

Peril on the Piste



An Adventure for Character Level 1



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INTRODUCTION

Every winter time the quiet town of Montorosso gets overrun by well-to-do people on their way to a luxury retreat. In the mountains nearby goblins set up shop. They built a dazzling ski resort with all bells and whistles attached, crazy critters that they are. Once a week a shuttle coach comes down to the valley to transport guests. Only this time something is off. The weekly shuttle hasn't arrived. New guests are still waiting while the locals grow anxious.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Peril on the Piste is an introductory *Fifth Edition* adventure for new players, designed for use with three to five level one characters. It offers about four to five hours of play and is ideal for both conventions or a first campaign session. The focus is on combat, but it calls on the ingenuity of the characters in the final part to successfully complete the adventure.

Names of monsters appear in **bold**. Magic items and spells appear in *italics*.

A text box is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for players.

The adventure can award characters up to 325 experience points (XP). An encounter or discovery that awards experience points specifies the amount awarded per character.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The goal of the adventure is to rid the ski resort of a zombie infestation. The infestation is caused by the desecration of an ancient barbarian's grave at the top of the mountain. To lift this curse, the grave has to be restored in peace. This is accomplished either by the performance of a ritual with a thurible found in the resort or by causing an avalanche at the top of the mountain that buries the grave under the snow. Characters have to travel through the resort first before they can enter the piste and climb to the top. They will encounter various types of undead along the way.

BACKGROUND

Years ago goblins settled in the harsh mountainous area of Madonna di Campiglio and built a sprawling ski resort called Ski Bellissimo. Nobles, merchants and other wealthy people spend their holidays there. Guests arrive via a shuttle service that rides between the resort and

Montorosso, the town in the valley. Recently the goblins developed a new piste on the top of the mountain which was to open soon. They found a barbarian's corpse frozen in the ice, which they triumphantly marketed as a new attraction called the *barbar*. But disaster struck soon, for the barbarian's eternal rest was disturbed. The whole area became accursed and turned the goblins into murderous zombies. Unfortunate guests followed suit after they fell prey to them. The few guests that survived holed up in a hut on the piste, hoping against the odds that someone might come and save them.

The new piste was finished nine days before the start of the adventure. Three days ago the zombie infestation began. The shuttle service was supposed to arrive two days ago, but didn't since all goblins turned into zombies.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The characters reside in Montorosso and are called upon by innkeeper Mario D'Argento (male human **commoner**) to investigate why the weekly shuttle service of the goblin ski resort Ski Bellissimo has not arrived.

The inn is called Travel Through Espresso and is dependent on resort guests staying for the night before moving on. Rooms are available for 8 sp per person. Mario D'Argento is a chubby good-natured innkeeper who is genuinely worried about his guests. He knows the following:

- The resort has been run successfully by goblins for years.
- The shuttle service transports guests to and from the ski resort.
- The shuttle service is always on time despite the resort being run by goblins.
- The coach is carried by goats.
- Mario usually has some small talk with the goblin drivers. He hasn't noticed anything strange, save for talks about a new piste at the top of the mountain.

If the characters agree to investigate the issue and solve any problems that caused it Mario D'Argento promises them a reward of 100 gp.

THE RESORT

A path of 3 miles leads from Montorosso to the resort. As the steep slopes make it difficult terrain, the journey takes 2 hours of travel.

TRAVELING TO THE RESORT

THE WAYWARD GOATS

Four wayward **goats** tow an empty wagon 1 mile from the resort. The character with the highest Passive Perception notices their incessant anxious bleating first.

When the characters approach the wagon, read:

Four goats tow a wildly swinging wagon in haphazard fashion. As they rush back and forth, you notice the wagon's side reads "Ski Bellissimo Shuttle Service. It's Wonderful and Fast!" It looks like they are in blind panic as they head towards a patch of trees with frantic speed.

The side of the wagon is stained with bloodied handprints, which is immediately noticeable if the wagon stops moving. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that these stained handprints are the size and shape of a medium-sized humanoid and two days old.

There is nothing inside the wagon save for a small bag containing clothes, stale bread and 4 gp. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a bloody finger top near the door.

GM Note: Two persons tried to flee with the wagon, but failed. One of them got its finger in the door when it slammed shut.

