

4. Trap in ruined tower [XPE = 90, RTXP = 330]

The cellar is dark, but dry. The floor is wooden, sturdy planks laid out across the space. Diagonally opposite the ladder is a fire pit set in a stone plinth, in which appears to be a quantity of charcoal. A half-full bag sits on the floor alongside the plinth.

A couple of antique swords, surprisingly shiny, hang from a rack close to the plinth.

Unless a thorough search of the area is conducted, the ten-foot square pit trap in the centre of the floor will not be noticed. The first person to cross the planks will fall victim to the trap and be dumped unceremoniously to the bottom of the pit.

Well-Camouflaged Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 20. Market Price: 4,400 gp.

2 *Treasure Packets* (5) [Elixir of hiding] [Scroll of Bless Weapon, Scroll of Command Undead]

The walls of the pit are rough, and pock-marked with holes. One hole is slightly larger than the others, and pushed towards the back are a stoppered flask and a brass scroll-case.

As you recover from the indignity of it all, you can hear a scraping sound from one of the holes in the wall. There's a nasty, high-pitched squeaking to accompany it. With a sudden eruption of loose stones and earth, five large, red-eyed rats jump out and swarm over your pitiful form...

5. Dire creature/ swarm disturbed in tower bottom trap (no treasure) [XPE = 100, RTXP=430] Dire Rat CR = 1/3 (80) – use 5 = 400XP, 100XP ea

DIRE RAT
Small Animal

Hit Dice: 1d8+1 (5 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.

Armor Class: 15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +0/-4

Full Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d4 plus disease)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Disease

Special Qualities: Low-light vision, scent

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +3

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 4

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +4, Swim +11

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Finesse^B

Organization: Solitary or pack (11–20)

Challenge Rating: 1/3

Alignment: Always neutral

Dire rats are omnivorous scavengers, but will attack to defend their nests and territories. A dire rat can grow to be up to 4 feet long and weigh over 50 pounds.

Combat

Dire rat packs attack fearlessly, biting and chewing with their sharp incisors.

Disease (Ex): Filth fever—bite, Fortitude DC 11, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: Dire rats have a +8 racial bonus on Swim checks. Dire rats have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Dire rats use their Dexterity modifier for Climb and Swim checks.

Once the rats are disposed of, the tower proves to be surprisingly comfortable and warm, the remaining walls above preventing too much of the storm water from entering. The charcoal fire is easy to light and burns evenly for both cooking and heat. Smoke drifts up through cracks in the walls, doubtless to the surface.

The swords on the wall are clean – the cellar is not damp and they were well-cared for previously. They are not magical in any way, but may be taken as additional weapons for a martial character.

The storm rages until early evening. It blows itself out, the wind drops and the rains calm. But, by now it is dark, the ground is sodden and the stars are bright in the sky. Time to sleep.

Morning dawns bright and clear. The rains have washed away the tracks of the goblin army and the ground is clear. Trying to follow the marauders might be difficult...

Everyone should make a DC 15 Spot Check. Anyone passing this will notice a column of smoke, about a day's travel to the West. Anybody able to make a Knowledge (Local) or Knowledge (History) Check DC 14 will realise that a ruined village lies in that direction – the ideal location for a bunch of goblins to hide out!

After an hour or so travelling across the plains, have the group make two more Spot Checks. The first (DC 10) is to realise that the column of smoke has vanished. The second (DC 12) allows the group to spot the flock of birds circling in the air up ahead. A Knowledge (Nature) DC10 or Survival (DC12) Check will inform that these are Carrion Hawks, eagle-like birds which feed off the dead.

You can see more clearly the scene under the Carrion Hawks: there is a large stone, almost like a slab, lying across the ground. Three goblinoid figures lie on the slab, motionless. About half-a-dozen others lie scattered around on the floor: the shapes of two or three wolves can also be seen. Carrion Hawks are nibbling away at the forms on the floor.

At the edge of the slab lies a leather satchel, of the same type as had been left at the ruins of the tower.

The goblins on the ground were killed by having their throats slit. The three on the slab were sacrificed (to Orcus), their stomachs ripped out (to add to his belly): anyone making a Knowledge (Religion) Check DC 27 will realise this, and realise to whom they have been sacrificed. There are carvings on

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the slab, the same writhing, wriggling script as seen on the walls of the tower. The writing appears fresh, and red, as if written in the blood of the victims sacrificed on the altar.

The satchel contains the Treasure Packet noted below. If the satchel is picked off the slab, or the corpses on the slab are disturbed, then the three sacrificed goblins rise as Zombies and attack the group.

