

EXILE

EGYPTIAN ADVENTURES

HAMUNAPTRA

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX 1ST-LEVEL CHARACTERS

- CREDITS -

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The following text is Open Gaming Content: Book One: all game mechanics from Chapters 2 and 3; Book Three: rules for Charioteering, all game statistics for NPCs, all of Chapters 3, 4, and 5.



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INTRODUCTION

Exile is an *Egyptian Adventures: Hamunaptra* adventure designed for four to six 1st-level characters (PCs). You can adapt it with a little effort to accommodate parties with more or less characters, or for PCs of a higher level. Throughout this adventure, each scene, where appropriate, includes scaling information to modify the adventure as needed. Finally, though designed as an introductory adventure to the world of Khemti, with some adaptation, you could use this adventure in nearly any setting.

BACKGROUND

Far away from the Serpent's Teeth Islands is a great continent holding the fabulous land of Khemti, and the bright jewel of Hamunaptra. Though no longer the largest city in Khemti, Hamunaptra is still the gem of the lands, the oldest city in all of Creation and the site from which all life sprang. Indeed, some say Osiris himself founded the city. Hamunaptrians still strive for excellence in all things, encouraged by the Pharaoh's policy of enticing the most skilled to take up residence in his city, making Ta-Mehtu's capital the best and brightest in the entire kingdom.

Even great thinkers and priests have come here, hoping to learn and better themselves in the great centers of knowledge for which the capital is famous. Hamunaptra, being a center of learning and civilization, attracts far more than those excellent artisans and thinkers; it draws those of foul purpose and evil design. One such visitor is a strange man, of odd dress and speech. He claims to come from a distant land called Freeport. Forever barred from returning there, he came to Khemti to start a new life.

Of particular interest to this foreigner is a priest, a *wa'eb* (pure one). According to rumor this peerless holy man carried an item of great profanity, the *ankh of darkness*, which he brought to the city to be destroyed in a special ceremony dedicated to the patron god. It was said the item's destruction would bring favor to the land and all of the Ta-Mehtu, though in what ways none could say. However, the end of the device did not happen, for Mesret, the odd man from across the sea, sent killers to infiltrate the *wa'eb's* rooms and steal the magic item. The priest tried to stop them, but their numbers were too great and they succeeded in murdering the *wa'eb* and stealing the treasure.

Mesret claimed the item for himself, leaving his killers in the city to hide his trail. With his anpur servant, he fled out into

the desert to an old tomb he claimed for his home. He carried the item, hoping to unlock its secrets and bring glory to the Unspeakable One. However, his servant knew the evil in the ankh, and tried to destroy it. The cultist murdered the gnoll, plotting to animate his corpse by using the power in the ankh to make him a more obedient slave.

SYNOPSIS

After the grisly murder of the *wa'eb*, a lesser priest named Khefu summons the adventurers to the Temple of Osiris. Seeking to advance his station by recovering the cursed relic, he entreats the heroes to find the killers and bring them to justice. Once the adventurers agree, they can explore the city of Hamunaptra, gathering information to lead them on the right path.

While checking out the city, they are attacked by a squad of killers. Assuming they survive the encounter, they learn who is behind the attack and where the relic is headed — to an old tomb in the desert. The adventurers leave the city and track their quarry over the shifting sands until they find the entrance to the tomb, wherein they will face and confront the mastermind behind the murder.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Getting the PCs involved should be easy. The best way is if one of the characters is actually a priest of Osiris; this should be likely if they're starting in Hamunaptra, though a priest of any god other than Set will do fine. Alternatively, if there is a Ghaffir in the group, assume that character was one of the guards on duty when the attack occurred. In shame, the character should be more than willing to retrieve the missing object, recruiting his comrades to help him succeed in his mission.

Having the characters be visitors from another part of Khemti is another great hook, for the young priest who hires them would probably turn to outsiders first to better conceal his efforts. Alternatively, if the PCs are evil, they could hear about the missing relic in Hamunaptra's underworld, and move to seize it for themselves.

Whatever you decide, the adventure opens with the PCs going to meet Khefu in the Temple's Courtyard, so work out a plausible reason why the characters are together and willing to take the job.

HAMUNAPTRA

Patron Deity: Osiris.

Population: 118,784 (Human 72%, Half-elf 10%, Halfling 9%, Dwarf 5%, Other 4%).

Ruler: Pharaoh Wennefer II (*human male pharaoh aristocrat 5/shenu 14, LN*).

Other Important Figures: Semna, Court Vizier (*human male shenu 10/priest of ma'at 6, LN*), Inebi, Prophet of Osiris (*halfling male priest 8/lector priest 8, NG*), General Qarun (*human male beqenu 15, LN*), Khendjer, Royal Bodyguard (*human male ghaffir 11/wildwalker 4, LG*).

Resources: Beer, bronze, dairy, gold, grains, meat, oil, produce, stonework, woodcrafts.

For a map of the city, see **The Book of Gates** in *Egyptian Adventures: Hamunaptra* page 29.

PART ONE: WELCOME TO HAMUNAPTRA

This section details the events as they unfold in the city. The PCs first meet Khefu, who informs them of the situation and then allows the characters to explore Hamunaptra looking for clues. Part One concludes with a showdown between the PCs and the killers, revealing to them the purpose of the attack and the possible location of the missing Ankh of Darkness.

A. KHEFU AND THE TEMPLE

Read aloud or paraphrase the following text.

