

THE NECROMANTEION

**An Adventure for 4 to 6 Level 4
characters packed with action!**

By Jason G. Bakos

**Save the Oracle of the Dead from
Demons, in this Adventure for
Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition!**



THE NECROMANTEION

THE ORACLE OF THE DEAD

A 3 to 6-hour adventure for 4-6 level 4 characters.

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A big thank you to R P Davis on his amazing editing work and insight on how this adventure should be. Learn more about R P Davis on his personal website, at <http://r-p-davis.com/>, and by checking out his other work on the DM's Guild, at <http://www.dmsguild.com/browse.php?author=R%20P%20Davis>.

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On the cover: A photo of the entrance to the real life Necromanteion, in Mesopotamos, Greece. Credit to the owner of this picture, at <https://oreinomeli.wordpress.com/tag/οδοιπορικό/>, who explicitly states that his pictures may be used for any intents and purposes.

To her, with whom I can go to adventures and discover.

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THE NECROMANTEION

The **Necromanteion** is a **Dungeons & Dragons** adventure module for a party of four to five characters from 3rd to 5th level, designed to take 3 to 6 hours to complete.

The adventurers find themselves in the Necromanteion, a temple that offers services for speaking with the dead. At the time of their arrival, the temple has been thrown into chaos by the intrusion of foul demons, their intentions unknown but their power undisputable. The fate of the Necromanteion is in the hands of adventurers!

A Historical Note

The **Necromanteion** (Neh-kro-man-dee-on) was an ancient Greek temple of necromancy devoted to Hades and Persephone. According to tradition, it was located on the banks of the Acheron River in Epirus, near the ancient city of Ephyra. This site was believed to be the door to Hades, the realm of the dead. It is at the meeting point of the Acheron, Pyriphlegethon and Cocytus rivers, believed to flow through and water the kingdom of Hades.

RUNNING THE MODULE

Read the adventure module in its entirety before running it.

Creatures written in **bold** refer to the corresponding entries in the *Monster Manual (MM)*, *Volo's Guide to Monsters (VGtM)*, *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes (MToF)* or Appendix A - Monsters. Creatures from MToF are included in Appendix A.

Magic items and spells written in *italic* refer to the corresponding entries in the *Dungeon Master's Guide (DMG)*, *Players Handbook (PHB)*, or Appendix B - Magic Items.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Having heard about the Necromanteion, the adventurers arrive at the temple, only to find it in mayhem. A demonic invasion is threatening the temple's very existence, and the heroes are the only thing that stands between the demons and the temple's destruction. They must get all the help they can, enter the temple, fight multiple fiends, and go deeper into the building. To advance, they must overcome the challenges presented by the temple itself, challenges normally meant to prepare the living faithful for the journey to the kingdom of the dead. At the climax of the adventure,

they must defeat the demon Galgadath, a brute who has taken over the adyton, in the deepest part of the temple.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Necromanteion

This temple is built inside a remote cave, deep in a thousand miles long line of mountains. It is reachable only by the river Pargos, which threads through the entirety of the mountain range. Sailing along it, the heroes find a dock, from which they follow a road to the sacred temple.

The Necromanteion is built in a holy place where the channeling of the souls of the dead is easier. It is devoted to Kelemvor, the Lord of the Dead, though many other deities are worshiped, especially those with connections to the afterlife and the cycle of life and death. These could include Lathander, the Raven Queen, or even Myrkul and Cyric, the former gods of death and murder.

In the Necromanteion, those who wish to talk with the dead are called "Seekers". To communicate with the dead, a Seeker must undergo a ritualistic preparation of the body and mind. This procedure is lengthy, lasting for days, but the results are worth it, as without the preparation it is very difficult to succeed in the temple's tests. Following a cleansing ceremony and a sacrifice of livestock, the Seeker descends into the temple, and with the Prophet's guide, and is finally able to contact the soul they seek to find. The oracle is open to members of the public, who pay a hefty price to enter.

A Forgotten Realms Note:

If you wish to include this temple in the Forgotten Realms, choose a location close to the largest cities of Chessenta, where the use of magic was scarce and would only be left to temples. It is also recommended, though not mandatory, to change the temple's devotion from Kelemvor, who is not worshipped in these parts of Faerûn, to Waukeen, the god of merchants, as is the tradition there.

A Din Garum Note

Din Garum is a large city in the North. If you include the Necromanteion in a Forgotten Realms campaign, it's located to the north of Chessenta. It was built a millennium ago around a volcano in which magical lava flows, and its economy and society is based

around it. Find more about this city in the upcoming DM's Guild Supplement on it.

Mad Stones

Eons ago, a dwarf fighting against evil forces buried a powerful artifact somewhere deep below the city of Din Garum, to protect it from unknown threats. That small blue stone was powerful enough to imbue the minerals beneath the city with arcane properties, granting them the power to tamper with a creature's mind.

