

A ONE-SHOT FOR LEVELS 1, 3, 5 OR 10

# A Simple Journey



*The last caravan north this side of spring.  
What could possibly go wrong?*

A FREE ONE-SHOT FROM

**JAY'S RP CORNER**

COMPATIBLE WITH FIFTH EDITION

**Jay Graham**

# A Simple Journey

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*It ain't a soft journey for soft bellies.*

A *Simple Journey* is a one-shot adventure for four to six characters of 1st, 3rd, 5th or 10th level, designed to be played in a single session of about three hours. Strangers share the last caravan north before spring, an avalanche buries it, and the only shelter from the blizzard is a tomb that should have stayed sealed. It is set on the road to the frozen north, and ends in the town of Targos, in the Forgotten Realms' Icewind Dale, but any frozen frontier town will do. Everything the Game Master needs, including every stat block, is in this booklet.

## Running this adventure

**Choose a tier.** Before play, choose the party's level: 1st, 3rd, 5th or 10th. Each encounter in the tomb has a table giving the right opponents for that tier, and the Shadow Mage herself changes with it.

**Short on time?** The adventure is built in self-contained parts. The escape across the snowbank and the frozen lake can be shortened to a few checks, and the flooding corridor can be skipped entirely.

**Survival, not just combat.** The first half of this adventure is a fight against the cold, the snow and the ice. Reward clever ideas, and let the escape feel inches from death and disaster at every moment.

**Stat blocks.** Every creature used is in the Bestiary at the back of this booklet, in the 2024 fifth edition format.

## Adventure Background

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*This section is for the Game Master only.*

Centuries ago, a powerful sorcerer known as the **Shadow Mage** rose to power in the north. Her hubris was her undoing: her people revolted, and she went into hiding. Rumour says she spent her last years trying to find eternal life and cheat death. When she died, her followers built her a tomb beneath a cliff on the shore of a frozen lake, so that she could rest undisturbed until the time came for her to rise and take her place on the Northern Throne. Her servants still serve her in death, and a guardian waits at her doors.

The tomb was sealed behind a wall of ice and forgotten, but not by everyone. A secret passage leads from the tomb to a nondescript hut in the town of Targos, and someone has been using it.

The characters know none of this. They are travellers with their own reasons for heading north in the worst winter in years, and the only way to get there is Gruck and Druck's caravan.

## Adventure Summary

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- **Part 1: The Last Caravan North.** The characters board a sealed caravan with strangers. An avalanche sends it tumbling, and they must break out from under the snow.
- **Part 2: Snow and Ice.** The characters cross a treacherous snowbank and a frozen lake to the shelter of a cliff as a blizzard hits, and find a cave sealed by ice.
- **Part 3: The Tomb of the Shadow Mage.** A guardian at the doors, a flooding corridor, a chamber of undead servants, and the Shadow Mage herself.

## Part 1: The Last Caravan North

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Read or paraphrase:

You are gathered around a small campfire, waiting for the caravan that will take you to the frozen north. It is always a dangerous road, and in the worst winter in years it has become even more treacherous. People run it for many reasons, from fleeing the law to tracking down lost loved ones, and most who do have no wish to share their stories or their motives. The air around this camp, and around this fire in particular, is thick with suspicion, secrets and mistrust. The wind is so loud that talking is almost pointless, and so cold that all but the hardiest of you have no choice but to wrap up against the nipping frost.

Loud, thundering footsteps herald the caravan's arrival: a large, closed wagon of thick, heavy wood, wrapped in layers of fur and leather and pulled by two giant polar bears. They are led up the path by a giant ogre with a deep scar running from the top of his head, down his face and past his jaw to his neck. He looks sullen and dark, wrapped in thick, dirty, shaggy furs, all but his large, entirely bald head, which, apart from the scar, is covered in large tattoos in an odd mix of dwarven and ogre styles.