THE BROKEN SIGN

When the characters reach the resort, read:

The mountain winds cut deeply as you climb higher. You round the last corner and there it is: the resort. The path curls down towards the stables and what appears to be the reception. On the way a half broken signboard reads: "Welcome to Ski Bellissimo!"

The signboard is stained with bloodied handprints. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that these stained handprints are the size and shape of a medium-sized humanoid and two days old.

Two frozen bodies of human guests lie covered in snow around the signboard. The are found with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check.

The bodies look like they are ripped apart. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the guests died two days ago. With DC 15 it is revealed that this is the work of clawed monsters.

MONSTER ROSTER

Monsters are tied to a particular location, but may move around. For instance, loud noises can attract the monsters to a different location, or monsters could patrol at

night. The majority of the monsters are **goblin zombies**. Consult page 8 for their statistics.

Location	Monster(s)	Notes
A2	4 goblin zombies	25 XP
C1	3 zombies	25 XP / The zombies are former guests
D2	6 goblin zombies	50 XP
E1	8 crawling claws	25 XP / The claws can reach the tunnel underneath E1
F1	4 goblin zombies & 5 crawling claws	50 XP
Piste	30 goblin zombies	Spread around in groups of 1d6

RESORT LOCATIONS

A1. RECEPTION

It's a mess in the reception area with scraps of broken furniture scattered around. There is a big map of the ski piste behind the large desk that is about twenty feet wide. Over the map someone scribbled with charcoal: "NONE OF YOU WILL SURVIVE".

Wisdom (Perception) DC 10: To notice velvet ropes on the floor that formed rope barriers near the two small hallways.

Piste map: The map shows the piste as described on page 6. It has two flashy signs near the top of the mountain. One reads: "New *barbar* piste to open soon! Come and see the frozen man!" The other reads: "Guaranteed avalanche free!"

Desk: A guest book lies open with the last entry three days ago. According to the entries, there are 16 guests currently residing at the resort.

GM Note: The entries contain the names of the survivors holed up in location H1.

A2. GOBLIN ROOMS

The doors to the goblin rooms are denoted as a private area. Inside the bunk beds are mostly broken down, showing signs of struggle.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 10: To find small medicinal flasks amidst the rubble that contain traces of a herbal concoction.

Medicinal flask: A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check shows that the herbal concoction is commonly used as a way to calm persons.

GM Note: The goblins got sick before they turned into zombies.

B. STABLE

A foul stench of something rotten encircles you as soon as you enter the stables. Scattered around in the old hay lie the remains of goats brutally ripped apart. Someone scribbled "NO HOPE" in charcoal on the wooden walls.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 10: To notice a schedule written in Goblin.

Goats: A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the goats died two days ago. With DC 15 it is revealed that this is the work of clawed monsters.

Schedule: Reading Goblin or a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check shows that the schedule lists the different planned rides of the shuttle service with departing and arriving guests. The latest entry is three days ago.

C. LODGES WEST

The door opens to the walls of a long hallway. Someone used charcoal to write "NOBODY IS GOING TO SAVE US" all over it.

Door to C4: The wooden door is locked. It requires a successful DC 10 Dexterity check to open with thieves' tools. It can be forced with a successful DC 10 Strength check.

INDIVIDUAL TREASURE

Roll for random individual treasure left behind by guests at your discretion. Typical amounts to find are 14 (4d6) sp or 10 (3d6) gp. Another option is to roll for a random trinket on the ski trinkets table.

C1 - C3. GUEST ROOMS

The guest rooms contain nothing but crushed furniture and bloodied sheets.

Bloodied Sheets: A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the blood is two days old.

C4. FRA CINO'S ROOM

This room is surprisingly tidy. A neatly folded habit lies on top of the unspoiled bed. There is a small portable iron safe in the corner.

Iron Safe: The safe is opened with a successful DC 10 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a successful DC 15 Strength check.

Contents Safe: The safe contains the following: *Fra Cino's Thurible* (see page 8), 5 sticks of incense and a book titled "Ten Thurible Uses. Number five will shock you!" Award 25 XP for this find.

Book: The fifth item in the book tells of the ritual as described on page 8.