During the artifact's discovery, the king of Din Garum went mad, corrupted by its immense potency. Having heard a legend in which a dragon was said to have gained unrivaled power from offering itself to the volcano, in an insane attempt to do the same he threw his family and himself in the magma.

Thanks to the story of the mad king, the people call these gems "Mad Stones." *Mad stones* can be found all around the world in places that one needs to use their mind and spirit. Naturally, they find use in the Necromanteion, where their transmutation and enchantment arcane powers serve as the basis of all the tests that the Seekers have to clear in order to prepare for delving into the kingdom of the dead.

Note that the demons' fiendish nature gives them immunity to the effects of the *mad stones*, meaning they can freely walk around the temple with no limitations.

Plot Hooks

To reach the Necromanteion, one must learn of its existence and acquire a map to it. These prerequisites can be fulfilled with one of the following scenarios, or with any other you might want to use:

- The adventurers receive the information and the map as part of their reward for a previous adventure.
- The temple is mentioned in a book an adventurer found.
- They sail down the river Pargos as they return from a previous adventure, and discover the docks seemingly by accident.
- They meet a priest of the Necromanteion, Koios, in one of their adventures, either by saving him or simply interacting with him somewhere. He tells them to visit the temple. (See p. x)

- They are tracking an individual who visited the Necromanteion in the past.

No matter which option you choose, give the adventurers a sense of urgency. Use the smoke rising from the Necromanteion in "Arriving", p X, as a sign that something is wrong.

NPCs

Tiressias

"The realm of the dead is dangerous..."

Tiressias (teer-ess-EE-ass) is an elf with a natural talent for reaching out to the souls of those who have passed. His skill and leadership have earned him the position of Prophet, the master of this temple. The attack took place as he was in touch with the spirits of the dead. In the midst of it all, both his body and his mind were gravely injured. He is missing an arm, and his mind has been swapped with a demon's in the Abyss. To observers, he simply seems insane, snarling and growling as he crawls on the floor. (LG male **Elf Diviner** VGtM 213).

Xanthos

"These books are the backbone of the Necromanteion! I'll die before I see them in the hands of evil!"

Wise and kind yet strict, Xanthos (ZAN-thoss) is the temple's keeper of books. He makes sure to thoroughly record every visit, payment, and expense, down to the smallest detail. The attack on the temple has disturbed his uneventful late years, and he is terrified that something will happen to his precious library. (LG male **human Cult Fanatic** MM 345, but with no spell slots left)

Koios

"I'll protect the Prophet from these foul creatures!"

As one of the youngest and most enthusiastic acolytes of the temple, Koios (KOH-ee-oss) frequently travels to spread the word about it. It is possible that the adventurers have met him before, and that he recommended they visit the temple. He is bright and cheerful, almost always wearing a smile, and his joy in working in the oracle is only matched by his faith in Kelemvor. He has a sharp mind, doesn't panic easily, but has no combat skills. (LG male **human Commoner** MM 345).

Melampus

"This is where we need to sacrifice something... I think."

When the demons' invasion begun, Melampus (MEH-lam-pus), one of the youngest priests in the Necromanteion, ran off and managed to hide in the forest. When the adventurers defeat the demon (below, in Arriving), Melampus comes forward, thanks them, and offers to take them to the temple, being the only priest brave enough to do so. In the temple, he offers to act as a guide, explaining all the necessary parts of rituals, lore, and anything else the adventurers might need to explore the Necromanteion. He is inexperienced as a priest, having served at the temple for less than a year, and has no combat skills. As the adventure progresses, he gains more confidence. (LG male **gnome Commoner** MM 345).

Galgadath

"Bow before my might, puny mortals."

Galgadath (GAL-guh-dath) is a **barlgura** (MM 56) with an ambition to prove his strength. He plans on accomplishing this by conquering the mortal realm. Sailing the river Styx to get to the Nine Hells, he chanced upon an open portal that led to a cave near the Necromanteion. He and his followers decided to wreak havoc in this temple, and though some have their own agendas, he simply saw the chance and took it.

Gosa

"Damn mortals and their egos... I'll show them!"

Gosa (GOH-sah) is a **Quasit** (MM 63) with a deep history with mortals. Many have tried to use it as a familiar, but they all mistreated it. It now seeks vengeance, and wants to use the information in the library (Room 2) against mortals. This of course means that it has to get rid of Xanthos.

Demons

Incomprehensible Abyssal sounds

The other demons roaming the Necromanteion are not sentient, and hunt living creatures to satisfy their need for flesh and blood.

THE NECROMANTEION

ARRIVING

Assuming the adventurers are sailing down the river Pargos, read or paraphrase the following:

"As you sail down the calm river, you notice an ominous sign on the horizon. You see smoke at the mountain's foot, right where the Necromanteion should be. About 20 meters down the river, you see some wooden docks, and from that direction, you hear the shouts of two men. You have a bad feeling about this."