The caravan stops at the ogre's insistence. After a few seconds of awkward silence, a small bundle of furs in the driving well speaks up in a gruff dwarven voice. "Last caravan north this side o' spring! Ye all better be hardy sorts, cause it ain't a soft journey for soft bellies. It's dangerous, an' only hard sorts like Gruck an' Druck Caravans hae the stomach for it! I be Gruck, an' this handsome big devil be ma partner Druck, an' we're the only hard bellies mad enough ta make this run, so be thankful. Pile in, an' let's brave the journey north!"

As he finishes, a flame-red haired and bearded dwarven face appears from the bundle and kicks the wagon with a peg leg. At that, the half-ogre Druck opens the back of the caravan. Inside are ten benches, bare but for fur skins and heavy lanterns. At the back is a large, poorly built, overstuffed chest. As you board, the giant nods solemnly at you and pulls a fur-lined hood over his head, so deep that his face sinks into darkness and only his yellowish eyes shine out. He closes the caravan door with a slam, followed by the sound of a giant locking bar sliding into place.

### Gruck and Druck

Gruck and Druck are indeed mad, but it is only this madness that has let them survive this perilous journey time and time again. A curious character can open a small hatch between the driving well and the otherwise completely enclosed passenger section, and see Gruck driving the caravan and mumbling to himself. Druck's heavy footsteps show that he walks ahead of the polar bears through the most treacherous parts of the journey, guiding them safely along the paths and mountainsides.

Locked in the caravan with its ripe smell and the sound of the howling wind and driving rain, snow and ice outside, the characters should feel a claustrophobic uncertainty, as various noises, crashes and bumps can be heard but not seen. Now and then the old dwarf calls down, "It's alright! Nuthin' tae worry about!" or "Oh ho ho, close one!", but he offers no further explanation and ignores any demands for information.

After a few hours of this, the characters have fallen into a sullen silence. Ask them how they are passing the time.

### The Avalanche

Deep in this silence comes a strange **whumph!** that echoes all around outside, followed by a disturbing **shhhhhhhh** as a giant avalanche breaks loose and slides, unseen, towards the wagon. If the little hatch to the driving well is open, Gruck slams it shut without a word. Next comes a resounding **crash**. The whole caravan shakes, then lurches violently, and still shaking, starts to tip end over end.

### The Tumbling Caravan

The caravan tumbles for 3 rounds. At the start of each round, each character who isn't secured must make a DC 16 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check to grab something and secure themselves. On a failure, they must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 1d6 Bludgeoning damage and gaining the Prone condition on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Helping.** A secured character can help one who isn't, but must succeed on another DC 16 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check or be pulled loose in the attempt.

The caravan comes to rest on its end. The driver's end, with the little hatch, is now the floor, and the chest has burst open over it.

### The Chest

3 hempen ropes (50 feet each) · 3 pairs of crampons · 3 large fur-lined cloaks · 6 iron spikes · 1 grappling hook (optional, GM's choice)

## Breaking Out

The back of the caravan, now the roof, is held shut by the huge locking bar, and nearly 10 feet of ice and snow lie on top of it. A considerable feat of strength or some ingenious thinking is needed to break out. The door has AC 8 and 18 Hit Points.

**The snow pours in.** Once the door is smashed open, nothing stops the snow piling in and filling the bottom of the caravan, and its weight sinks the caravan deeper, 1d4 feet every 2 rounds, unless the characters find a way to stop it. The characters must then find a way up through the cascading snow. Magic will come in handy here, but the ropes and equipment from the chest, if the characters noticed them, can be a last resort.

The escape from this predicament should not be easy, and should feel inches from death and disaster at every moment.

## Part 2: Snow and Ice

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Once out of the caravan, whether stuck in the snowbank or on top of it, the characters have two new problems: the cold, and the 600 feet of fresh, dark, unstable snow between them and solid ice. There is no sign of Gruck, Druck or the bears.

### Bitter Cold

Each hour, a character who isn't suitably dressed for the cold (a fur-lined cloak from the chest counts) must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Exhaustion level.

## The Snowbank

There is room here for ingenuity and original thinking, but a combination of the ropes and crampons should let the characters slowly work their way off the snowbank and onto the frozen lake.