Though it's morning in fabled white-walled Hamunaptra, the day is already hot and stifling. The sun is oppressive as it beats down on streets of fitted stone. The Temple of Osiris is a great structure, situated near the river so that its smells waft in the air. Accorded a position of honor in the city, the Temple stands above the rest, looking down on the press of homes and shops filling the various districts. The Temple is of a simple design, at least when compared to the Citadel, the other prominent structure visible from the open courtyard you stand in. The place around you possesses an austere majesty that is both awing and humbling.

In the courtyard, somber priests cross the stone floor, while servants sweep dust and sand from the rocks. A

fountain of precious water trickles in the center. To either side, stone statues hold up the roof, offering precious shade. Coming out from between two of those pillars is a young priest dressed in the vestments of his faith, with a determined expression and none too few beads of sweat on his brow. It seems this must be your contact.

Khefu, despite his outward appearance of resolve, is terrified. He knows what he's about to do is wrong and could land him in terrible trouble, but his ambition clouds common sense. When he comes within a few paces of the PCs, he welcomes them in a low voice, and urges them to follow him to a shadowed place in the courtyard. PCs looking for hints and succeeding on a DC 20 Sense Motive check get the feeling Khefu is nervous from the slight tremor in his voice and his outward overconfidence.

Assuming they follow him to the shadows, Khefu relates the following information. Read or paraphrase.

Friends, I've asked you to come because I have it on good word from shared acquaintances that you know the value of discretion, and the matter at hand is one that demands absolute secrecy. Two nights past, heinous murderers breached the security of this temple. Who was slain? A visiting wa'eb... his identity is unimportant for the likes of you, and for what I ask, as the killers were evidently not after him. This was no simple

RUMORS IN HAMUNAPTRA

If you wish, have the characters make Gather Information checks at the start of the game to see what information they know prior to the start of the adventure. Depending on their check result, they can learn any of the following information:

DC Rumor

- 5 There was a disturbance in the Temple of Osiris.
- 10 There was a disturbance in the Temple of Osiris. No big deal; such things are common in these dark times. Still, they say the temple is improving its defenses.
- 15 There was an attack on the Temple of Osiris a couple of days ago. No one knows what happened, or if anyone was hurt. A priest in the Temple has made some discreet inquiries looking for warriors. Who knows for what purpose?
- 20 A priest of Osiris was butchered a couple of days ago. No one knows why or how, though word has it that the killers were really short; in any event, the Temple is keen on getting justice. They say an important priest named Khefu is hiring warriors to track down and kill the killers.
- 25 A wa'eb was murdered the day before yesterday in the Temple of Osiris. Word has it the murderers were small, maybe those accursed gnomes who haunt the markets. They say something very important was stolen from his rooms. An acolyte named Khefu is looking for help in recovering the missing object, and to bring the culprits to justice.

killing, for they had theft in mind. Anyone who stood on that killing floor would have met the same end.

<beat> Yes. Indeed. An important object was stolen from that room, a cursed ankh purported to have the power over life and death, to circumvent the natural order, and create blasphemies to the eyes of man and god. While the priests of my order are doing what they can to recover the item and bring the thieves to justice, I find this is an excellent opportunity to help both myself, my faith, and, of course, you.

So, what I need from you is to track down the killers and recover the art... ahem... ankh before the rest of the priesthood can. Your low profiles in this matter will be of invaluable assistance, for knowledge of the attack and theft have not been announced by the priests, but rumors fly on the winds. You are not to discuss this with any priest or ghaffi. Do not nose around the temple, lest my... ahem... betters catch wind of what we're doing. And, if you bring me back the ankh, I'll reward your band with 1,000 debens and provide free healing for a month.

From the eyewitness accounts, the intruders were short, possibly halflings, but more likely those despicable gnomes. They took only the wa'eb's life and the item, leaving the sack of unmarked silver coins untouched, and ignoring the fine materials decorating the room.

Again, you must work quickly lest the other agents of the temple find the ankh before you. If the ankh resurfaces before you return, don't bother coming to the temple, I shall disavow knowledge of you.

If asked, Khefu suggests the PCs begin their search in the marketplaces, for it's said there has been an influx of gnome merchants. Perhaps some thinly disguised threats and a little muscle will loosen their tongues. Khefu is unwilling to increase payment for this task; it is all he has. However, if the PCs negotiate, and succeed a DC 20 Diplomacy check, Khefu will extend the time of free healing to up to six months, but no more. If the PCs are rude, attack him, or in any other way offend him, he departs. Attempting to blackmail Khefu won't work either, because the Temple will take the priest's side over that of outsiders. Under no circumstances will Khefu allow the PCs to see the room.

B. THIEVES IN THE MARKET (EL 2)

Much of Hamunaptra's mercantile activity lies beyond the Osiran Colossi, outside of the city's walls. Though contained beyond the city, it is still a busy place, with lowborn merchants hawking their wares, urchins pilfering purses, and unsavory types walking the alleys between stalls. Tough bodyguards stare out from kohl painted eyes, watching customers with suspicion while their hands rest on great scimitars. Nevertheless, the majority of the people here are honest citizens, who want nothing more than to buy grains, vegetables, or fabrics and finished goods legitimately.