SKI TRINKETS

d6	Trinket
1	A snow globe with two hobgoblins on skis that sing when the globe is shaken
2	A round wooden flask with iron casing that contains a sweet smelling liquor which tastes like chocolate
3	A copper emergency whistle that sounds like an eagle when blown
4	A pair of gnomish glasses with blue filters that partially blocks sunlight
5	A tiny jar with elvish runes that contains an herbal ointment which soothes the skin
6	An overly large hat made of red wool with a bell on top that always rings the same melody

D. TAVERN

A path laden with signs brings you to a large ramshackle building with two large wooden doors. Wooden sign boards above designate the doors' destinations: "Food Court" and "Fancy Restaurant". From the windows of the food court comes a faint green glimmer.

GM Note: The green glimmer comes from the ghostly hobgoblin as described in D1.

D1. FOOD COURT

There is rubbish everywhere, as if this place hasn't been properly cleaned. An abundance of signboards near the stands promote their wares in a pushy manner. Many dishes are named after the *barbar* that can be admired on the top of the new piste. A sweet smell unlike anything you have encountered so far reaches you: fried dough. From its directions comes a faint green glimmer while a deep voice repeats the phrase: "Five for five! Five for five!"

Voice: The voice comes from a fritole¹ stand run by a ghostly hobgoblin. It holds out a paper bag. The hobgoblin vanishes if someone exchanges 5 coins of any denomination for the bag. If someone takes the bag without paying, the hobgoblin transforms into a **shadow**.

¹A fritole is an Italian fried doughnut.

