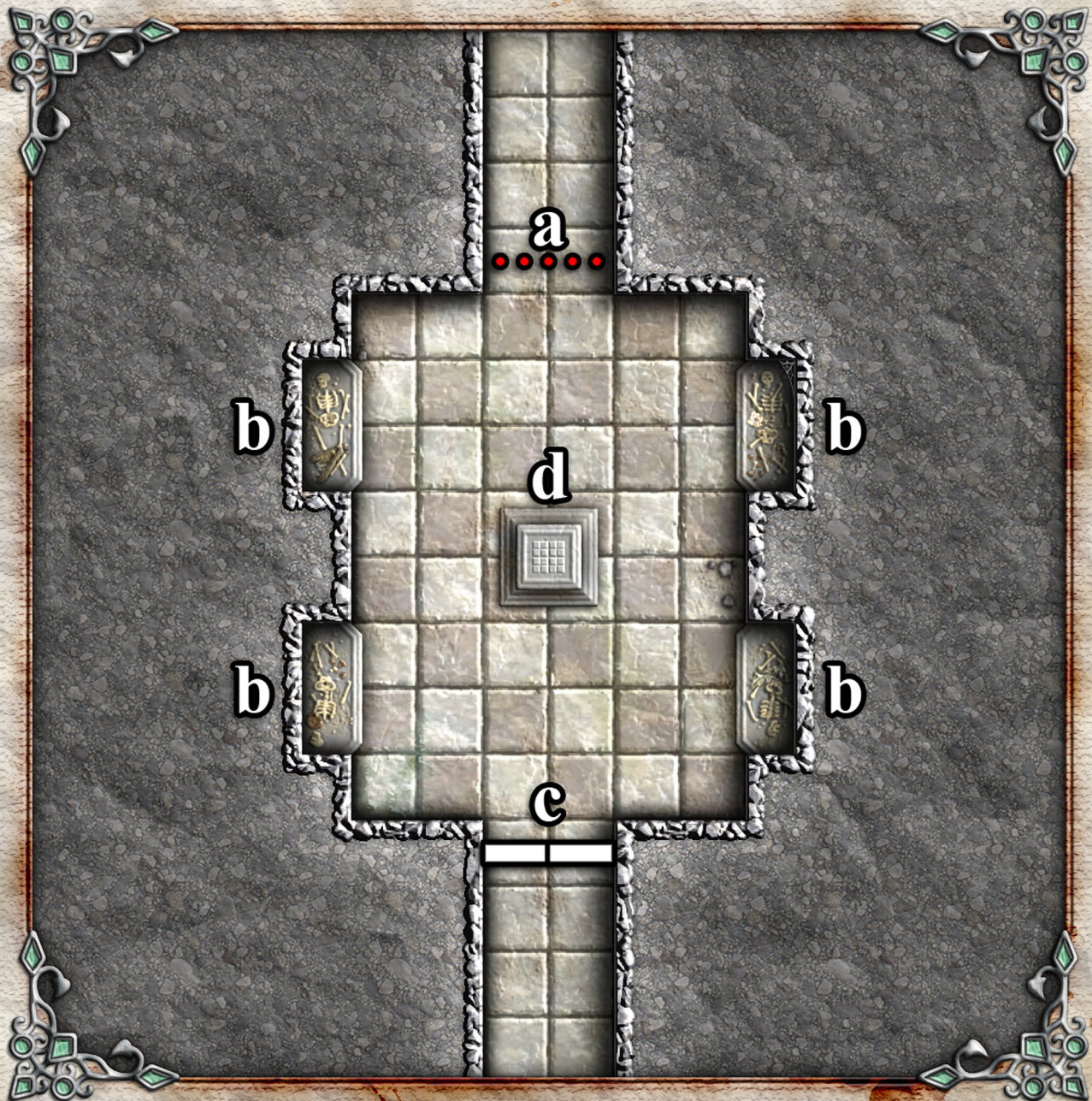


CRAFTING ENCOUNTERS

ROOM 1



A single dungeon
encounter
for low level
characters



Written &
Illustrated by
Kristian
Richards

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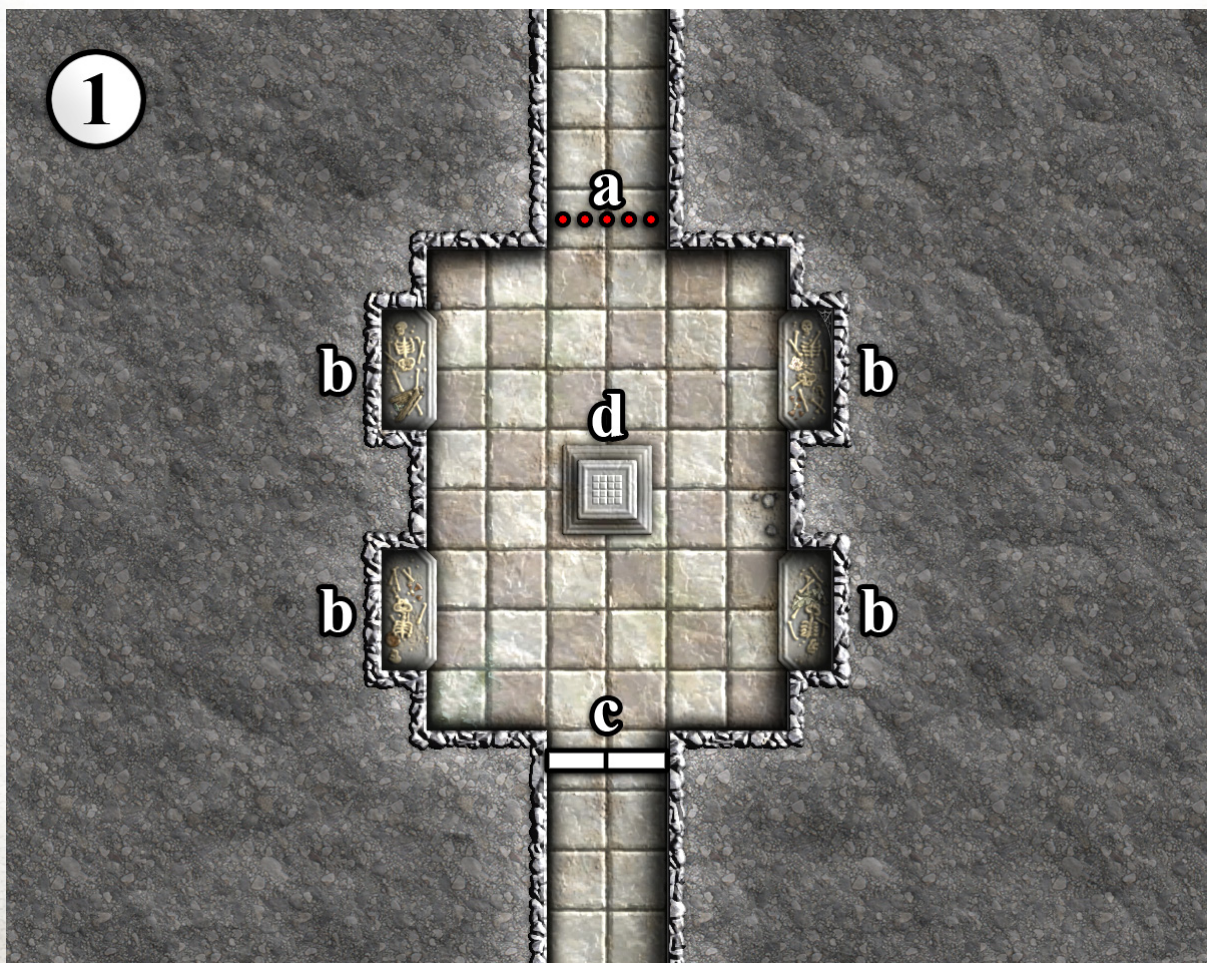
About This Booklet

Each of the encounters in this series (at least I hope there will be a series) is meant to be either slotted into an existing adventure (to add a bit of variety / more of a challenge), or used with other 'rooms' from this range to help you build a dungeon from scratch. Furthermore, you'll also be able to build quick and easy terrain pieces to accompany each of these encounters with the aid of 'print & paste' dungeon textures* -OR- use the supplied map tile with your virtual tabletop of choice.

Encounter Overview

This encounter should be a suitable challenge for a level one/two party of four adventurers. The room itself requires one PC to spend some time solving a simple 'sliding block puzzle' while their colleagues fend off waves of undead.

