state.

Once you use this feature you can't use it again until you finish a short rest.

Plaguebringer

Starting at 14th level, you become a plaguebringer. As an action you create a pall of doom around you in a 15 foot radius. Shadowy mist fills the area and creatures in the mist must make a Constitution saving throw or suffer disadvantage on Charisma checks and vulnerability to all damage as their flesh decays. This effect lasts for 7 days. Since this spell induces a natural disease in its target, any effect that removes a disease or otherwise ameliorates a disease's effects apply to it.

Once you use this feature you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.



Circlet of bones

Mage Forge

Keeping the Dead in Line. The Radiant Gate was conceptualized by the necromancers of Graazek Necropolis as a way to keep the undead creatures they tend to draw in sequestered and away from what they refer to as the civilized dead. Though it was actually put together by clerics as part of a treaty between the necropolis and the nearby human towns, it is considered a feat of necromancy and currently resides at the entrance to The Death Pit.

The Radiant Gate

Wondrous item, rare

This magical force field comes in five pieces, four to be assembled at the top, bottom, far left and far right of an entryway and connected by a length of silver wiring to allow the magic to flow from one piece to the next. Each piece has a glyph scratched into the surface. The fifth glyph is small enough to fit in a pocket.

When you connect all four pieces a radiant force field appears between them. Each undead within 30 feet of the force field must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. If the creature fails its saving throw, it

is turned for 1 minute or until it takes any damage. A turned creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from the force field as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of it. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action.

The radiant gate deals 14d8 radiant damage to each creature that ends its turn within 5 feet of it. A creature takes the same damage when it comes within 5 feet of the radiant gate for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there. A creature holding the key glyph is immune to this effect.

Circlet of Bones

Wondrous item uncommon, requires attunement

This circlet made from a circle of teeth, rib or knucklebones can be fashioned as a necklace, bracelet or other form of jewelry. It is inscribed with necromantic glyphs while you wear it the shambling undead to ignore you, sensing you only as one of their own. Undead creatures CR ½ or less ignore you. Any spell that detects undead will detect you as an undead creature as well.

Monster Menagerie

Churchgrim

There is a common belief that the soul of the first creature buried in any cemetery lingers and becomes the guardian of that cemetery. To avoid

giving a humanoid this fate, many people instead bury a dog. The resulting entity is called a churchgrim, or just a grim for short. Often manifesting as a big black dog this creature exists to protect the sanctified burial place it is bound to and is typically not dangerous unless someone attempts to disturb the graves.



Churchgrim

Medium undead, neutral good

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)

Speed 45 ft

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) |

Damage Resistances Necrotic, Radiant

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The churchgrim has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 25 (4d10 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Chilling Howl (6). The churchgrim lets out a howl. Everything within 300 feet that can hear it must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) psychic damage on a failed save and half as much on a successful one.

Necrogrim

What do you get when an already potent guardian spirit is consumed with dark magic? The necrogrim is an answer, and can come about in a number of ways. Most of the time a churchgrim exists because a dead hound was buried to guard a cemetery, and it is possible for a churchgrim to become a necrogrim if it is exposed to enough necromantic magic over a long enough period of time, slowly warping the being, but this is not guaranteed and can take years to complete.

The faster way to create a necrogrim is to bury a living dog up to its neck in the earth, with food and water just out of reach. Eventually it will die, and the anger and hate and helplessness it feels in that moment will pull all of that dark energy in. A necrogrim is the result.

Necrogrim

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 156 (24d8 + 48)

Speed 45 ft

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) |

Damage Immunities Necrotic

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The necrogrim has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Nexus of Undeath. The necrogrim draws in other undead entities. Undead creatures with an intelligence of 9 or lower within 300 feet are compelled to congregate around the necrogrim and act as allies.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 41 (7d10 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Summon Shamblers (Recharge 6). The necrogrim magically summons 1d6 zombies and 1d6 skeletons with a 50 percent chance of success. The summoned creatures claw their way up out of the ground in unoccupied spaces within 60 feet of the necrogrim and act as allies. They remain for 10 minutes, until it or the necrogrim dies, or until the necrogrim dismisses them as an action.

Chilling Howl (Recharge 6). The necrogrim lets out a howl. Everything within 300 feet that can hear it must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) psychic damage on a failed save and half as much on a successful one.

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