Two burnt men, wearing dark robes soon appear on the docks, shouting "Help! Help us! It's killed everyone!" Behind them, a skeletal fiend clad in flames appears. As soon as the fiend appears, read or paraphrase the following:





"A fiery skeleton with wings appears from within the forest, chuckling as it hunts its prey. It spots you, and its laugh fades away. Turning its back at the priests, it starts running away towards the temple."

Immediately, the priests turn to the adventurers, and shout "Quick! Chase it down! It's going to tell the other demons that mighty adventurers have come to save us! We'll take care of the boats, just go!"

Combat: If the adventurers decide to chase after the demon, this becomes a chase scene. Use the "Chase" rules (DMG p. 252) to handle this. For the demon in flames, use the **Flame Skeleton Akaz** (Appendix A). If the adventurers persist and catch up with Akaz, he decides to engage in combat. In that case, read or paraphrase the following:

"Standing this close to the demon, you feel hot and the atmosphere gets dense. The skeletal fiend cackles and tries to burn you with its flames."

If they do not follow, the demon is found in Location 1, with only one dretch, as the second one has been sent to inform Galgadath of the arrival of the adventurers.

When the threat of Akaz has been dealt with, or if they pursue a fleeing Akaz, the adventurers reach the temple. There they find more priests lying on the ground, burnt and unconscious.

Treat the acolytes as **commoners** (MM 345), though they are probably dead when the heroes find them. Roll a d8 for each acolyte. On a roll of 1, an acolyte is

alive but unconscious.

If the heroes manage to wake any of the acolytes, the wounded priests explain how the demons suddenly appeared, killing many and ravaging the temple. The acolytes can offer little help as they are exhausted, but can cast a *guidance* spell to two of the heroes, giving them the blessing of Kelemvor. The acolytes refuse to enter the temple, as they are terrified of the demons in it.

When the heroes have finished with the acolytes, another figure comes out of the woods. It is Melampus, one of the youngest priests, who offers to be the adventurer's guide in the temple.

1. THE ENTRANCE

This is the reception hall. Those who seek an audience with the deceased are welcomed by priests of the temple. Normally, they are told to leave their personal belongings behind, and head for the waiting rooms, where they prepare both body and mind. Melampus informs the adventurers of this as they enter.

Rather than peaceful contemplation, however, the heroes find two acolytes being devoured by two demons in the middle of the hall. Read or paraphrase the following when they open the doors:

"The heavy doors are slightly ajar. When you open them fully, you find yourselves faced with a vile scene: two demonic creatures are eating the bodies of two priests of the Necromanteion. They turn and look at you with bloodlust."

Combat: The demons are **dretches** (MM 57). The dretches mindlessly attack the new source of meat. If they are overpowered, they try to run away.

2. THE BUREAUCRACY ROOM

In this room the priests discuss matters of interest to the temple, study sacred texts, and record the procedural expenses for the temple. When the adventurers arrive, the door is stuck, barricaded from within by Koios, who in fear blocked himself in by pushing a table across the door.

Melampus bangs the door. "Koios! Open up!" he shouts. A voice can be heard from inside the room. "Go away! I'm not going to let the demons in! I've barricaded the door!"

Melampus begs Koios to open the door, explaining how these adventurers saved him. But Koios refuses Melampus's demands, for fear has clouded his judgment and made him paranoid. The adventurers must

persuade Koios that it is safe to let them in.

Getting Koios's permission can be achieved with a variety of skill checks, such as a successful **DC 19 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check**.

Note: If Koios was used as a plot hook for this adventure, substitute an Acolyte named Hermes for Koios.

If the heroes want to use force, they can break down the door with a successful **DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check**. Once they enter, read or paraphrase the following:

"A young man stands before you, sweaty, shaking and with his thin arms wrapped around himself. All around him are, desks, paperwork and scribing tools, scattered by the panicking acolytes. Tied with a rope to a large wooden desk, you see an old man, who is missing an arm and growling like an animal."

Koios introduces himself. He tells the heroes the story of the sudden arrival of the demons, and does not know anything about the invasion's origin. He then explains that the Prophet Tiressias, the Chief Priest of this temple, has gone mad.

Koios implores the adventurers to help the Necromanteion, promising rewards and eternal gratitude should they succeed. He also warns them about the gate tests in Locations 7 and 9, and describes the basics of the ritual they must perform to unlock the 5th gate in Location 8.

Melampus asks Koios to loan the heroes Tiressias's staff, and tells the heroes the staff is known to have magical properties. Koios refuses.

Unless the heroes intervene, Koios refuses to loan the Staff. A successful **DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion)**

check convinces Koios to loan Tiressias's *Staff of the Prophet*, to which they can attune.

Sample Phrases:

Melampus - "Please, Koios! They need it to help us!"

Koios - "There is no way I would trust these strangers with our Prophet's staff! He needs it in case he regains his sanity!"

If the adventurers ask how Tiressias got here, Koios explains how some acolytes heard screams and rushed to the Adyton, deep in the temple. There, they found demons and the prophet, and with valiant efforts and sacrifice, managed to bring him to safety.