### Crossing the Snowbank

A character who isn't wearing crampons or snowshoes must make a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check for every 100 feet travelled. On a failure, the snow collapses beneath them, and they fall 1d6 feet, plus 1 foot for every 100 pounds of their weight (with gear).

**Roped together.** Anyone tied to a falling character must succeed on a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check or be pulled in too. If they succeed, the fall stops, and the party can haul the fallen character out with a group DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check. Increase the DC by 1 for every 50 pounds the fallen character weighs over 200 pounds, or decrease it by 1 for every 50 pounds under.

## The Frozen Lake

Once on the frozen lake, the characters must cross the last 120 feet to the foot of the cliff.

### Thin Ice

Any 10-foot-square area of ice with more than 350 pounds on it starts to crack. Each creature on that area must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall through into the frigid water. Anyone roped to a falling character must make the same checks as on the snowbank.

### Frigid Water

A creature can stay in freezing water for a number of minutes equal to its Constitution score with no ill effect. After that, at the end of each minute it spends in the water, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Exhaustion level. A creature with Resistance or Immunity to Cold damage, or one naturally adapted to icy water, succeeds automatically.

## The Blizzard

At the far side, the characters can collapse onto solid ground at the foot of the cliff. As they breathe out, give them a minute to begin to relax. Then the blizzard hits.

### **Blizzard**

**Wind.** The howling wind limits hearing to 100 feet, and imposes Disadvantage on ranged weapon attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. It puts out open flames, scatters fog and erases tracks in the snow. A creature flying by nonmagical means that can't hover falls at the end of its turn.

**Snow.** Visibility is reduced to 30 feet, and a creature without goggles or other eye protection has Disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Concentration.** A creature concentrating on a spell must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each of its turns or lose Concentration, unless it is sheltered from the weather.

The characters have two options. They can go back out into the blizzard and try to cross the ice and the snowbank again, now shifting in the wind and drifting over the ice, so that it is hard to tell whether they are standing on ground, frozen lake or snow. Or they can move further in under the cliff, where anyone looking for shelter finds a cave mouth sealed by a wall of ice. The ice isn't as thick as it looks: a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check smashes it, giving the party access to the long-abandoned cave.

## Part 3: The Tomb of the Shadow Mage

The cave is large and, by comparison, warm and dry. It seems to have been untouched for many years, and a thick layer of dust covers everything. A curious character notices a faint light at the back of the cave, coming from a small flight of carved stone stairs in a rough-hewn passage leading down and to the south.

### The Doors

At the bottom of the stairs is a room 40 feet square, beautifully carved out of the rock, smoothed, decorated with marble and granite and held up by giant pillars. A large set of double doors are made of decorative stone, gilded with brass and marble, and two sapphires worth 50 GP each are set into them; prising one out takes a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. Written on the doors in Undercommon are the words: *"The tomb of the Shadow Mage. Death awaits those who disturb her slumber."*

**The guardian.** If anyone stands directly in front of the doors, reads the words aloud or interferes with the sapphires, the tomb's guardian appears from the shadows and attacks.

| Tier       | The Guardian |
|------------|--------------|
| 1st level  | Ice Spider   |
| 3rd level  | Phase Spider |
| 5th level  | Roper        |
| 10th level | Jade Spider  |

**Opening the doors.** Once the guardian is dead, the doors can be opened. They are solid stone lined with marble, and their lock can be picked with a DC 18 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check; but once the guardian is dead, the sapphires come free without force, and removing them makes the doors swing open.

### The Flooding Corridor

Beyond the doors is a marble-lined corridor, 100 feet long and 10 feet wide, dimly lit by glowing white gems. Removed from the wall, the gems stop glowing and turn out to be toughened glass, essentially worthless.