**Note that these dungeon textures are supplied as separate pay-what-you-want products over on [DriveThruRPG](#), and are accompanied by video tutorials on the [Crooked Staff Terrain](#) youtube channel.*



Room 1

- A large, dusty chamber with an arched ceiling and burial niches cut into its side walls.
- There are around a dozen niches in total (at varying heights, from floor to ceiling) all of them crammed with old bones, fragments of tatted cloth, broken pots, and lumps of rusty iron.
- Upon the far wall is a heavy stone door, and at the room's centre is a square plinth.

a. Any character pausing to examine the entrance to the room (or with a passive perception of 10 or higher) will notice a narrow slot upon either side of the passage - similar to that used by a portcullis. However, the portcullis itself is hidden behind a narrow section of false ceiling that requires a further DC15 Intelligence (investigation) test to uncover. Should the party notice this hidden opening, it can easily be jammed (assuming they can reach the 10ft high ceiling) with a DC10 Dexterity test and thieves tools.

b. The lower burial niches are easily accessible, but contain nothing of worth. Reaching any of the higher niches will require a successful DC10 Strength (athletics) test - though these also appear to house nothing more than old bones and the like. However, a successful DC13 Wisdom (perception) test uncovers a golden ring set with a tiny bloodstone, still affixed to a bony finger (worth approximately 50gp).

c. The stone door is unmarked, has no visible lock, handle, or hinges, and is virtually impossible to force open.

d. This plinth stands roughly waist-high (to an average human that is), and contains 15 small square blocks that appear to display some kind of rune or inscription - though they are all jumbled up (i.e. it is essentially a sliding block puzzle - see below). As soon as any of the blocks are moved the encounter begins...

The Encounter

As soon as the first block on the plinth is moved the following occurs:

- The portcullis slams shut - possibly separating any characters in the passage from those in the room. Anyone stood directly beneath it will also be required to make a DC14 Dexterity save or suffer 1d10 points of damage, and be pinned to the ground. Lifting the portcullis requires a DC18 Strength (athletics) test.
- Moments after the portcullis falls, 1d3* skeletons will animate (coalescing from the piles of old bones) and clamber down into the room to assail the intruders. Each round thereafter, another 1d3* skeletons will animate (up to a maximum of four* in play at any one time) and join the fray. This continues until the puzzle is solved, or all 12 skeletons are slain.

**For a 2nd level party, consider increasing this to 1d4 and six respectively.*

Skeleton

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armour Class 12

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10	14	15	6	8	5
(+0)	(+2)	(+2)	(-2)	(-1)	(-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities Bludgeoning

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 9

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

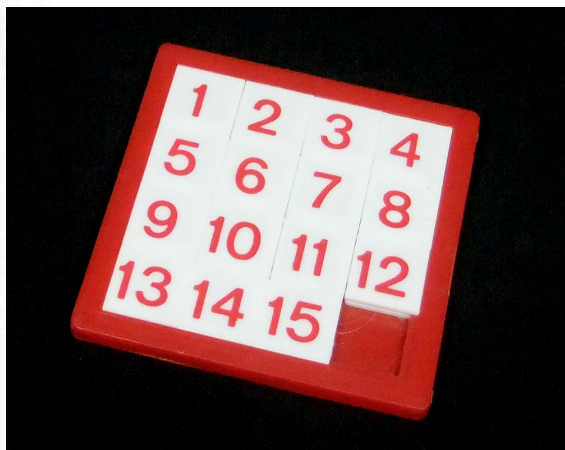
Challenge ¼ (50 XP)

ACTIONS

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

The Puzzle

In order to run this encounter you will need to utilise a sliding puzzle (sometimes called a sliding fifteen/block puzzle), which can be bought quite cheaply from a variety of places (though it is entirely possible that you already have one lying around).



Furthermore, you might also like to cover the sliding pieces with a more appropriate picture - such as the one provided along with this booklet (though you might be able to find something more suitable for your own campaign online).

In either case, the puzzle should be jumbled up before hand, and if you have used a custom picture, have any character attempting to solve the puzzle make a DC12 Intelligence test. If that test is successful, show the player a picture of what the completed puzzle should look like (to simulate the fact that smarter characters should have a better chance of solving the puzzle than dim-witted ones).



-the puzzle with a runic graphic glued on top-

Solving the Puzzle

During the course of the encounter, one character may forgo their actions and instead have their player spend that turn trying to solve the puzzle (while their companions attempt to fend off the animated skeletons). However, should any of the players (not the characters) start to drag out their decision making in an obvious attempt to buy the puzzle solving player more time, consider implementing a 10 second (or similar) countdown for them to declare their actions (and failing to do so results in them rolling with disadvantage, or even missing their turn).

Once the puzzle is solved, any remaining skeletons fall to the ground (returning to their inanimate state), and the stone door slowly grinds open...

Note that the sliding puzzle can be replaced with a riddle (the answer to which must be spoken aloud) or a different puzzle of your own devising. However, the sliding puzzle almost certainly guarantees several rounds of combat (which is the main intention), whereas a simple riddle may not.