A creature that has a **passive perception score of 13** or higher, or succeeds on a **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check** spots some keys hanging from the wall. These are the keys to the boxes in Location 4. Alternatively, if the heroes ask the priests where the keys are, they will hand them over with a successful **DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check**.

3. THE LIBRARY

Before entering this room, Melampus warns the adventurers that this is the library, and that its keeper Xanthos is pathologically protective of the books. When they enter, read or paraphrase the following:

"This dark room's walls are filled with countless leather-bound books, and in the middle of it, on a desk, you see an old man clutching a dagger in his hand."

In this dark and dusty room, tons of old books are kept, guarded by magic and protected by Xanthos. The books contain the names of all the temple's visitors, as well as their reasons for wishing to speak with the dead. In order to keep the books safe, powerful spells have been cast around them, prohibiting them from ever leaving these four walls. This information is revealed to the adventurers by Xanthos, who speaks as soon as he sees the adventurers. "Oh, Melampus, you brought help! Thank the Gods! Please, brave ones, dispose of these foul creatures! I need to make sure no one lays hands on my books!"

To anyone who casts the *detect magic* spell here, the books and the walls give off an aura of abjuration.

When the adventurers pass through the Gate in Location 6, the quasit Gosa leaves its hiding place and heads for the library. If they discover it in its hiding place in Location 4 and kill it, the library is safe.



4. WAITING ROOMS

It is here, Melampus informs the adventurers, that the Seekers normally spend their first hours, changing into ceremonial robes and leaving behind all their other belongings. In these plain rooms, only a bed, a desk, and a small box to place personal belongings can be found. The keys to these boxes are found in Location 2. In one of the rooms, the box is open and empty, while in the other two, they are locked, safe-keeping the belongings of unlucky Seekers present in the Necromanteion. To open the boxes, a creature must succeed on a **DC 16 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check**, or use a key from Location 2. One chest contains 300 gp and a *potion of greater healing*, while the other holds a *shining blade* (see Appendix B).

5. DIET ROOMS

When the adventurers enter each room, read or paraphrase the following:

"These otherwise-empty rooms contain only a small cushion and a candle mounted on the wall opposite to the door. Runes cover the walls, connected with the arcane power of four blue gems that sit on iron podiums, in each corner of the room. They must be soundproof, as the sounds of the demonic invasion are muffled out in here. It's obvious these rooms are meant to provide peace of mind."

Any Seeker, even the purest, must prepare themselves by resting, meditating and following a strict diet. The runes channel the power of the *mad stones* to prepare the Seeker. Honing their senses and conquering their desires are simply prerequisites for the hardships the Seekers must later face in their journey.

Melampus explains that spending at least two hours in these rooms gives any Seeker a boost in fortitude and strength of character, qualities needed in the Gates' tests, but advises against wasting time in them. The preparation grants any creature advantage on the skill checks in Locations 7, 9 and 10.

If the adventurers decide to explore these rooms, assign a number from 1 to 4 to each, and roll a d4. The quasit Gosa is hiding in the room corresponding to the result of the roll, in the form of a rat. It heard the sounds of battle when the heroes entered the temple and is waiting for them to leave. When they open the door to the room where it is hiding, it tries to run away, and if they don't stop it, it flees, hoping to hide somewhere else. When it is sure the heroes are gone, it can attack Xanthos at its leisure.

Attack on Xanthos:

If the adventurers fail to protect Xanthos, Gosa sneaks up on him and kills him. When it attacks, the priest prays that help will find him, and at that moment, Melampus gets a vision. He witnesses a small demon enter the library and sneak up on the old priest. Sweating, Melampus begs the adventurers to rush back and save Xanthos. You can have this happen whenever you want, but it is recommended you do it when the adventurers have just entered the maze in Location 10, in order to make it harder to go back. See "Rewards" for the possible outcomes.

