

[Blackengorge](#) - An Odd Couple - Cartwheels - Chapter #02, Scene #02

...continues from [Scene #01](#)

Synopsis
The 12th Day of Ches in the Year of the Sudden Journey
While Kireth studies, Celestia looks for enlightenment at the temple, and Zero entrenches himself in the inn, Khalin and Tradden have agreed to assist one of the villagers, the elf smith Caldring, in looking for iron ore in the swamps to the southeast beyond the lake.
The group have headed into the marshes where Caldring has spotted an iron cartwheel. As she tries to pull it out she falls into the swamp with a splash, but resurfaces with skeletons not far behind!

- [Khâlin Grundokri](#) - 2nd Level Male Dwarven Warlord
- [Tradden Aversward](#) - 2nd Level Male Human Fighter
- Caldring Andrezar - NPC

Scene Length
This scene starts on Friday 19 November 2010 and is expected to be completed by the end of Sunday 28 November 2010. Players are expected to be able to post at least once a day.

INITIATIVE BLOCK

Combat Encounter completed

- 01) [25] Tradden - **1d20+3+2: 25** - HP 18/32
- 02) [23] Deerepit Skeletons (Batch 1) - **1d20+3: 23**

Deerepit Skeleton #01 - Dmg: 9=9

Deerepit Skeleton #02 - Dmg: 15=15

Deerepit Skeleton #03 - Dmg: 11=11

Deerepit Skeleton #04 - Dmg: 11=11
- 03) [21] Skeleton - **1d20+6: 21** - Dmg: 16+23+7=46
- 04) [20] Khalin - **1d20+2+2: 20** - HP 21/31
- 05) [19] Deerepit Skeletons (Batch 2) - **1d20+3: 19**

Deerepit Skeleton #05 - Dmg: 12=12

Deerepit Skeleton #06 - Dmg: 8=8

Deerepit Skeleton #07 - Dmg: 12=12

Deerepit Skeleton #08 - Dmg: 12=12
- 06) [18] Caldring - **1d20+4+2: 18** - HP 36/36
- 07) [16] Deerepit Skeletons (Batch 3) - **1d20+3: 16**

Deerepit Skeleton #09 - Dmg: 6=6

Deerepit Skeleton #10 - Dmg: 12=12

Deerepit Skeleton #11 - Dmg: 13=13

Deerepit Skeleton #12 - Dmg: 6=6

BATTLE MAP



Matt, me and Random: "*Figures.*" thought Tradden to himself as he shook some of the excess water off and watched the dead rise en masse from the swamp. One after another each would start with a milk white hand appearing like the moon over the horizon, quickly followed by the rest of the arm, the head and so on, until the full skeleton was stood, baleful black sockets very much giving the impression of malevolent intent.

With a coolness belying his young age (and which he hoped would also impress his companions), he stepped forward.

Mindful that they could get flanked by the now numerous skeletons he positioned himself so as to be in a line with the others - they would have to get around the three of them first!


Hoping to take advantage of a quick strike, he looked out with both weapons at what appeared to be the biggest one. He didn't have enough room to charge it properly, but he saw it his all nonetheless.

hoping to take advantage of a quick strike, he lashed out with both weapons at what appeared to be the biggest one. He didn't have enough room to charge it properly, but he gave it his all nonetheless.

[Surprise Stab vs Skeleton's Reflex: **1d20+9: 16**] - hits!
[Damage: **4**] and [Grants **Combat Advantage**] and [**Marked**]

He had the things attention now anyway.

[Surprise Stab Secondary Attack: **1d20+9+2: 19**] - hits!
[Damage: **2d6+7: 12**]

 Me and Random: *The first wave of skeletons to arise out of the squelching bog lumbered around the cartwheel and towards Tradden and Khalin, their tattered cloaks swaying limply.*

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[Decrepit Skeleton #01 Longsword: **1d20+6: 23** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - hits!
[Damage: **4**]

[Decrepit Skeleton #02 Longsword: **1d20+6: 15** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - misses!

[Decrepit Skeleton #03 Longsword: **1d20+6: 15** vs Khalin's AC(18)] - misses!

[Decrepit Skeleton #04 Longsword: **1d20+6: 24** vs Khalin's AC(18)] - hits!
[Damage: **4**]

Sharp edges swirled around the heroes, some slashing across their legs.

 Me and Random: *The skeleton that had risen first turned its malevolent eye sockets towards Tradden and slashed with its longsword.*

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[Skeleton Longsword: **1d20+10: 25** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+2: 9**] and [**Marked**]

The blade caught Tradden across the arm and an eldritch hiss emanated from the skull.

 Mark, me and Random: *Khalin raised an eyebrow as the skeletons advanced. "More skeletons? By the lord of the twin axes, is this forsaken land purely the realm of the dead?"*

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The warlord resolved himself to press the elf smith further on what was really going on with goblinoids, kobolds and now minions of the undead. As he'd suspected during the battle in the gorge days before, the threat was surely greater than the locals were prepared to admit. But he wouldn't get the chance if they didn't dispatch these monsters back to whatever hell they'd sprung from.