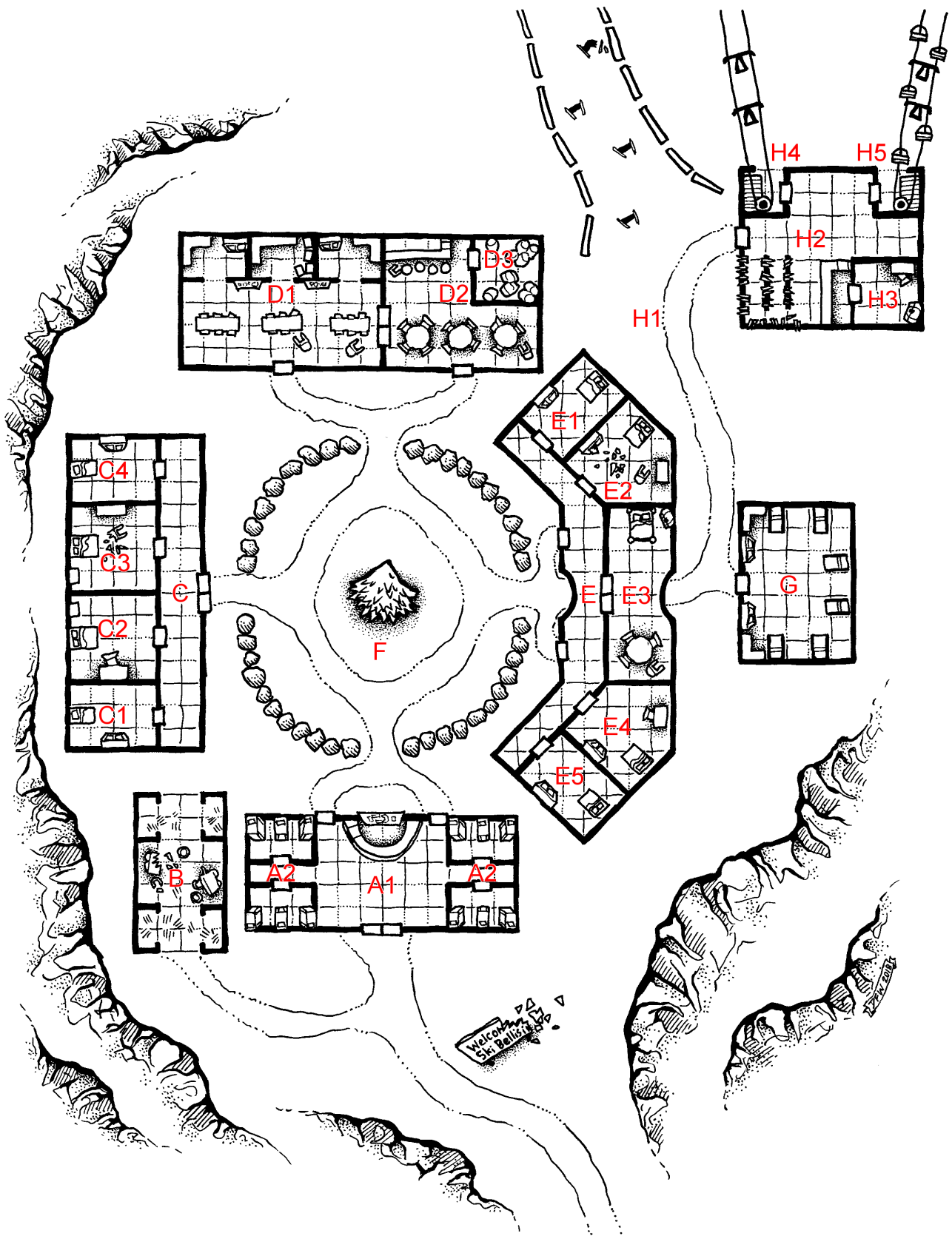


Figure 1: Map of Ski Bellissimo resort
1 square = 5 ft.

Paper Bag: The bag contains 5 magical fritoles. Consuming a fritole restores 2 hp and provides enough nourishment for one day. Award 25 XP for obtaining the fritoles.

D2. RESTAURANT

This place is as fancy as a goblin run restaurant can get. Burnt up candles adorn the tables that vary wildly in size and shape. A blackboard near the bar promotes a special weekly menu named after the frozen *barbar* who lies at the top of the mountain.

Tables: There are carvings in one of the tables that designate a crude map of the resort and piste. A mark with charcoal highlights the hut on the piste. Writing next to it reads: "We're here!"

D3. STORAGE

Two opened crates lie sideways on the floor.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 10: To notice two bottles of Grappa del Goblin worth 25 gp each. The label depicts a drunken hobgoblin holding a bottle.

Opened Crates: The crates are emptied of their contents. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals traces of root vegetables and bread.

GM Note: The survivors obtained supplies here.

E. LODGES EAST

The door opens to the walls of a long hallway. Someone used charcoal to write "WE'RE STILL HERE!" all over it.

E1, E2 & E4. GUEST ROOMS

The guest rooms contain nothing but crushed furniture and bloodied sheets.

Bloodied Sheets: A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the blood is two days old.

E3. RICHI DI SOLE NERO'S ROOM

This room is obviously the honeymoon suite of the resort. A fluffy bear hide hung upside down decorates the wall. At another part of the wall someone wrote "IF YOU'RE STILL ALIVE, GO UP" with charcoal.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 10: To find a silvered dagger worth 25 gp and a set of fine clothes with an embroidered emblem.

Emblem: The emblem is known to belong to the house of di Sole Nero with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check. This is a marginal noble family that holds land near the coast.

E5. MASINA COUSINS ROOM

A vague scent of perfume stings your nostrils. In a good way.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 10: To notice a bottle of Grappa del Goblin worth 25 gp. The label depicts a drunken hobgoblin holding a bottle.

Perfume: A vial of perfume worth 5 gp lies on the bed within a disorderly set of pink dresses.

F. SQUARE

As you leave the stables and reception behind you follow the path to a small square surrounded by big rocks. Signboards point in all kinds of directions where other pathways go. A lonely pine tree stands tall in the center. Under the tree two ghostly hobgoblins wear hats with bells and sing songs of joy as they glimmer green.

Ghostly Hobgoblins: The hobgoblins vanish into the air when they are approached.

Graffiti: Written in charcoal on one of the rocks is graffiti that reads: "NEED HELP".

GM Note: The path to locations G and H goes underneath the lodges of location E.

G. INFIRMARY

You open the doors to one large room where several hospital beds lie overturned. The cabinets near the walls look untarnished however.

Cabinets: The cabinets contain a variety of herbs and medical instruments. A potion of healing is found with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Shambles: After the characters enter the infirmary, the ghost of **Shambles the Shaman** (see page 8) appears. He ran the infirmary until the zombie infestation broke out. His spirit moves on if this curse is lifted. He can relay the following information:

- He regrets the opening of the new piste and believes the curse is caused by disturbing the eternal rest of the barbarian.
- He heard people outside two days ago and believes they were headed for the piste.

- He thinks that an avalanche that buries the barbarian under snow will return it to rest and thus lift the curse.
- If Shambles likes the characters he gives them 3 pieces of *goblin fireworks* (see page 8) that was originally intended to celebrate the opening of the new piste. Award 25 XP for this gift.

H1. PATH TO SKI LIFTS

The Ski Lifts are at the bottom of the piste. The chair lift still operates. In the distance further up the piste the contours of a large hut are visible.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 10: To notice light in the hut and smoke coming out the chimney.