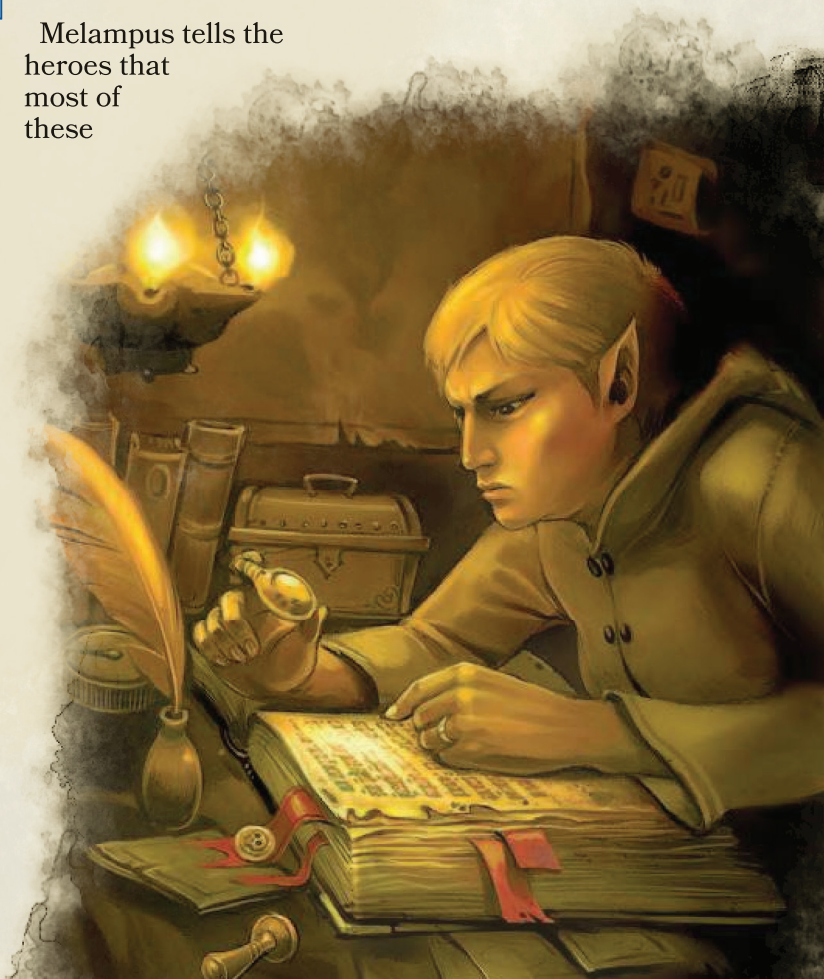
6. STORAGE

Once the adventurers enter, read or paraphrase the following:

"Beyond the doors, you find a large room, 15 feet wide and 50 feet long, filled with wooden boxes, shelves on the walls, and ceramic amphorae. This is where everything needed for Seeker rituals and the everyday life of the priests can be found, and the foul smell that fills this room makes it obvious that this includes livestock."

This room is filled with materials, foods, barrels of drinkable water and wine, and livestock in the form of chickens and pigs, which live in the small cages in the back of the room.

Melampus tells the heroes that most of these





things
are also used in the rituals performed in the Necromanteion, such as the sacrifice of livestock.

Three small demons are hiding in this room, having heard the battle that took place in Location 1. This room can provide valuable materials, such as livestock for the sacrifice required in Location 9. If the adventurers decide to explore the crates they find the following: Beans, bread, honey, milk, wine, rice, and all sorts of vegetables.

Combat: Before the adventurers enter the room, have each of the three **manes** (MM 60) roll a Stealth check. When the heroes enter, compare the manes' Stealth checks to the heroes' passive Perception scores to determine if they spot the manes. Heroes who do not spot the manes are surprised in the first round of combat. When they are spotted, the manes attack. If left to their own devices, they devour all of the livestock in the room, forcing the adventurers to sacrifice something else, like demons (or priests), in Location 9.

A Priest's home note:

The priests of the Necromanteion live in their quarters, deeper in the cave. The door on the Southwestern wall leads to these rooms, but is now locked. Unless you want to use them specifically for something, they are to be left unexplored.

If the explorers decide to enter, read or paraphrase the following:

"A simple 20 feet long corridor with six wooden doors and one larger metallic door stretches in front of you."

Beyond each wooden door there are the priests' shared rooms. Each room is ascetic in its own right, featuring only four beds and a few wooden closets. Behind the metallic door is Tiressias's room, which like the others is very simple but filled with books on

necromancy and divination magic.

7. THE 1ST AND 2ND GATES

Melampus informs the adventurers of the following:

"Walking through these large iron gates, the journey of a Seeker begins. Be careful, though! There are Mad Stones in the gates! Pass through a gate, and magic will test your resolve. The, shall we say, less prepared usually end up suffering what we priests call "mental fatigue." They usually prepare for it in the mediation rooms, but I think you don't have enough time."

Mad stones are installed in the arch of the gates, as Melampus points out. If the adventurers ask about them, refer to the "Mad Stones" information box on page x.

To proceed beyond these gates, a creature must succeed on two checks.

To pass the first gate, they must prove they can sufficiently focus on just one image, with a successful **DC 13 Wisdom check**.

To pass the second gate, they must prove they can master their hunger. The *mad stones* magically impose a ravenous hunger. Having eaten what little the priests provide in the Diet Rooms, a Seeker must prove that they are strong enough to suppress their appetites with a successful **DC 13 Constitution check**.

The adventurers are also subject to these effects. However, unlike Seekers, if the heroes fail, they can still move on, suffering 5 (2d4) psychic damage. A creature attuned to the *staff of the prophet* is immune to this effect.

Once a creature passes through either of these gates, it is immune to that gate's effects for the next 24 hours.

8. THE MEDIATION CHAMBERS

These rooms help to further the preparation for the journey to the kingdom of the dead, with even harder tests. When the adventurers explore any of these rooms, read or paraphrase the following:

"You feel an increasing sense of unease at the emptiness of these rooms. The dark stone walls have been stained with the blood of Seekers. Plates with food have been spilled right next to the half-eaten bodies of

other, less fortunate temple visitors."