When the PCs arrive in the market, allow them to look around, shop, and do whatever they wish. This is an excellent

opportunity for characters to pick up last minute items, make contacts, or feel the pulse of the city. The merchants are conspicuously closemouthed about anything involving the Temple of Osiris, the arrival of gnomes, or anything else involving the death of the wa'eb. If a PC makes a DC 20 Sense Motive check, she can tell the merchants are hiding something, but they will not divulge any information unless threatened physically, which brings city guards in 1d4 rounds (use statistics for 2nd-level warriors in the DMG).

Once the PCs exhaust their options and seem to be at a loss for what to do next, have them make a DC 20 (the Hide check for one of the killers) Spot check to notice a small form wrapped in leper's rags watching them from an alley between two red clay buildings. Once the "leper" notices that the PCs are on to him, he slips back into the alley in the hopes of luring the PCs to his gang of thugs. Assuming the PCs follow the small man, read or paraphrase the following.

The alley before you is about 20-feet deep. A few wicker barrels and crates litter the sandy ground. The lighting here is bad, and there are many long and dark shadows to provide plenty of hiding spaces. At the opposite end of the short road, you see a man leading an ox, as well as other passersby, but there is no sign of the leper.

Set-Up: If the PCs don't take the bait, either by not going to the alley or not entering it, the gnomes ambush them at an appropriate time later that night, preferably against only one or two PCs. Otherwise, once the PCs enter the alley, two gnomes dressed in leper garb stand up from their crouching positions to hurl darts. Two more gnomes rain darts from the rooftops on either side.

The alley is poorly lit; canvas tarps overhead on the open-air rooftops block much of the light. It is bright enough to see normally, however, shadows cast here and there offer concealment (20% miss chance) and plenty of places to hide. The sounds of the street and the nearby markets (assuming the attack comes during the day) mask most sounds of fighting, unless some one screams or casts a particularly flashy spell. There are no auras in place.

Creatures: The four gnome killers are part of the squad who stole the ankh from the wa'eb and murdered him. They were left behind to make sure there were no loose ends. Two gnomes stand on either rooftop and each has cover (+4 AC), while two more are in shadowy zones in the alley and each of them has concealment (20% miss chance).

KILLERS (4)

Sutekhra expert 1; CR 1/2; Small humanoids (gnome); HD 1d6+1; hp 4; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +0; Grap -3; Atk +3 melee (1d3+1/18-20, sutekhra dagger) or +3 ranged (1d3+1 plus poison, dart); Full Atk +3 melee (1d3+1/18-20, sutekhra dagger) or +3 ranged (1d3+1 plus poison, dart); SA sutekhra traits; SQ darkvision 60 ft., speak with vermin 1/day, sutekhra traits; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Hide +12, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Open Locks +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +3; Stealthy.

Poison (Ex): Injury DC 13; initial 1 Con; secondary 1d2 Con.

Languages: Common, Gnome, Elf, Gnoll.

Possessions: Small suit of leather armor, Small sutekhra dagger, 4 Small darts, one vial of greenblood oil, 1d4×5 gp.

Tactics: The gnomes on the roofs launch one dart per round for four rounds. Only the first darts launched are covered with greenblood oil. The gnomes in the alley throw poisoned darts on the first round and then draw their daggers. On the following round, the gnomes in the alley, assuming they can, charge the nearest character, while their allies above target spellcasters first. The gnomes fight to the death.

If the combat persists more than four rounds, a local notice and calls for the watch. A group of 1d4+1 watchmen (2nd-level human warriors) arrive in 1d6 rounds. The gnomes on the rooftops flee if the watch arrives. The two in the alley fight to the death.

Treasure: Once the PCs defeat the gnomes, and assuming the watch does not interfere, searching the bodies reveals the listed possessions. In addition, all four gnomes have identical tattoos on their foreheads: a sharply curved talon. A character that succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or DC 20 bardic knowledge check knows the tattoo is the symbol of a local gang of thugs called the Fangs of Set. Outlawed in the city, the Fangs are a clandestine group bent on undermining the Temple of

Osiris' influence in the city. Rumor holds that the gang works for The Headsman of Set, an agent and killer in service to the Pharaoh of Nekhenset, of Lower Khemti. Feel free to expand this information to suit your own campaign.

Finally, one of the gnomes on the roof carries a map leading to an old, previously forgotten vault about a mile east from the city. The map itself is written in code and the directions themselves are not clear. Succeeding on a DC 15 Decipher Script check will provide enough information for the characters to reach the vault. Otherwise, the characters will need to find someone to translate it for them, such as using a *speak with dead* spell on a dead gnome, returning the map to Khefu who can properly translate it, or through some other means as you devise. Once the map is adequately translated, the PCs can follow its directions to the hidden vault in the desert, described in **Part Two**.

Scaling: To increase the difficulty of this encounter, make the gnomes rogues instead of experts. The killers gain sneak attack +1d6 and trapfinding. In addition, their Reflex save increases to +4, while their Will save drops to -1. Add Balance +6 and Search +6 to their list of skills. This increases the challenge to EL 4.

To decrease the difficulty of this encounter, change the killers to kobolds using statistics straight from the *MM*. This reduces the challenge to EL 1.

PART TWO: THE VAULT

Allow the party to adequately supply themselves for a trek into the desert. The exact location of the vault is unimportant; place it anywhere within a day's walk from Hamunaptra. Though this adventure assumes that the PCs encounter nothing along the way, feel free to add an encounter, but no more than one encounter and with an Encounter Level no greater than 2. Otherwise, the characters will be too depleted to survive the Vault.