**The trap.** Halfway along, a 10-foot-square pressure plate is indistinguishable from the rest of the marble floor; spotting it takes a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. When it is triggered, the doors behind slam shut and the corridor begins to fill rapidly with freezing water from tiny spouts every 10 feet along the tops of the walls. In 4 rounds the corridor is full, and the Frigid Water rules apply. The doors have no lock on this side and can't be opened from here. There are only two ways to drain the water:

- **Reverse the mechanism.** Lifting the pressure plate takes a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check and reveals a mechanism, which a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check shows can be reversed. Reversing it takes a DC 15 Dexterity check (a character proficient with Thieves' Tools or other suitable tools adds their Proficiency Bonus) and 5 rounds of work, reduced by 1 round for every 2 points by which the check beats the DC, to a minimum of 1 round. Drains then open and empty the corridor in 2 rounds.
- **Unlock the far door.** A DC 14 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check unlocks the south door, leading deeper into the tomb. This opens the drains, which empty the corridor in 2 rounds; then there is a click, and the door swings open into the next room.

### The Antechamber

This large room is decorated with the symbols of a long-forgotten god. A mural covers the entire chamber, walls, roof and floor, and tells the story of the Shadow Mage. A character who studies it and succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (History) check pieces together the tale in the Adventure Background: the sorcerer's rise,

her fall, her search for eternal life, and the tomb her followers built so she might one day rise again and take the Northern Throne.

A depiction of the Shadow Mage is painted into the floor, with words in Undercommon: “*She will rise again on the blood of mortals.*” When the characters reach this part of the chamber, hidden doors burst open, revealing her servants, still serving her in death.

| Tier       | The Servants    |
|------------|-----------------|
| 1st level  | 8 Skeletons     |
| 3rd level  | 6 Drow Specters |
| 5th level  | 4 Wights        |
| 10th level | 4 Vampire Spawn |

**Treasure.** With the servants dead, the characters can explore the room thoroughly. A variety of small chests and coffer hold 200 GP and six more sapphires worth 25 GP each.

## The Shadow Mage

At the back of the room, a staircase leads up to a stone sarcophagus. The sarcophagus opens if so much as a single gold piece is lifted, if anyone touches it, or if anyone tries to cross back over the painted seal towards the entrance. The Shadow Mage's remains rise and attack the intruders.

| Tier       | The Shadow Mage Rises As            |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1st level  | Drow Specter                        |
| 3rd level  | Mummy                               |
| 5th level  | Mummy (with maximum Hit Points: 90) |
| 10th level | The Shadow Mage (Alhoon)            |

## Conclusion

A character who searches the Shadow Mage's tomb finds a small lever that slides back the rear wall, revealing a passage to the surface. The passage looks frequently used, and takes some time to travel. Its other end comes out in a nondescript hut deep in the town of Targos. The characters have reached the north after all.

## Rewards

| Source                | Reward                              |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| The tomb doors        | 2 sapphires (50 GP each)            |
| The antechamber       | 200 GP and 6 sapphires (25 GP each) |
| Surviving the journey | The characters gain a level         |

## Further Adventures

| d4 | What Happens Next                                                                                                                                                              |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | <b>Gruck and Druck.</b> The caravan's owners vanished in the avalanche, bears and all. Did they survive? Did they know where the avalanche would leave their passengers?       |
| 2  | <b>The Hut in Targos.</b> Someone has been using the passage, and often. Who owns the hut, and what have they been taking from the tomb, or bringing to it?                    |
| 3  | <b>The Northern Throne.</b> "She will rise again on the blood of mortals." If the Shadow Mage was destroyed too easily, perhaps what lay in the sarcophagus wasn't all of her. |
| 4  | <b>Fellow Passengers.</b> Each traveller on the caravan had a reason to go north. Now that they have shared a tomb, will they share their secrets?                             |

## Designer's Note

I wrote this adventure to be run as a one-shot at my local gaming store, potentially for new players or club regulars, which is why it scales to several levels. It is compartmentalised so that sections can be removed if time is running short.

# Bestiary

The creatures of this adventure appear below in alphabetical order. Initiative shows the modifier, followed in parentheses by the score to use if the GM doesn't roll.

## DROW SPECTER

*Medium Undead, Neutral Evil*

The restless spirit of a dark elf servant, still armed as it was in life. At 1st level, the Shadow Mage herself rises as a drow specter.