The food offered to Seekers here is harsher, just broad beans, pork fat and clams, which throws their digestive systems into disarray. The gems embedded in these rooms start to mess with the Seekers' senses, heightening their emotions and numbing their logical minds. In these rooms, demons have murdered Seekers who were in the middle of preparations.

9. THE 3RD GATE

As Melampus once again explains, to pass through this gate a Seeker must prove their strength even further.

Checks are again required for each creature attempting to pass through the gate. This gate tests the resolve of the Seeker. A creature passing through the gate must succeed on a **DC 13 Charisma check**. On a failure, a creature takes 9 (2d8) psychic damage. A creature attuned to the *staff of the prophet* is immune to this effect.

Once a creature passes through this gate, it is immune to that gate's effects for the next 24 hours.

When they pass through the third gate, read or paraphrase the following:

"A long corridor spreads before you, lit by blue flames burning in candles mounted on the walls. At the far end of the corridor you see an altar, and behind it a door on which is carved a demonic face. To either side of the door, you see two small fountains, each with crystal-clear water splashing, creating a soothing sound amidst all this chaos."

A *detect magic* spell reveals an aura of necromancy and abjuration in the altar and on the door, and an aura of evocation on the water.

To move on to the next part of the Necromanteion, a ritual must be performed, as described in the following paragraph. The door can also be opened with a successful **DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check** or a **DC 17 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check**.

The Ritual

Melampus looks around nervously, trying to make sure of something. "To open this gate, we, uh, need to kill something on the altar. I think. And then wash our hands."

To perform the ritual, one must first sacrifice a living creature on the altar, preferably by slitting its throat. With their hands still stained with blood, they must

then wash their hands in the healing waters of the fountain. Finally, they must flick some drops of the water mixed with blood from their wet hands onto the face of the demon on the door. This will "exorcise" the evil and open the 5th gate.

A successful *dispel magic* spell with a DC of 16 will also remove the need to complete the ritual.

10. THE MAZE

Describe what lies beyond the 5th gate by reading or paraphrasing the following:

"Beyond these doors you see a dark path. Taking a few steps in these dark marble halls, passing a corner, the thought dawns on you... This is a maze."

Melampus warns the adventurers that this maze was designed to disorient the starving, confused Seekers, to help them reach a heightened state of being. It is the final trial before they can finally speak with the dead.

This time, however, the trial is far more dangerous, as two **bulezau (MToF 131)** roam this place, hunting unsuspecting mortals. They hide in the shadows, waiting for their next meal.

Combat: When the adventurers take a few steps into the maze, they are bound to walk into the 30 feet aura around the Bulezau, which means they are susceptible to their aura effects. When that happens, combat begins. The bulezau tries to long jump in between the party members to attack with their tails. They fight to the death.

Magic generated by *mad stones* protects this maze. To navigate it, a creature must succeed on a **DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check** or its speed becomes 0 for the rest of this turn. The adventurers can try to find other ways to navigate the maze. For example, they could destroy the walls, making their own way. The walls have an AC of 17 and 60 HP.

If the adventurers fail to overcome the challenge set by the *mad stones*, but manage to hurt the bulezau demons enough so that one is slain and the second is reduced to less than half of its maximum hit points, it offers a deal. If the heroes promise to not kill it, the bulezau promises take them to the entrance of the maze, so that they can go to Xanthos, or to the exit.

A creature attuned to the *staff of the prophet* is immune to this effect.

In the northwestern part of the maze, the adventurers find a large hole on the ground which leads to Location 14. This is the place where the demons started their invasion.

11. THE FINAL GATE

When they successfully navigate the maze, the adventurers face a final gate. Read or paraphrase the following:

"A large silver door, festooned with spikes and etchings of mist and darkness, stands before you. In the middle of the door, you see a silver carving that pictures a skeletal right hand holding two balanced scales. A jar filled with flour is placed on the floor."

A *detect magic* spell reveals that the jar and the door have the same aura of transmutation magic. A successful **DC 18 Intelligence (History or Religion) check** reveals that the jar must be broken to please the god of death, Kelemvor. When it is broken, the doors to the Adyton creak open. Melampus explains this to the adventurers.

12. THE ADYTON

The room where the Seekers come in contact with the dead has been taken over by Galgadath. Read or paraphrase the following:

"This large, richly-decorated marble hall is lit by flames in four amphorae at the corners. It is cold, misty, and a chill runs down your spine. In the center of the hall, on the ceremonial altar, a large red ape-like demon with huge scars stands, staring at you. The altar is elevated and there are four small stairs on its sides. Two more demons, like the ones you encountered outside, are on either side of the large one. They are obviously ready to attack. The large demon speaks:

"Welcome to my new home, mortals. I am Galgadath, soon to be a demon lord. Surrender to me now and I will spare you. I desire skilled servants. I am not mindless, like most other demons."