Once the PCs reach the site of the vault, read or paraphrase the following text.

Before you is a mound that, at first glance, seems nothing more than a jumble of stones. However, as you draw closer, you spy sections of finished materials - a few painted sections suggesting an old wall, or the upswept curve of a statue's arm. The map places the entrance to the vault here.

I. ENTRANCE (EL 3)

The entrance to the vault is easy to find (DC 5 Search check), but not so easy to survive. Guarding the entrance is a sand serpent, a strange elemental creature found only in the deep desert. Once the PCs enter **Room 1**, read or paraphrase the following text.

Beyond the cleft in the tumble of stones is a narrow dark passage that soon opens into a larger room. The walls here are those of the outer rubble, but each stone suggests that it once was part of a larger structure, as does the smooth tile peeking out from the piles of sand on the floor. Beyond, on the opposite side of the entrance, is a stairwell that descends into the darkness.

Set-Up: A character succeeding on a DC 10 Search check sees human-sized footprints in the sand moving towards the stairs. Succeeding on a DC 20 Listen check allows the listener to hear the sound of air whistling from down the stairs. Succeeding on a DC 35 Listen check allows the character to hear the sound of shifting stone far deeper in the vault. There are no auras in this room. The walls, floor, and ceiling are safe and solid despite the haphazard construction.

Once the PCs move 10-feet into the room, the sand on the floor swirls and coalesces into the form of a six foot long snake that strikes out at the lead character. Unless the characters have a light source, the room is shadowy, granting everyone inside concealment (20% miss chance), though the sand viper has tremorsense out to 60 feet.

Creature: Mesret the necromancer placed this sand viper here to serve as a guardian and to destroy or drive off intruders. The serpent will attack anyone other than its master.

SAND VIPER

Medium elemental (earth); CR 3; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grap +0; Atk +4 melee (1d4–1 plus poison, bite); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4–1 plus poison, bite); SA poison; SQ scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +11, Escape Artist +23, Hide +12, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +7; Weapon Finesse.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 11, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution based.

Tactics: Being a creature of low intelligence, the sand viper strikes against the closest opponent. It changes targets based on whomever damages it last. It fights to the death.

Development: Even if there are loud sounds of combat, Mesret believes his guardian is competent enough to handle any minor threats, and so does not come to investigate. The dread skeletons, however, move to take positions on either side of the corridor — **Room 2** — and ready actions to throw a poisoned dart at the first person to come into their room.

Treasure: The sand viper has no treasure.

Scaling: To increase the difficulty of this encounter, make the base creature a large viper. This results in the following changes: HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +7; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +2; Grap +6; Atk +4 melee (1d4 plus poison, bite); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4 plus poison, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; Will +2; Hide +8, Spot +6, Swim +8. This increases the challenge to EL 4.

To decrease the difficulty of this encounter, replace the sand viper with a small fire elemental using statistics straight from the *MM*. This reduces the challenge to EL 1.

2. FIRST CORRIDOR

Read or paraphrase the following text.

At the bottom of the steeply declining stairs is a wide corridor, its walls painted with hieroglyphics, though many are old, chipped, and worn away by time and irreverent raiders. The floor here is dusty, and there is an obvious path winding through the grit to a larger room at the end of the corridor.

The hieroglyphs, if a character can read them or make a successful DC 20 Decipher Script check, tell of the internment of a wealthy merchant of questionable character. So wealthy was he that he could afford to construct a tomb of this scope. His life, however, suggests excess, decadence, and cruelty. Any further information is impossible due to the damage.

A DC 25 Listen check reveals unintelligible mutters from ahead. A DC 10 Listen check reveals the sound of air blowing nearby and ahead. Otherwise, this corridor is empty and contains nothing of interest.

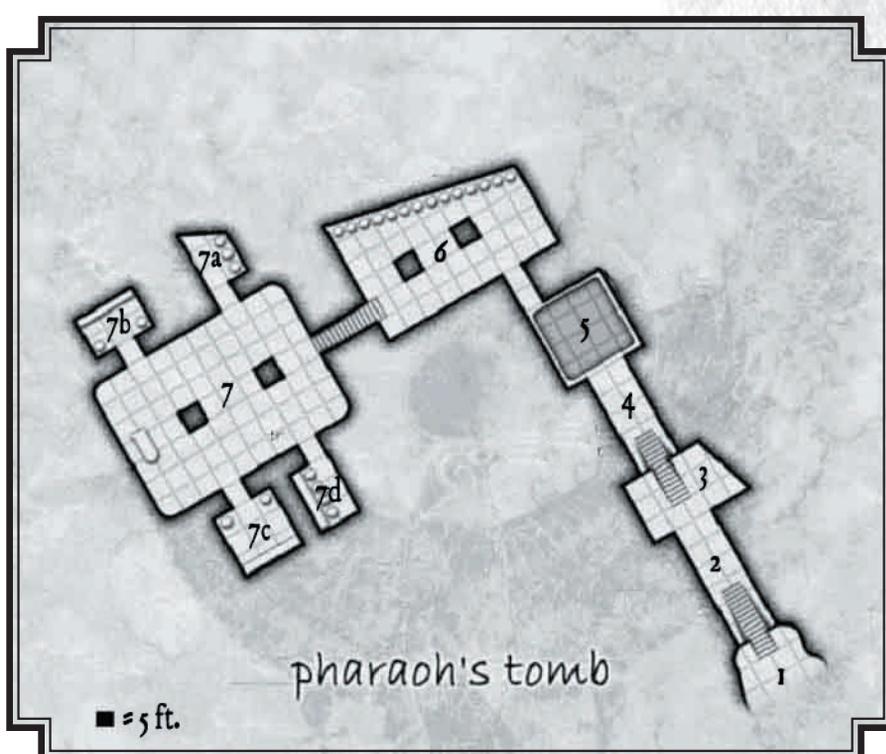
3. ANTECHAMBER (EL 2)

If the PCs were loud while fighting, the dread skeletons are ready for them. The following text assumes that the creatures are hidden. Read or paraphrase the following text.