Designer's Note

Since these puzzles come in all manner of different sizes, the image overlay I have provided is scaled to fit the sliding puzzles that I own (where each individual piece is roughly ½" square). As such, unless you happen to have a puzzle of the exact same size, you will likely need to re-size the image to make it fit on the puzzle you own.

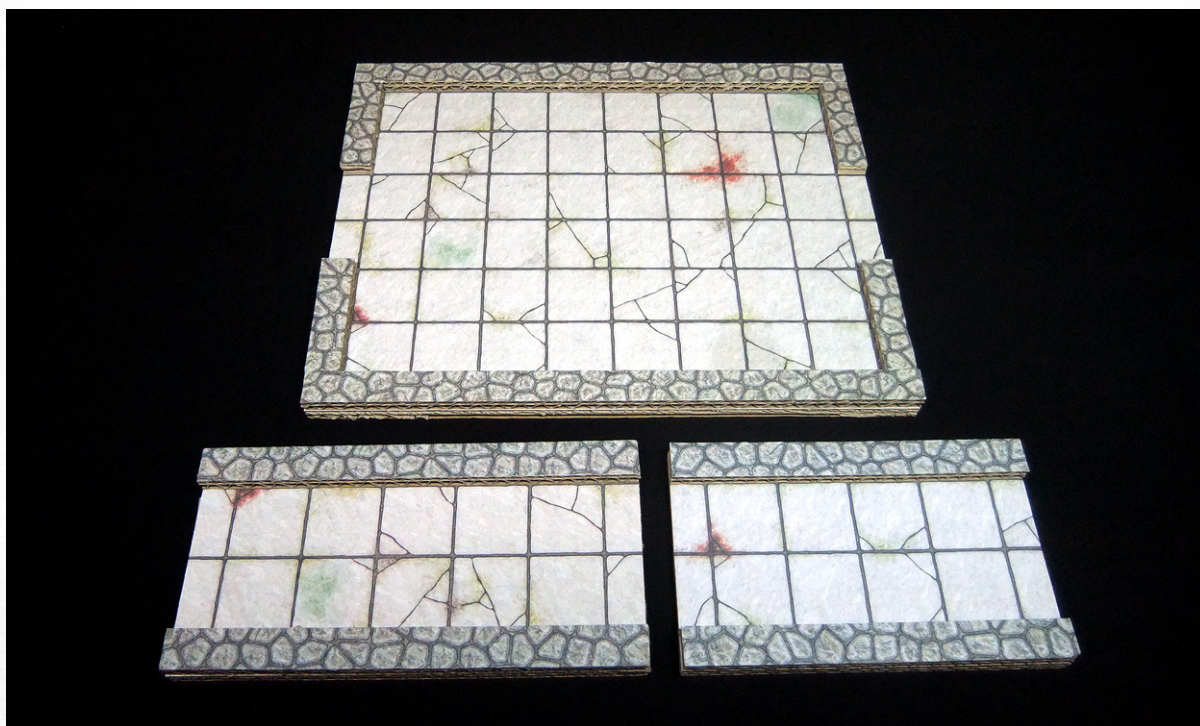
*The easiest way to do this is to open the image in something like GIMP (a free image editing program) and then select the **Image > Print Size** option, and input the overall size of your puzzle piece (that's just the pieces not the plastic surround). With any luck, the image should then print out at the correct size.*

Creating Terrain For This Encounter



*- the finished encounter with all the pieces in place -
(Midlam Miniatures used with permission)*

If you enjoy using miniatures in your games, and would like to represent this encounter with a set of dungeon tiles and terrain, you will need to create the following:



A couple of passages, and a room with two exits (the size of the tiles and the position of the exits are not all that important, but the space should be large enough to facilitate combat). Note that the instructions and textures for making both of these can be found in the [Basic Dungeon](#) video.