The offers the adventurers a choice: Serve him or die. Should they accept his offer, it is up to you to figure out what comes next, as this choice should be heavily influenced by your campaign's world and story. Should the heroes choose to fight, the demon and his underlings attack.

Combat: Two dretches assist Galgadath, who casts *entangle* on the first round of combat on the area with the most creatures. On the next turn, he uses his *Running Leap* and *Reckless* abilities to reach melee range with the adventurers, where he uses *Multiattack*. The dretches have no particular tactics, and attack the creatures closest to them. If Akaz managed to outrun the adventurers and notify Galgadath, add one more dretch to this encounter.

Melampus stays outside unless the adventurers ask something specific of him.

Encounter Scaling: If the party has been weakened by their earlier trials, consider not using any dretches. If the party is average, consider using only one, or lowering Galgadath's HP. If they are very strong, add a dretch. If the encounter turns out to be hard for the adventurers, you can help them by removing the Kingdom of Souls effect. In the end of the second round of combat, Tiressias himself appears, having partially recovered his sanity. He thanks the adventurers briefly before cursing the vile fiend that defiled the Necromanteion. With his last ounce of strength, Tiressias lifts his arms high, and suppresses the effect of the *Kingdom of Souls*. Melampus then helps him get away.

If the adventurers took the bulezau's deal in the maze, when Galgadath is reduced to less than half his hit point maximum, the bulezau appear to help his chief in combat.

Kingdom of Souls

The presence of the dead is felt by everyone in this room. The atmospheric effect here is magical, and can have a toll on the unprepared. Whenever a creature starts its turn inside the Adyton, they must succeed on a **DC 12 Wisdom saving throw** or take 4 (1d6)



cold damage. Anyone holding the *Staff of the Prophet* is unaffected by the *Kingdom of Souls* effect. Any creature that prepares for this effect in Locations 4 and 8 has advantage on the saving throw.

13. EXIT

Normally, when a Seeker's journey comes to an end, they exit through this hallway, which leads to a door. Stepping outside the door leads to a path in the forest which eventually leads to a dock much farther downstream in the river Pargos. The priests also bring a Seeker all of the belongings left in the boxes in Location 2 before sending them off. This is done to assure anonymity and discretion between Seekers, who should not cross paths. Two dead bodies and a dead demon are sprawled the exit, having obviously killed each other.

14. ABYSSAL PORTAL

Exploring the hole in the northwestern part of Location 10 eventually reveals to the adventurers the source of the demonic invasion. Read or paraphrase the following:

"In this small, dark cavern, you find a small rift in space. The air is cold and the foul stench is nauseating. On the other side of the portal you see a river flow, its bank a dark soil. On the horizon, you see nothing but barren wastelands and dark clouds."

This is a portal to the Abyss. If the players want to close it, they first have to succeed in a **DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check** to understand what must be done. Then they must cast *dispel magic* on it, with a DC of 15. They could consult the priests, who will give them a *spell scroll of dispel magic*.

If any of the adventurers wish to travel through the portal, they may do so at their own risk. They should be warned that there doesn't seem to be any land in the other side, so if they do go through the portal, they will likely end up swallowed by the river Styx. A successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Religion or History) check** reveals that the river is extremely dangerous and even minimal contact with the water will result in amnesia.

CONCLUSION

Victory

With Galgadath and his demons defeated, the Necromanteion is safe. The priests can put out the flames and in due time restore the damage. For now they are just happy to be alive. They happily accept help with the repairs, and offer the adventurers a place to stay until the temple is up and running again. They also

offer them rewards, which can be found below.

Defeat

With the defeat of the adventurers, the Necromanteion falls into mayhem, and the demons' very existence there corrupts it. Even if someone slays them, it will be years before this sacred place is free of their vile influence. If no one stops them, they will try and further their conquest of the mortal world, using the information found in the library as a starting point. Woe to those in the Material Plane if the demons successfully invade. If the adventurers were defeated but managed to run away and survive, rumors of the Necromanteion's fall slowly spread all over the world. Include these rumors in following adventures, to make the adventurers aware that their actions have consequences. Ensure they know that their failure (or cowardice) meant not only the destruction of the Necromanteion but also threatens the safety of the entire Material Plane.

REWARDS

The heroes are allowed to keep any treasure they find in Locations 5 and 7, and the priests give them a further 200gp each. Any treasure that the adventurers found in the chest in Location 5, which belonged to the murdered Seekers in location 7, will also be given to the heroes.

The heroes earn the eternal gratitude of the Necromanteion, and each adventurer can try to speak with a passed soul without any charge as soon as Tiressias is healed of his injuries. He lets them keep his magic staff, as he can make a new one.

Perhaps most importantly, the adventurers have gained fame. The priests here will forever tell the tale of their saviors, even if the adventurers' reasons for intervening were neither good nor holy.

As the temple's repairs continue, Tirressias comes to realize that he has grown weaker, and slowly the necessity of preparing the Necromanteion for his possible passing comes to influence his future actions.