At the end of the corridor is a larger and odd-shaped room, with one wall slanted and narrowing the room deeper inside. Another set of steps carved from stone descend further into the blackness of the place. Shattered bits of pottery lay scattered on the floor along with a few splintered pieces of wood. Like the corridor, the floor in this room is dusty, but it is obvious there has been much more movement for no obvious trail exists here. The walls and ceiling bear hieroglyphics, but these are even more defaced than the others and are completely unintelligible due to graffiti and soot.

Set-Up: Unless the PCs use a light source, this room is dark, granting everyone without darkvision total concealment. When the first PC crosses into this room, the dread skeletons attack.

Creatures: Mesret rewards loyalty with undeath. He murdered his last two gnome killers and stripped away the flesh until only bones remained. Using the *ankh of darkness*, he animated them as dread skeletons and ordered them to stand guard and attack any intruders.



DREAD SKELETON SUTEKHRA (2)

CR 1; Small undead (augmented gnome)*; HD 1d12; hp 6 each; Init +11; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grap -3; Atk +3 melee (1d3+1/18-20, sutekhra dagger) or +3 melee (1d3+1, claw) or +4 ranged (1d3+1 plus poison, dart); Full Atk +3 melee (1d3+1/18-20, sutekhra dagger) or +3 melee (1d3+1, claw) or +4 ranged (1d3+1 plus poison, dart); SA command skeletons, sutekhra traits, unnatural aura; SQ damage reduction 10/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., immune to cold, speak with vermin 1/day, sutekhra traits, turn resistance +2; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 12.

*These dread skeletons use the dread skeleton template presented in Green Ronin's *Advanced Bestiary*.

Skills and Feats: Hide +13, Listen +5, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +3; Improved Initiative^B, Stealthy.

Command Skeletons (Su): Dread skeletons can automatically command all normal skeletons within 30 feet as free actions. In addition, normal skeletons never attack dread skeletons unless compelled.

Poison (Ex): Injury DC 13; initial 1 Con; secondary 1d2 Con.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Any creature of the animal type that comes within 30 feet of a dread skeleton automatically becomes panicked and remains so until the distance between it and the dread skeleton is at least 30 feet.

Languages: Common, Gnome, Elf, Gnoll.

Possessions: Small suit of leather armor, Small sutekhra dagger, 4 Small darts, one vial of greenblood oil, 1d4×5 gp.

Tactics: The dread skeletons start by throwing a poisoned dart on the first round. On the following round, being intelligent, unlike ordinary skeletons, they draw their sutekhra daggers and move to flank any obvious priests. Failing that, they focus their attacks against one opponent at a time.

Development: When the PCs reach this room, Mesret has successfully animated the anpur corpse, however, he lacks the means to control it. Mesret flees to one of the satellite rooms and hides until the mummy leaves. Sounds of combat from this room draw no response.

A DC 10 Search check of this room reveals an old campfire consisting of dung and a few funerary wrappings. A DC 15 Survival check can tell a character that the campfire is probably years old. There is nothing else of interest in this room.

Treasure: Aside from the equipment each dread skeleton carriers, there is no additional treasure in this room.

Scaling: To increase the difficulty of this encounter, add 2 more dread skeletons. This increases the challenge to EL 4.

To decrease the difficulty of this encounter, reduce the number of dread skeletons by one. This reduces the challenge to EL 1.

4. SECOND CORRIDOR (EL 2)

This room is **Trapped!** The two 10-foot squares at the bottom of the steps are trapped. Allow the lead descending PC a DC 15 Spot check to notice heavy damage to the floor there, along with a few loose bricks scattered about. Otherwise, the first character stepping off the stairs triggers the trap.

Bricks from Ceiling: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; repair reset; Atk +12 melee (2d6, bricks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Once the trap is sprung or disabled read or paraphrase the following text.

The stairs leading down open into another corridor similar to the one you just left behind you. Strangely though, the walls here are blank, fitted blocks of sandstone. You can't but help hear the whistling of air coming from a shadowy pit at the end of the tunnel.

Set-Up: Unless the PCs have some sort of light source, this room is dark. The sound of wind coming from **Room 5** increases the DC of all Listen checks by +5. Furthermore, exposed flames have a 25% chance of being extinguished each round.

Development: This room is empty and uninteresting save for the trap at the foot of the stairs. When the characters make it half way down this corridor, the imuit hyena in Room 6 is alerted to the presence of intruders and waits patiently for the PCs.

Treasure: There is no treasure in this room.

Scaling: To increase the difficulty of this encounter, have the trap deal 4d6 damage and increase the Search DC by +2. This increases the challenge to EL 4.

To decrease the difficulty of this encounter, remove the trap entirely.