H2. SKI LIFT HALL

A smell of decay lingers everywhere in the hall. Rows upon rows of skis in all sizes stand in front of a large desk and office. In the distance the chair lift creaks and sighs. Near the entrances to the lifts there is a large map of the piste.

Skis: The skis are still in good shape to be used on the piste. See page 9 for rules on using skis.

Map: A sign boasts of there being zero risk of avalanches. Another sign promotes the new piste and the barbar to be admired at the top. The ski hut is encircled with charcoal. Figure 2 shows a flowchart of the piste.

H3. OFFICE

Papers lie around without any apparent order to them. A large horn the size of half a goblin decorates the wall.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 15: To notice that a section of the wall does not follow the same wooden pattern as the rest.

Wall Section: The wall section is the locked door of a safe. It is opened with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check requiring thieves' tools or a successful DC 15 Strength check.

Safe: The safe contains 40 gp and 60 sp.

Horn: The horn is a *goblin klaxon* (see page 8).

H4. ROPE TOW LIFT

The rope tow lift is not operating. Its rope is attached to a treadmill.

Treadmill: A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation or Nature) check shows that the treadmill can be powered by 2 **riding horses** or 4 **goats**.

H5. CHAIR LIFT

The foul stench gets stronger here. It comes from the moving treadmill that powers the lift.

Treadmill: Inside the treadmill an **ogre zombie** chases a piece of rotten meat. It has no interest for anything else and attacks only if provoked.

GM Note: The lift hangs 10 ft. above the ground.

THE PISTE

Figure 2 depicts the different tracks of the piste. Every starting point and end point of a ski lift is considered a checkpoint.

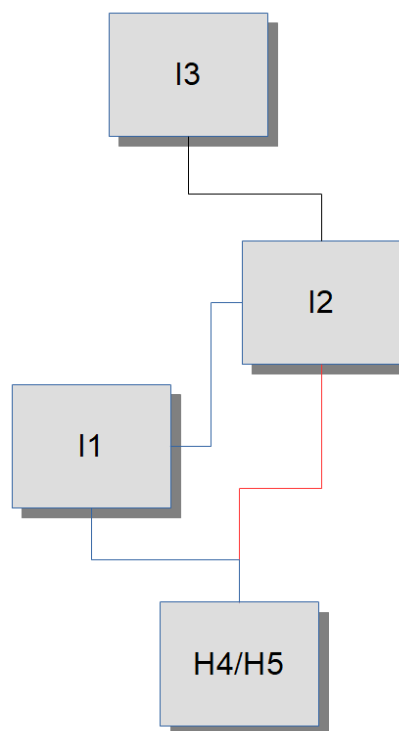


Figure 2: Flowchart of the piste

WANDERING MONSTERS

Check for wandering monsters on the piste when the characters journey between checkpoints or take a short rest. Check for wandering monsters twice when the characters take a long rest. An encounter with a group of **goblin zombies** as mentioned in the monster roster on page 2 occurs on a roll of 1 on a d6.

I1. HUT

Four survivors of the zombie infestation inhabit the hut. They are:

- Fra Cino, an old monk (human **acolyte**). He has a habit of sighing. Believes the cause of the zombie infestation to be the disturbance of the frozen barbarian's resting place. Thinks this curse is lifted by the performance of a ritual with his *thurible* (see location C4).
- Richi di Sole Nero, a human **noble** with styled hair and a dislike of peasants.
- Lola & Grian Masina, two cheeky young ladies (human **commoners**) that are cousins of the wealthy Masina merchant family.

I2. GONDOLA LIFT

A newly built lift leads to the top of the mountain. The trail is covered with fallen gondolas, save for one that's still dangling in the wind. Yet another treadmill powers the lift.

Treadmill: A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check shows that the lift can be powered by an **ogre** or something similar in strength.

GM Note: The lift hangs 10 ft. above the ground.

I3. TOP

As you reach the top, the wind gets stronger. Snow cuts into your skin with every gust. Near the top is a large patch of ice blown free. A large figure is frozen deep into it. The *barbar* the goblins boasted about. Along the edge snow fences stop snow from accumulating on the piste.

Barbarian's Grave: The barbarian lies underneath a patch of slippery ice that is 20 ft. by 20 ft. A creature moving onto it for the first time during a turn must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone. The patch is difficult terrain and a desecrated area. Undead creatures in the area have advantage on all saving throws.