Melampus specifically will gain respect from the other priests, and Tiressias will train him in the hidden arts of this temple, hoping that one day he will be worthy of succeeding him as The Prophet.

A Ritual Note

If the adventurers wish to partake in the ritual to speak with the dead, they must follow some steps. Roughly, the procedure is as follows: First, any Seeker must spend a day in the Pre-Diet rooms. Passing through the first two gates, they must meditate in the Meditations rooms, and having prepared mentally and

physically, partake in the sacrificial ritual. Opening the demon door, they must find their way through the maze, and finally break the flour jar to please Kelemvor. It is only then that they are ready to take a trip to the kingdom of souls, with the guidance of Prophet Tiressias. If you wish to learn more about the details of this ritual, search the internet for scholarly speculation of what happened in the Ancient Greek Necromanteion.

APPENDIX A: MONSTERS

FLAME DEMON AKAZ

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d8+16)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Intimidation +4, Athletics +6, Acrobatics +8

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons, cold, lightning

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Abyssal, Primordial

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Scorching Aura. Akaz generates a 30-foot-radius aura of heat. A creature that starts its turn in the aura, or who enters it for the first time on a turn, takes 6 (1d10) fire damage. The area in the aura is brightly lit, and it sheds dim light for another 30 feet.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Flame Skeleton Akaz makes 2 Flame Claw attacks or 2 Fire Beam attacks.

Fire Beam. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) fire damage.

Flame Claw. **Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. **Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) fire damage4) fire damage.

BULEZAU

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (7d8+21)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	8 (-1)	9 (-0)	6 (-2)

Skills Intimidation +4, Athletics +6, Acrobatics +8

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Abyssal, Telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Rotting Presence. When any creature that isn't a demon starts its turn within 30 feet one or more bulezau, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 necrotic damage plus 1 necrotic damage for each bulezau within 30 feet of it.

Standing Leap. The bulezau's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

Sure-Footed. The bulezau has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

ACTIONS

Barbed Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d12 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease ends. While poisoned in this way, the target sports festering boils, coughs up flies, and sheds rotting skin, and the target must repeat the saving throw after every 24 hours that elapse. On a successful save, the disease ends. On a failed save, the target's hit point maximum is reduced by 4 (1d8). The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0.

APPENDIX B: MAGIC ITEMS

Staff of the Prophet

Staff, rare, requires attunement

This black slick staff is adorned with a black skull on one end, with two purple gems in its eye sockets. This staff connects the wielder with the world of the dead. It grants resistance to cold damage and allows the wielder to cast the *speak with dead* spell. Once you cast the spell, you can't cast it again until you finish a long rest.

Shining Blade

Weapon (any sword), rare

This beautiful and elegant blade is meant to be a symbol of the wielder's power and justice. It was crafted to aid in crusades against vile creatures.

When you hit a fiend or an undead creature with this magic weapon, that creature takes an extra 4 (1d4+1) radiant damage.

Mad Stone

Wondrous item, uncommon

This small blue stone has been imbued with the arcane powers of an ancient artifact. It can act as an augment for spells of the Divination, Enchantment or Necromancy spells. A creature that attempts to augment its spell with a Mad Stone must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, their spell is augmented. If the spell deals, damage, add 1d4 psychic damage. If it requires an enemy creature to roll against the spellcaster's DC, increase the DC by 2

OTHER PRODUCTS BY JASON BAKOS

King to an Empty City

What good is a king without a city to rule over? What happens when everyone in a city disappears, gone without a trace?

This is the state in which an adventuring party, your characters, finds Sheol in; a city devoid of all life forms, claimed by Hegemon, a Wraith that used to be its king.

Explore the empty city! Be mindful of the thieves' guilds! Find your way to the portal that leads to the castle! Fight your way through the hoards of undead to foil Hegemon's insidious plan!

Encounter with the Edan Sha

A group of bandits called the Edan Sha are active in the shady parts of the city. Perhaps they stole from you, or maybe you were hired to defeat them. Whatever the reason, you find yourselves fighting against the gang. Little did you know that they had an ace up their sleeve!

Featured as the Product of the Week, by the DMs Guild Newsletter, "An encounter with the Edan Sha"! This encounter is made up of a droppable scenario, built around the group of the Edan Sha and the Helmed Horror that Hegemon bestowed them with. It can be used as a prelude to the adventure "King to an Empty City", also found on the DM's Guild!

Tomb of Mild Discomfort

Making good on his promise, Acererak the Eternal built a tomb for his opponent, queen Azaria the Arcane, following her defeat at his hands. Bored, but with a reputation as a tomb maker to uphold, Acererak created a tomb filled with traps that will annoy explorers more than they will kill them. Do not underestimate the dangers lurking in this tomb, though!

Featured as one of the ten dungeons in The Dungeoneer's Pack: StormKing's Barrows, this tomb is sure to bring laughter and suspense to any table.