5. RITUAL SHAFT (EL 2)

Read or paraphrase the following text.

This large shaft is the source of the winds you've heard. Whistling from the cyclopean depths is a constant rush of air that whips dust into swirling vortices as it spins up a shaft of equal darkness. Peering down the shaft, you see it descends into impenetrable darkness as it does above. The walls here are painted with perverse images of lost spirits wandering in the underworld. Beyond the shaft, about 40 feet across, is a narrow corridor, dimly lit, that opens into a larger chamber. A row of iron rung pairs are set into the left wall every two or so feet, with the top rungs evidently designed for handholds and the bottom for feet.

Set-Up: When Mesret came to this tomb, one of his gnome killers triggered the trap in this shaft by falling 50 feet down before the impact killed him. As a result of the accident, he triggered a *permanent gust of wind* to blow up the shaft, making crossing difficult. Mesret had his other gnome servant hammer iron bars into the left wall to make passage across the pit possible.

The sound of the winds imposes a -6 circumstance penalty to all Listen checks. Without a light source, this room is shadowy from the dim lighting of Room 6, granting every one in and around the shaft concealment (20% miss chance).

Development: Crossing the ritual shaft looks more dangerous than it is. A DC 5 Climb is required to make the passage across by using the rungs. If the PCs suspect the rungs are trapped, other

routes may be possible, though more difficult. The winds blow levitating characters up the shaft until they strike the ceiling 50 feet above (2d6 points of nonlethal damage on impact). A *fly* or similar spell will allow characters to cross the gap. Alternatively, characters could simply climb down the rope and walk across the floor of the shaft to the other side. If so, they discover the shattered remains of one of Mesret's hired killers.

Treasure: At the bottom of the ritual shaft are the remains of a gnome killer, which includes a Small suit of leather armor, Small sutekhra dagger, *potion of cure light wounds*, and 10 gp.

6. VESTIBULE (EL 3)

One imuit hyena, a headless undead animal guardian, protects this room. The creature hides behind one of the columns. Thanks to its blindsense ability, it knows exactly where the PCs are. Once a character makes a move towards the short hall to room 7, the imuit attacks. The imuit hyena's head lies in the third canopic jar from the right.

Read or paraphrase the following text when the PCs enter this room.

Two fat columns dominate the center of this irregular chamber. Each column is smooth, with red and gold patterns painted near the top and base. Wedged into a crack in one of the left-hand columns is a sunrod casting a steady light on the entire chamber, and illuminating hieroglyphic burial scenes. In one, a rabid hyena is beheaded by priests and its carcass wrapped tight in funerary wrappings. Beneath the pictogram, arranged in a row against the back wall, are a series of small sealed jars, also painted with symbols and patterns.

Set-Up: When the PCs first enter this room, have each make a DC 11 Listen check to hear the quiet tread of the approaching imuit hyena as it creeps forward in the shadow of a column to charge the lead character. Characters who succeed on a DC 20 Listen check hear a moaning and shuffling noise coming from **Room 7**. The room is brightly lit from the sunrod. There is a faint spiciness to the air.

Those who failed the DC 11 Listen check are surprised when the imuit hyena charges.

Creature: The imuit hyena, a headless undead guardian, is charged with protecting **Room 7**. Created decades ago, Mesret used the *ankh of darkness* to seize control of the creature. The key to defeating the undead is its head, which lies in the seventh canopic jar from the left. A character who succeeds a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check knows that to put these creatures to rest, their heads must first be destroyed. A *detect undead* or *detect magic* spell will reveal an imuit's head for what it is, and the head can be the subject of a *locate object* spell like any other object. Each jar has a hardness of 2 and 5 hit points.

IMUIT HYENA

CR 3; Medium undead; HD 2d12; hp 16 each; Init +1; Spd 50 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grap +4; Atk +3 melee (1d4+3, claw); Full Atk +3 melee (1d4+3, claw); SA fear aura; SQ blindsight 100 ft., fast healing 5, low-light vision, scent, separate head, undead traits; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 13, Con —, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +2 (+6 in tall grass or heavy undergrowth), Listen +5, Spot +3; Alertness, Toughness.

Fear Aura (Su): All creatures within 30-ft.-radius, must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or become panicked for 2 rounds. If cornered, the affected creature cowers. On a successful save, the creature is shaken for one round, but cannot be affected by the imuit's fear aura for 24 hours.

Separate Head (Ex): An imuit's head contains the creature's animating and directing force. The head has an AC 5 and 2 hp. If the imuit's head is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, it loses its blindsight and fast healing abilities, leaving it blind and vulnerable.

Tactics: The imuit hyena charges the lead character in the hopes of containing the intruder to the hall leading to **Room 5**. If any character gets past the undead, it retreats to prevent passage down the stairs to **Room 7**. Finally, it attacks anyone who moves to investigate the jars, though it will sacrifice itself to prevent anyone getting past this room. The imuit hyena fights to the death.

Development: When combat begins in this room, the anpur mummy begins his search for his creator. He locates Mesret in five rounds, at which point the mummy attacks. Characters in this room can hear Mesret's shrieks and cries for help by succeeding on a DC 5 Listen check. If the characters do nothing to help the evil cultist, the mummy kills his creator in three rounds before climbing the stairs to deal with the intruders.

Treasure: There are 14 canopic jars in this room. One contains the head of the imuit hyena. The rest hold the viscera of the original inhabitants of this tomb, except for one holding 150 gp and an *amulet of natural armor +1*.