**AC** 15 **Initiative** +3 (13)

**HP** 22 (5d8)

**Speed** 30 ft., Fly 50 ft. (hover)

| <b>STR</b> | <b>DEX</b> | <b>CON</b> | <b>INT</b> | <b>WIS</b> | <b>CHA</b> |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 10 (+0)    | 16 (+3)    | 10 (+0)    | 10 (+0)    | 10 (+0)    | 11 (+0)    |

**Resistances** Acid, Cold, Fire, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing (from nonmagical attacks)

**Immunities** Necrotic, Poison; Charmed, Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

**Senses** Darkvision 120 ft.; Passive Perception 10

**Languages** Elvish, Undercommon

**CR** 2 (XP 450; PB +2)

### Traits

**Incorporeal Movement.** The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were Difficult Terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) Force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the specter has Disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The specter makes two Shortsword or Hand Crossbow attacks, and can replace one of them with Life Drain.

**Shortsword.** *Melee Attack* Roll: +4, reach 5 ft. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) Piercing damage.

**Hand Crossbow.** *Ranged Attack* Roll: +4, range 30/120 ft. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) Piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or have the Poisoned condition for 1 hour. If it fails by 5 or more, it also has the Unconscious condition while Poisoned this way, or until it takes damage or someone takes an action to shake it awake.

**Life Drain.** *Melee Attack* Roll: +4, reach 5 ft. Hit: 10 (3d6) Necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or its Hit Point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a Long Rest.

## ICE SPIDER

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

A pale, frost-rimed spider that spins webs of ice.

**AC** 14 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** +3 (13)

**HP** 26 (4d10 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft., Climb 30 ft.

| <b>STR</b> | <b>DEX</b> | <b>CON</b> | <b>INT</b> | <b>WIS</b> | <b>CHA</b> |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 14 (+2)    | 16 (+3)    | 12 (+1)    | 2 (-4)     | 11 (+0)    | 4 (-3)     |

**Skills** Stealth +7

**Vulnerabilities** Fire

**Resistances** Cold

**Senses** Blindsight 10 ft., Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 10

**Languages** None

**CR** 1 (XP 200; PB +2)

### Traits

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including along ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webs.

### Actions

**Bite.** *Melee Attack Roll:* +5, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) Piercing damage, and the target makes a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. *Failure:* 9 (2d8) Poison damage, and the target has the Poisoned condition for 1 hour. If this damage reduces the target to 0 Hit Points, it is stable but has the Paralyzed condition while Poisoned this way. *Success:* Half damage only.

**Ice Web (Recharge 5–6).** *Ranged Attack Roll:* +5, range 30/60 ft. *Hit:* The target has the Restrained condition and takes 1 Cold damage at the start of each of its turns until freed. As an action, the target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the web on a success. The web can also be attacked (AC 10; 5 HP; Vulnerability to Fire; Immunity to Poison and Psychic damage).

## JADE SPIDER

Huge Construct, Unaligned

A colossal spider carved from green stone, set at the doors by the Shadow Mage's followers.

**AC** 17 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** +0 (10)

**HP** 250 (20d12 + 120)

**Speed** 40 ft., Climb 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 22 (+6) | 10 (+0) | 22 (+6) | 3 (-4) | 11 (+0) | 1 (-5) |

**Immunities** Poison, Psychic; Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 120 ft.; Passive Perception 10

**Languages** None

**CR** 12 (XP 8,400; PB +4)

### Traits

**Magic Resistance.** The spider has Advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including along ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The spider makes two Slam attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Attack* Roll: +10, reach 5 ft. Hit: 19 (3d8 + 6) Bludgeoning damage.

**Slow (Recharge 5–6).** *Wisdom Saving Throw*: DC 17, each creature of the spider's choice within 10 feet of it. *Failure*: For 1 minute, the target's Speed is halved, it can't take Reactions, it can take either an action or a Bonus Action on its turn but not both, and it can make only one attack on its turn. The target repeats the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

## MUMMY

Medium Undead, Lawful Evil

At 3rd and 5th level, the Shadow Mage rises as a mummy, wrapped in her burial shroud.