Barbarian's Voice: A creature that enters the patch of ice for the first time hears a loud voice that says: "Who dared disturb my rest? Let my peace return. Let the mountain be white again."

Snow fences: The fences look fragile. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that a loud noise (audible out to 300 ft.) will cause an avalanche.

Zombie Run: When the characters reach the top, they attract the attention of all roaming **goblin zombies**. Check for wandering monsters every minute. If the characters start the consecration ritual using *Fra Cino's thurible* or cause an avalanche, check for wandering monsters every round when there is 1 minute left to complete the ritual.

Avalanche: The avalanche covers the whole piste and comes to a halt near the square in the resort, burying locations D and E in the snow.

EPILOGUE

If the characters succeed in performing the consecration ritual using *Fra Cino's thurible*, read:

As soon as you utter the last words of the ritual, the ice shakes briefly. The same thundering voice you heard before sounds in your heads: "Now I can safely go back to sleep. You have my eternal gratitude." A calm comes over the piste. The wind lies down. The last goblin zombies around you fall lifeless to the ground. Ski Bellissimo is safe again.

If the characters succeed in causing and escaping from the avalanche, read:

As soon as the avalanche grinds to a halt, the ground shakes briefly. The same thundering voice you heard before sounds in your heads: "Now I can safely go back to sleep. You have my eternal gratitude." A calm comes over the resort. The wind lies down. The last goblin zombies around you fall lifeless to the ground. Ski Bellissimo is safe again.

All remaining undead turn into lifeless corpses. Award the characters 75 XP for completing the adventure.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

If you wish to continue playing, some of the following may provide the next adventure hook for the characters:

The Barbarian Axe. As a reward for being laid to rest, the barbarian shares the location of his axe with the characters. He was a legendary warrior for his people, and his weapon possesses some interesting properties.

Fra Cino's Mission. After a well conducted ritual, with which Fra Cino might have helped, the old monk has some other duties to attend to. That involve desecrating grounds populated by undead.

Goblin Entertainers. The ski resort was part of a larger concern of goblins building all sorts of entertainment areas in these lands. Perhaps the characters found documents on another one of those, boasting of the treasure hoard or asking for help with a problem over there.

APPENDIX

MAGIC ITEMS

FRA CINO'S THURIBLE

Wondrous item, common

This thurible is a small copper censer with silver filigree suspended from a double chain. You can use the thurible to purify a 20-foot-square area of desecrated ground with a ritual. The ritual requires a stick of incense and takes 10 minutes.

GOBLIN KLAXON

Wondrous item, common

A slightly bent horn with a length of 2 ft. that is used in the mountains. It produces a sound audible out to 300 ft. The klaxon starts with 1 charge that is regained after taking a long rest.

As an action, expend 1 charge. Each creature in a 15 ft. cube can roll a d4 and add the number rolled to one ability check or saving throw of its choice. It can roll the die before or after making the ability check or saving throw. This effect ends after 1 minute. It also ends for each individual creature affected after rolling the d4 granted by this effect.

GOBLIN FIREWORKS

Wondrous item, common

This piece of firework is a small multicolored rocket. To launch the fireworks, make a ranged attack (range 150/600). Upon exploding the fireworks create bright colors in a 15-foot cone as if *color spray* has been cast.

MONSTERS

GOBLIN ZOMBIE

A goblin zombie is a goblin turned undead, hellbent on bloodshed. Unlike regular zombies, it retains its former nimbleness.



GOBLIN ZOMBIE

Small undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (armor scraps)

Hit Points 10 (2d6 + 3)

Speed 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned, exhausted

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 8

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

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Goblin Nimbleness. On each of its turns, the goblin zombie can use a bonus action to take the Dash or Disengage action.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the goblin zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the goblin zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee weapon attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage.

SHAMBLES THE SHAMAN

Shambles the Shaman is a **ghost** with the following modifications:

- It is Small and has 35 (10d6) hit points.
- It lacks the Horrifying Visage action.

- It speaks Common and Goblin.
- It has a challenge rating of 3 (700 XP).

SKI RULES

Equipping or removing skis takes an action. A creature wearing skis has an uphill speed of 5 ft., a downhill speed of 80 ft., and a speed of 10 ft. on even ground.

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