Scaling: To increase the difficulty of this encounter, add 1 more imuit hyena. This increases the challenge to EL 5.

To decrease the difficulty of this encounter, replace the imuit hyena with four zombie cats, using the following stats:

ZOMBIE CATS (4)

Tiny undead; CR 1/4; HD 1d12; hp 9 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grap -11; Atk +0 melee (1d2-3, claw) or Slam +0 (1d3-2); Full Atk +0 melee (1d2-3, 2 claws), -5 melee (1d3-3, bite) or Slam +0 (1d3-2), -5 melee (1d3-3, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ single actions only, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 5, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

This reduces the challenge to EL 1.

7. BURIAL CHAMBER (EL 2)

Mesret killed his assistant and brought the body here to test the limits of his power with the *ankh of darkness*. When he animated the corpse, he created a mummy but lacked the means or the power to control it. Not able to flee because of the PCs, Mesret hoped to hide until the intruders could deal with the undead. Mesret escaped the mummy because it is too slow.

The following text assumes the mummy still casts about looking for its creator. Read or paraphrase the following text based on the exact circumstances of this room.

Two large square pillars support the low ceiling of this burial chamber. Scraps of old linen litter the floor along

with splotches of old blood mixed with sand. The room stinks of rot, overriding the sweet smells of incense and spices. On the far end of the room, an opened sarcophagus lies on a bier with a dried and desiccated corpse hanging out of it. Four side passages lead to smaller rooms.

Set-Up: The time it takes the PCs to reach this room determines the circumstances of this encounter. For the five rounds after the PCs first engage the imuit hyena in **Room 6**, the mummy in this room searches for Mesret. Roll 1d4 to determine the exact location of the mummy. On a 1-2, the mummy is in **Room 7**; on a 3, the mummy is in **Room 7a**; on a 4, the mummy is in **Room 7b**. On round six, the mummy finds Mesret and combat between the two begins. On round seven, reduce Mesret's hit points to 5. On round eight, Mesret is unconscious. Finally, on round nine, the mummy kills the priest. On the following rounds, the mummy leaves **Room 7** in search of the intruders.

Creature: Before Mesret ever brought his accomplices to this tomb, he explored it, and, with a little luck, he identified the stair trap (see **Room 4** for details). Sensing its usefulness, he left it intact, and set about working to acquire the *ankh*. Mesret would find a use this trap, because his assistant, an Anpur, was not privy to the identity of the item the cultist sought. And, when the lackey learned its powers, he argued with his employer, urging Mesret to destroy it. The cultist, fearing treachery from his assistant, sent him ahead to the tomb to prepare the way. The Anpur had never been to the tomb before, so when he descended the stairs he inadvertently triggered the trap, sending a cascade of stones and bricks tumbling down on his head.

He did not die immediately; his death was slow and awful, the shattered bones in his body sending paralyzing shocks throughout his body. In fact, he was still alive, delirious, when Mesret finally arrived at the temple. The cultist made no effort to help his minion and left him to die alone in the dark, tormented by *sutekhra* blades in the hands of expert carvers.

Mesret used the *ankh of darkness* on the gnoll, thinking to create something more powerful than skeletons. But, Mesret did not anticipate the hate that somehow remained in the body of his one-time servant. So when he animated the corpse with the artifact, he spawned an uncontrollable mummy, flailing about on broken limbs. The extensive damage to the body has made it somewhat weaker and slower than normal mummies are. Its legs are shattered and lack the strength, even in unlife, to support it.

Its goal is to find and destroy his former master. However, upon seeing the PCs, it struggles forward to attack, pulling itself along the floor, its ruined legs useless to support it.

MUMMY

Anpur warrior 1; CR 2; Medium undead*; HD 1d12; hp 12; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +1; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+6, slam); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+6, slam); SA despair, disease; SQ damage reduction 5/–, fire vulnerability; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 22, Dex 13, Con —, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 13.

*This mummy uses the template presented in Green Ronin's *Advanced Bestiary*.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +7, Listen +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5; Ability Focus (Despair).

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of a mummy, the viewer must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same mummy's despair ability for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mummy Rot (Su): Supernatural disease—slam, Fortitude DC 11, incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Unlike normal diseases, mummy rot continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or is cured as described below.

Mummy rot is a powerful curse, not a natural disease. A character attempting to cast any conjuration (healing) spell on a creature afflicted with mummy rot must succeed on a DC 20 caster level check, or the spell has no effect on the afflicted character.

To eliminate mummy rot, the curse must first be broken with *break enchantment* or *remove curse* (requiring a DC 20 caster level check for either spell), after which a caster level check is no longer necessary to cast healing spells on the victim, and the mummy rot can be magically cured as any normal disease.

An afflicted creature that dies of mummy rot shrivels away into sand and dust that blows away into nothing at the first wind.

Tactics: Once the mummy notices the PCs, it attacks relentlessly, pulling its pathetic form across the floor to reach them. All characters that see the mummy have to make Will saves to resist its despair ability. It focuses its attacks on anything in range, relentlessly fighting until it's destroyed.

Development: Mesret, if still alive, tries to sneak out of the room if an opportunity presents itself. Otherwise, he keeps an eye on the combat, assessing the PCs ability to handle the monster. If the characters are badly injured from the combat, Mesret emerges and fights his way past them. If the characters dispatch the mummy easily, he tries to flee when the moment is right.