**AC** 11 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** -1 (9)

**HP** 58 (9d8 + 18)

**Speed** 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 8 (-1) | 15 (+2) | 6 (-2) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Wis +3

**Vulnerabilities** Fire

**Immunities** Necrotic, Poison; Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 11

**Languages** The languages it knew in life

**CR** 3 (XP 700; PB +2)

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The mummy uses Dreadful Glare and makes one Rotting Fist attack.

**Rotting Fist.** *Melee Attack* Roll: +5, reach 5 ft. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) Bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) Necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with mummy rot. A cursed target can't regain Hit Points, and its Hit Point maximum decreases by 10 (3d6) for every 24 hours that pass. If the curse reduces the target's Hit Point maximum to 0, the target dies and its body turns to dust. The curse lasts until removed by the Remove Curse spell or other magic.

**Dreadful Glare.** *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 11, one creature the mummy can see within 60 feet. *Failure:* The target has the Frightened condition until the end of the mummy's next turn. If it fails by 5 or more, it also has the Paralyzed condition for the same duration.

## PHASE SPIDER

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

**AC** 13 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** +2 (12)

**HP** 32 (5d10 + 5)

**Speed** 30 ft., Climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 15 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Stealth +6

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 10

**Languages** None

**CR** 3 (XP 700; PB +2)

### Traits

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including along ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webs.

### Actions

**Bite.** *Melee Attack* Roll: +4, reach 5 ft. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) Piercing damage, and the target makes a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. *Failure:* 18 (4d8) Poison damage. *Success:* Half damage.

### Bonus Actions

**Ethereal Jaunt.** The spider teleports from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane or vice versa.

## ROPER

Large Aberration, Neutral Evil

A stalagmite that isn't, with a gaping maw and six grasping tendrils.

**AC** 20 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** -1 (9)

**HP** 93 (11d10 + 33)

**Speed** 10 ft., Climb 10 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 8 (-1) | 17 (+3) | 7 (-2) | 16 (+3) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +5

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 16

**Languages** None

**CR** 5 (XP 1,800; PB +3)

### Traits

**Spider Climb.** The roper can climb difficult surfaces, including along ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Tendrils.** The roper has six tendrils, and can grapple up to six creatures at once.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The roper makes four Tendril attacks and one Bite attack.

**Tendril.** *Melee Attack Roll:* +7, reach 50 ft. *Hit:* The target has the Grappled condition (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target has the Restrained condition and has Disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.

**Bite.** *Melee Attack Roll:* +7, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 + 4) Piercing damage.

### Bonus Actions

**Reel.** The roper pulls each creature it is grappling up to 25 feet straight towards it.

## SKELETON

Medium Undead, Lawful Evil

One of the Shadow Mage's servants, still serving her in death.

**AC** 14 (Armor Scraps) **Initiative** +3 (13)

**HP** 13 (2d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 6 (-2) | 8 (-1) | 5 (-3) |

**Vulnerabilities** Bludgeoning

**Immunities** Poison; Exhaustion, Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 9

**Languages** Understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

**CR** 1/4 (XP 50; PB +2)

### Actions

**Shortsword.** *Melee Attack Roll:* +5, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) Piercing damage.

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Attack Roll:* +5, range 80/320 ft. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) Piercing damage.

## THE SHADOW MAGE (ALHOON)

Medium Undead, Lawful Evil

At 10th level, the Shadow Mage rises as she always meant to: an undead psionic sorcerer who cheated death, a 12th-level spellcaster.

**AC** 15 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** +1 (11)

**HP** 120 (16d8 + 48)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 19 (+4) | 17 (+3) | 17 (+3) |

**Saving Throws** Con +7, Int +8, Wis +7, Cha +7

**Skills** Arcana +8, Deception +7, History +8, Insight +7, Perception +7, Stealth +5

**Resistances** Cold, Lightning, Necrotic

**Immunities** Poison; Exhaustion, Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 120 ft.; Passive Perception 17

**Languages** Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon; telepathy 120 ft.

**CR** 10 (XP 5,900; PB +4)

### Traits

**Magic Resistance.** The Shadow Mage has Advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Turn Resistance.** The Shadow Mage has Advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns Undead.