His battlefield instincts kicking in, Khalin appraised the situation in a heartbeat. If he could get between Caldring and Tradden he could protect both with his shield, but for now two of the decrepit skeletons were bearing down on him, and would have to be dealt with first.

With a snarl Khalin swung his hammer at the skeleton before him...

[Warhammer attack vs Decrepit Skeleton #3: **1d20+6: 8**] - misses!

...but he slipped a little on the sodden earth and missed his target by some distance.

 Me and Random: *The second wave of skeletons to arise out of the squelching bog did not advance immediately. Instead they drew back rotted bows and let fly green shafted arrows at the heroes.*

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[Decrepit Skeleton #05 Shortbow: **1d20+6: 14** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - misses!

[Decrepit Skeleton #06 Shortbow: **1d20+6: 12** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - misses!

[Decrepit Skeleton #07 Shortbow: **1d20+6: 15** vs Khalin's AC(18)] - misses!

[Decrepit Skeleton #08 Shortbow: **1d20+6: 12** vs Khalin's AC(18)] - misses!

The skeletons aim was well off the mark, however, and all of the arrows flew wide of their mark.

 Me and Random: *Caldring dropped into a defensive stance, her footing unsteady in the bog. With grace belying her precarious position she drew out a razor-sharp scimitar hidden behind the pack on her back [Minor].*


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The blade was dull but along the flat were runes that began to shine as Caldring wielded it before her.

"Stay close," she barked at Tradden and Khalin, and took a swing at the skeleton, one of the runes shining brighter as the blade cut through the air.

[Word of Shielding vs Skeleton: **1d20+6: 11**] - misses!

The blade whistled pass the skeleton, only cutting a slice off it's tattered cloak.

 Me and Random: *The final wave of skeletons splashed through the bog, seemingly unhindered. With unnerving speed they joined their fellows at hacking at the young fighter and the dwarf.*

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[Decrepit Skeleton #09 Longsword: **1d20+6: 26** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - critical hit!
[Damage: **4**]

[Decrepit Skeleton #10 Longsword: **1d20+6: 26** vs Khalin's AC(18)] - critical hit!
[Damage: **4**]

[Decrepit Skeleton #11 Longsword: **1d20+6: 12** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - misses!

[Decrepit Skeleton #12 Longsword: **1d20+6: 25** vs Khalin's AC(18)] - hits!
[Damage: **4**]

Blades whirled all around the heroes, cutting and slicing into them.

 Matt, me and Random: *Without warning Tradden's worst fears were fulfilled – they were surrounded!*

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Tradden's confidence in his own abilities was also lower than normal – the boggy ground clawed and sucked at his feet, making his trademark fancy footwork even more difficult than normal. Why had Caldring brought them here? What was so important that it risked coming into such a death trap with so few people?

Trying to stay light on his feet, the young fighter hoped that the swamp would allow him to at least try and even the numbers...

[Tempest Dance vs Skeleton: **1d20+9+2: 31**] - critical hit!
[Damage: **1d8+7+2+1d6: 17**] and [**Marked**]
[**Magic Item Use**: Frost Longsword Daily Power (Cold): **1d8: 6**]

[Secondary Attack vs Decrepit Skeleton #09: **1d20+9-2: 12**] - misses!


[Tertiary Attack vs Decrepid Skeleton #02: **1d20+9-2: 25**] - *hits!*
[Damage **1d8+7: 15**] and [Killed]

Somehow the young fighter's feet managed to find purchase, and for the first time Caldring was witness to his trademark explosion of spinning blades. By the time he stopped to compose himself, there were frosty, shattered bones all around...

[Use **Action Point**]
[Second Wind: Tradden regains 8 hit points and adds +2 to defences until start of next turn]

Turning back to the main skeleton, Tradden pointed his icy sword right at it.

"*Your next...*"

 **Me and Random:** *Although bones lay splintered and frozen across the surface of the bog, the skeletons kept on coming.*


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[Decrepid Skeleton #01 Longsword: **1d20+6: 26** vs Tradden's AC(18+2)] - *critical hit!*
[Damage: **4**]

[Decrepid Skeleton #03 Longsword: **1d20+6: 17** vs Khalin's AC(18)] - *misses!*

[Decrepid Skeleton #04 Longsword: **1d20+6: 26** vs Khalin's AC(18)] - *critical hit!*
[Damage: **4**]



Sharp edges swirled around the heroes, some slashing across their legs.

 **Me and Random:** *The main skeleton, now glittering with a rime of frost, continued to press its assault against Tradden.*

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[Skeleton Longsword: **1d20+10: 28** vs Tradden's AC(18+2)] - *hits!*
[Damage: **1d8+2: 9**] and [**Marked**]

The skeleton swiped across Tradden's midriff, drawing a line of blood.