6. Undead Goblins [XPE = 90, RTXP = 520]
3x Undead Goblins CR = 1/2 (as Zombies)
1 Treasure Packet (6) [Oil of Magic Weapon, Arcane Scroll (Ray of Frost), three small topaz gems, 20gp each]

| Zombie Goblin, 1st-Level Warrior | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Size/Type: | Small Undead (Goblinoid, Augmented Humanoid) |
| Hit Dice: | 2d12+3 (16 hp) |
| Initiative: | +0 |
| Speed: | 30 ft. (6 squares), (can't run) |
| Armor Class: | 15 (+1 size, +1 natural, +2 leather armor, +1 light shield), touch 11, flat-footed 15 |
| Base Attack/Grapple: | |
| Attack: | Morningstar +3 melee (1d6+1) or javelin +2 ranged (1d4+1), or slam +3 melee (1d4+1) |
| Full Attack: | -- |
| Space/Reach: | 5 ft./5 ft. |
| Special Attacks: | -- |
| Special Qualities: | DR 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., single actions only |
| Saves: | Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3 |
| Abilities: | Str 13, Dex 11, Con --, Int --, Wis 10, Cha 1 |
| Skills: | none |
| Feats: | Toughness |
| Environment: | Any land and underground |
| Challenge Rating: | 1/2 |
| Alignment: | Usually neutral evil |

As the goblins start their assault, some of the braver Carrion Hawks swoop in to attack the humans who have disturbed their meal. They attempt to fly in and bite at exposed flesh before retreating into the skies. They fly around the terrible scene, lower than the other circling creatures, looking for a chance to drive off the invaders.

7. Carrion creatures at sacrifice site (no treasure) [XPE = 80, RTXP = 600]
4 "vultures" CR = 1/3 (80)

| Carrion Hawks | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Size/Type: | Small Animal |
| Hit Dice: | 3d8+9 (22 hp) |
| Initiative: | +2 |
| Speed: | 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 60 ft. (average) |
| Armor Class: | 15 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13 |
| Base Attack/Grapple: | +2/-2 |
| Attack: | Bite +5 melee (1d4) |
| Full Attack: | Bite +5 melee (1d4) |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Space/Reach: | 5 ft./5 ft. |
| Special Attacks: | -- |
| Special Qualities: | Low-light vision, resistance to disease, scent |
| Saves: | Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3 |
| Abilities: | Str 10, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 4 |
| Skills: | Spot +8, Survival +10 |
| Feats: | Track, Weapon Finesse |
| Environment: | Plain |
| Organization: | Solitary or flock (4-20) |
| Challenge Rating: | 1/3 |
| Alignment: | Always neutral hungry |

The Carrion Hawks, though in need of a good meal, may decide that fighting the humans is not such a good idea. As a Carrion Hawk is killed (or if it gets close to death – 3hp or less), the remaining Hawks should make a Will Save. The starting DC is 12, plus the total killed or driven off to date. Each Hawk makes a Will Save in turn when one of the flock dies or retreats. (cf the old 2E Morale Check system).

The trek towards the ruined village should be easy from hereon in.

Late in the day, as the you approach the location you believe to be that of the Ruined Village, you come across a grisly sight. A goblin, wearing strange symbols and totems, lies staked to the ground. His guts have been cut open and his stomach removed, though (by sheer force of will) he lives – just.

This is B’Gakk, the Shaman from the Goblin Ruins, supplanted by the Hobgoblin Cleric who arrived to convert the tribe to worshipping Orcus. The symbols can be identified as those of Maglubiyet on a Knowledge (Religion) DC12 check. It is obvious that little can be done for him apart from easing his pain and aiding his passing. But gentleness and kindness can go a long way, and B’Gakk can offer information on his ex-tribe to anyone assisting his final hour.

8. **Skill Challenge** Obtain information on goblin village from dying shaman. 3 successes before 3 failures (Gather Information, Intimidate, similar, plus Heal to ease the pain) DC 16. Can determine forces, locations of guards, and presence of “new cleric.” Total possible equivalent to CR1 encounter, each info worth CR 1/3.

[XPE = 60, RTXP = 660]

1 *Treasure Packet* (7) [Bracers of Armour +1 – 1 minor]

B’Gakk, Male NE Goblin Cleric L3

Abilities: CON +2, WIS +2

Skills: Heal +6, Sense Motive +6

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +6

Hit Points: -7 (normally 21)

Armour: Bracers of Armour +1

Weapons: none.