### Actions

**Chilling Grasp.** *Melee Attack* Roll: +8, reach 5 ft. Hit: 10 (3d6) Cold damage.

**Mind Blast (Recharge 5–6).** *Intelligence Saving Throw*: DC 16, each creature in a 60-foot Cone. *Failure*: 22 (4d8 + 4) Psychic damage, and the target has the Stunned condition for 1 minute. It repeats the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. *Success*: Half damage only.

**Psionics.** The Shadow Mage casts one of the following spells, requiring no spell components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16):

- **At will:** *Detect Thoughts*, *Levitate*
- **1/day each:** *Dominant Monster*, *Plane Shift* (self only)

**Spellcasting.** The Shadow Mage casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks):

- **At will:** *Chill Touch*, *Dancing Lights*, *Mage Hand*, *Prestidigitation*, *Shocking Grasp*
- **3/day each:** *Counterspell*, *Fly*, *Invisibility*, *Lightning Bolt*, *Magic Missile*, *Mirror Image*, *Scorching Ray*, *Shield*
- **2/day each:** *Confusion*, *Detect Magic*, *Disguise Self*, *Evard's Black Tentacles*, *Phantasmal Killer*
- **1/day each:** *Disintegrate*, *Globe of Invulnerability*, *Modify Memory*, *Wall of Force*

## VAMPIRE SPAWN

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

A servant the Shadow Mage made into something more than dead.

**AC** 15 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** +3 (13)

**HP** 82 (11d8 + 33)

**Speed** 30 ft., Climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Wis +3

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +6

**Resistances** Necrotic

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 13

**Languages** The languages it knew in life

**CR** 5 (XP 1,800; PB +3)

### Traits

**Regeneration.** The vampire regains 10 Hit Points at the start of each of its turns if it has at least 1 Hit Point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If it takes Radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't work at the start of its next turn.

**Spider Climb.** The vampire can climb difficult surfaces, including along ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Vampire Weaknesses.** The vampire can't enter a dwelling without an invitation from an occupant. It takes 20 Acid damage if it ends its turn in running water, and 20 Radiant damage if it starts its turn in sunlight, where it also has Disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks. If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into its heart while it is Incapacitated in its resting place, it is destroyed.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The vampire makes one Claw attack and one Bite attack.

**Claw.** *Melee Attack* Roll: +6, reach 5 ft. Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) Slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can give the target the Grappled condition (escape DC 13).

**Bite.** *Melee Attack* Roll: +6, reach 5 ft. (a creature that is Grappled, Incapacitated or Restrained). Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) Piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) Necrotic damage. The target's Hit Point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the Necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains Hit Points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a Long Rest.

## WIGHT

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

One of the Shadow Mage's honour guard, still armoured and still hungry.

**AC** 14 (Studded Leather) **Initiative** +2 (12)

**HP** 45 (6d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| <b>STR</b> | <b>DEX</b> | <b>CON</b> | <b>INT</b> | <b>WIS</b> | <b>CHA</b> |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 15 (+2)    | 14 (+2)    | 16 (+3)    | 10 (+0)    | 13 (+1)    | 15 (+2)    |

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4

**Resistances** Necrotic

**Immunities** Poison; Exhaustion, Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 13

**Languages** The languages it knew in life

**CR** 3 (XP 700; PB +2)

### Traits

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the wight has Disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The wight makes two attacks, using Longsword or Longbow in any combination.

**Longsword.** Melee Attack Roll: +4, reach 5 ft. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) Slashing damage plus 6 (1d6 + 3) Necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its Hit Point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the Necrotic damage taken, until it finishes a Long Rest. A Humanoid that dies this way rises 24 hours later as a Zombie under the wight's control.

**Longbow.** Ranged Attack Roll: +4, range 150/600 ft. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) Piercing damage plus 6 (1d6 + 3) Necrotic damage.

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