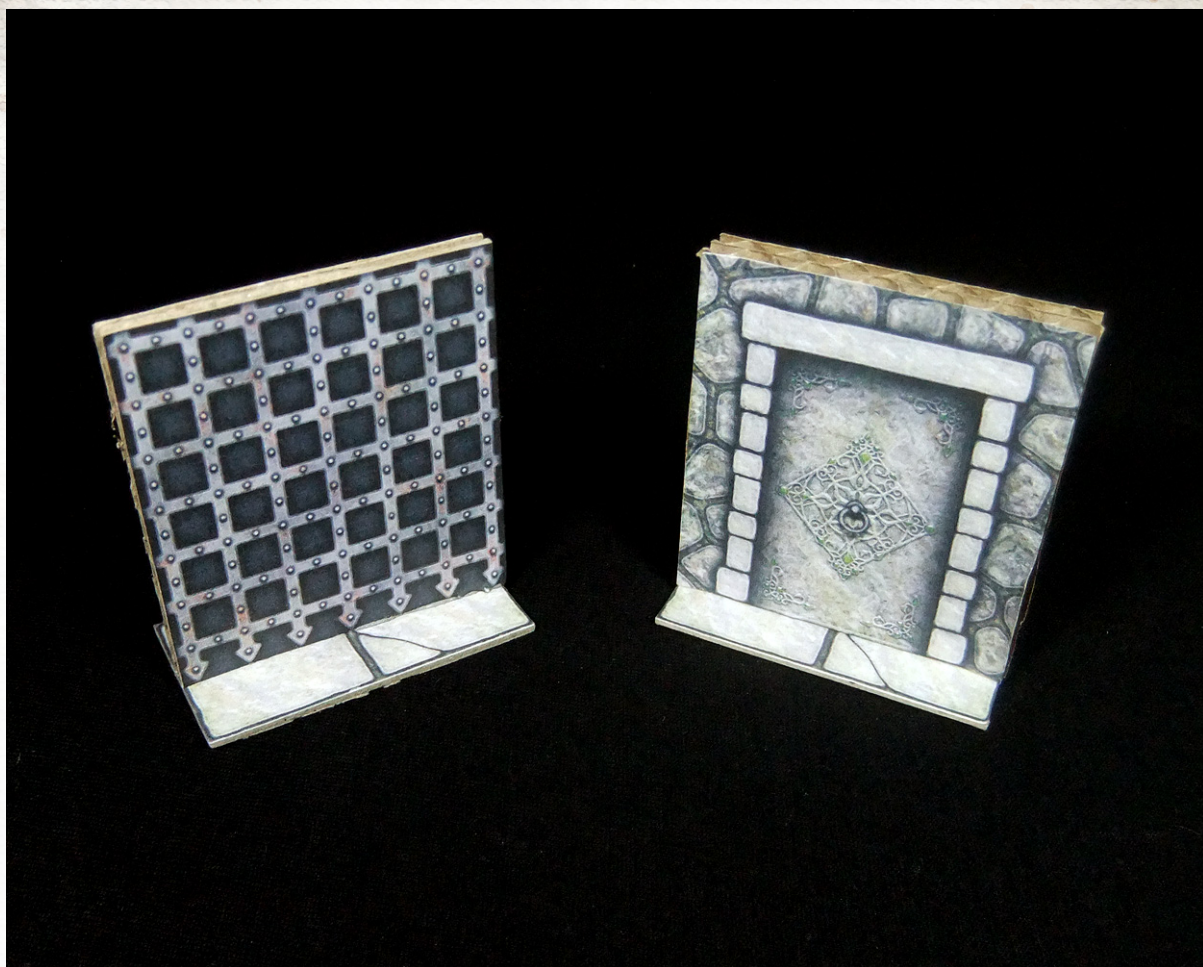


While not entirely necessary, a couple of niches with a few bones glued on top will help to add a bit more interest to the layout - as well as providing you with a choice of specific starting locations for newly animated skeletons to appear (two should suffice, but four is better). And, just like the floor tiles, the [Bone Piles](#) have their own dedicated video - whereas the niches can be found in the [Crypts & Tombs](#) video (fast forward to 7:55).



You will also need to make something to represent the plinth that contains the puzzle - and this one has been made in a similar fashion to the stone table in the [Books, Scrolls & Potions](#) video (fast forward to 1:03), except that the top and bottom pieces are 1" square, and the smaller (middle) piece is $\frac{3}{4}$ " square.

However, if you are pushed for time (or would prefer to keep the floor tiles free of clutter) you could do away with the plinth, and simply have the sliding puzzle be part of the stone door instead.



And finally, a portcullis and stone door (from the [Additional Doorways](#) video) are all that's left to finish off the layout.

Tips For Non-crafting DMs

If you have very little interest in creating dungeon tiles/terrain for your games, or if most of your gaming is done online (in which case you'll probably have to replace the puzzle with a riddle or similar), then this product also contains a separate image file that you can use in conjunction with your VTT of choice (which also happens to be compatible with all the other dungeon tiles compiled in [this album](#)), as well as an up-scaled 'battlemat' version of the same map that you can simply print out and use at the table at a moments notice.

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