Treasure: The mummy has no treasure.

Scaling: To increase the difficulty of this encounter, increase the mummy's Speed to 30 feet, and Strength score to 30, making the following changes: Grap +11; Atk +11 melee (1d6+10, slam); Full Atk +11 melee (1d6+10, slam). This increases the challenge to EL 4.

To decrease the difficulty of this encounter, replace the mummy with a ghoul. This reduces the challenge to EL 1.

7A. NORTH ANNEX

Read or paraphrase the following text.

This small, oddly shaped room is empty except for three clay vessels painted with scenes depicting burial rites.

This room is dark. There is nothing of interest in this room. The vessels contain spare wrappings.

7B. WEST ANNEX (EL 3)

Mesret hides here underneath the table, assuming the mummy has not found or killed him yet. Though mad, he is terrified by what the *ankh* created and his inability to control the monster in the adjoining room. However, if a PC stumbles onto him, he attacks.

Read or paraphrase the following text.

This small rectangular room has two large urns to either side of the short corridor. Across from the entrance is a low wooden table extending out from the wall.

Set-Up: Mesret hides in the left-hand corner underneath the table. He watches the entrance for the mummy or the PCs. If sounds of battle from **Room 7** reach him, he creeps forward to watch, scrambling back to his hiding place if someone notices him, or if anyone comes near this room.

Creature: Mesret is a contemptible creature from a foreign land. Disheveled, unkempt, and dressed in clothing unlike any the PCs have seen before, he is simply a fool who got lost at sea and harbors a desire to bring his dark god to power in this new land.

MESRET

Human cultist* of the Unspeakable One 5; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 5d4+5; hp 15; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3 Grap +3; Atk +5 melee (1d4/×3, masterwork punching dagger) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +5 melee (1d4/×3, masterwork punching dagger) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SA death touch, sneak attack +1d6, spells; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 14.

*The cultist class appears in *Freeport: The City of Adventure*, but this version uses the revised NPC class that will appear in an upcoming Green Ronin sourcebook.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +11, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Escape Artist +5, Gather Information +10, Hide +7, Intimidate +4, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +11, Speak Language (Khemtian Common, Hieroglyphics), Use Magic Device +4, Use Rope +1 (+3 bindings); Iron Will, Skill Focus (Bluff)^B, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (punching dagger).

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Khemtian Common, Hieroglyphics.

Death Touch (Su): 1/day, on a successful touch attack, Mesret rolls 5d6. If the result of this roll exceeds the target's current hit point total, the target dies (no save).

Cultist Spells Prepared (3/2+1; save DC 12 + spell level): 0 — *detect magic, light, read magic*; 1st — *cause fear**, *cure light wounds, shield of faith*.

*Death domain spell.

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork punching dagger, masterwork light crossbow, 10 bolts, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *ankh of darkness** (12 charges), *cloak of resistance* +1.

*See **Ankh of Darkness** sidebar for details on this new item.

Tactics: If drawn into combat, Mesret starts by casting *cause fear*. Lacking ranks in the Concentration skill, he will move out of a threatened square by taking a 5-foot step if possible. He saves his death touch ability until he's reduced to 5 or less hit points, wanting to save it until he absolutely needs it, before using *cure light wounds* to remove any damage he can. If the battle is turning against him, he'll do what he can to flee.

Development: The cultist surrenders if he fails to kill a PC with his death touch ability, believing them more powerful than his god. He allows the characters to take him back to Hamunaptra, though he will attempt an escape whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Treasure: Aside for what Mesret carries, this room contains no treasure.

7C. SOUTH ANNEX

Read or paraphrase the following text.

This small rectangular room has two large urns to either side of the short corridor. Across from the entrance is a low wooden table extending out from the wall.

This room and the urns are empty.

7D. EAST ANNEX

Read or paraphrase the following text.

This small rectangular room contains several small ceramic jars that sit on a shelf against the wall. Otherwise, this room appears to be empty.

This room and the jars are empty.

WRAPPING UP

Once the PCs defeat the mummy, kill or capture Mesret, and regain the stolen *ankh of darkness*, they are free to return to Hamunaptra. If you want to spin this introduction adventure into a campaign, you could have a band of gnomes attack the PCs, giving Mesret a chance to escape. Though the villain gets away, the PCs have the *ankh*. Mesret, and his allies, flee out into the desert and perhaps ally themselves to the Compact of Dust. As the PCs continue adventuring, Mesret returns, far more insane and powerful than he once was, leading his allies to lay waste to civilization. Even if the PCs or the mummy kills Mesret, don't discount him. He could return as a ghoul, mummy, or even a vampire. He may undertake a great blasphemy, animating an army of undead to revenge himself on those who killed him.

NEW MAGIC ITEM: THE ANKH OF DARKNESS

This magical iron ankh is about a foot long. It glows dimly with putrid ochre light. A wielder of an *ankh of darkness* can cast *animate dead* for 3 charges, except that instead of creating normal skeletons or zombies, it creates dread versions. Undead created in this fashion respond to commands of their creator. In addition, once per week, the *ankh of darkness* may be used to create a mummy by expending 10 charges, though the ankh does not provide control over this undead. An *ankh of darkness* has 50 charges.

Moderate necromancy; CL 15th; Craft Rod, *animate dead, create undead*; Price: 39,375 gp; Cost: 19,687 gp + 1,575 XP.

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