  **Me, Random and Mark:** Khalin gritted his teeth against the tide of blows from the undead minions bearing down on the party.

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[Second Wind (Minor): **7** hp regained, +2 AC until start of Khalin's next turn]

The battle was not going well. The sheer weight of numbers was starting to take it's toll. Khalin looked for a position to assist both his comrades, but the sheer amount of skeletons in the way and the tricky conditions underfoot prevented him from moving.


A wry smile crossed his bearded lips. "*Take heart, my friend,*" he bellowed across to Tradden. "*There'll be broken bones before we're finished, and they won't be ours!*"

[Inspiring Word (Minor): Tradden regains **1d6+8: 14** hp spending a **Healing Surge**]

The dwarf then lashed out at the lead skeleton.

[Warhammer vs Skeleton: **1d20+6: 11**] - *misses!*

The dwarf's quick strike failed to hit its intended target.

 **Me and Random:** *The second wave of skeletons drew back their bows once more and let fly at the heroes.*

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[Decrepid Skeleton #05 Shortbow: **1d20+6: 21** vs Tradden's AC(18+2)] - *hits!*
[Damage: **3**]

[Decrepid Skeleton #06 Shortbow: **1d20+6: 21** vs Tradden's AC(18+2)] - *hits!*
[Damage: **3**]

[Decrepid Skeleton #07 Shortbow: **1d20+6: 9** vs Khalin's AC(18+2)] - *misses!*

[Decrepid Skeleton #08 Shortbow: **1d20+6: 7** vs Khalin's AC(18+2)] - *misses!*

Two of the arrows thudded into Tradden.

 **Me:** *Caldring looked around her at the skeletons attacking Tradden and Kireth. The boy and the dwarf were faring badly - although the lead skeleton looked to be on its last legs, the rest of the skeletons were starting to swarm over them. If she didn't act appropriately, another wave might consume them.*


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Caldring held her blade above her head, runes flaring out brightly, and crashed it down into the water at her feet. As the waves cascaded outwards from the shock a shimmering rune, a baleful yellow fire, settled for an instant, and then grew with a crescendo to cover the skeletons with divine fire.

[Flames of Purity (Close Blast 3) : Rune of Protection]
1d20+6: 18 vs Skeleton - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 7**
1d20+6: 21 vs DS #01 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 9**
1d20+6: 11 vs DS #03 - *misses!*
1d20+6: 20 vs DS #04 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 11**
1d20+6: 23 vs DS #05 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 12**
1d20+6: 23 vs DS #06 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 8**
1d20+6: 19 vs DS #07 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 12**
1d20+6: 24 vs DS #08 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 12**
1d20+6: 13 vs DS #09 - *misses!*
1d20+6: 21 vs DS #10 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 12**
1d20+6: 19 vs DS #11 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 13**
1d20+6: 24 vs DS #12 - *hits!* - Damage: **1d8+5: 6**

[Rune of Protection: Each ally in blast regains **3** hp]




Vast clouds of steam leapt up from the marsh water as the firestorm hit, obscuring any view that Khalin or Tradden had. All they heard was the cracking and splintering of bones.

 **Me and Random:** *Khalin had lost his comrades in the mist that swirled around, and turned a couple of time before he was confronted with a blade swiping in at him unexpectedly.*

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[Decrepid Skeleton #03 Longsword: **1d20+6: 15** vs Khalin's AC(18+2)] - *misses!*

Khalin raised his shield up against the swipe and deflected it to the side. At least the dwarf could see something now!

   **Matt, me and Random:** The swamp was suddenly very, very quiet. Tradden couldn't hear either of his two companions, which he thought was odd until he realised he was hardly making a sound either...

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What was that? There was a slight sound... could it be the bone-on-bone sound of a skeletal warrior moving?

[Perception check: **1d20+3: 12**]

The splash was coming from behind Tradden's ear [East], but he wasn't sure if it was friend or foe.


It had to be the Skeleton - that wierd sound coming from the exact place he had last seen it. Using the same technique he had used a few days earlier when in the middle of a magical goblin inspired fog, Tradden looked to trade some power for more accuracy, knowing that it would still be tough given he could hardly see his own hand...

[Surestrike vs DS#9's AC with Frost Sword - **1d20+11-5: 16**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+3: 6**]

Tradden was greeted by the clash of steel on bone and the muffled sound of bones splintering and falling onto sodden earth.


"Hmm - one down, but how many more to go?" he thought to himself, moving forward slightly, and following the slightly sturdier ground around in a little curve in what he thought was a southwesterley direction, and which "should" put him between Caldring and Khalin.

"Hello?" he said aloud? "Khalin? Let me know if you are there MasterDwarf..."

 Me and Random: Khalin heard a splash behind him and whirled around just in time to see a blade slice through the mist and spear towards his head. Nov 22, 2010 ▼

[Decrepit Skeleton Longsword: **1d20+6: 20** vs Khalin's AC(18+2)] - hits!
[Damage: **4**]


Khalin ducked, but not in time and the blade cut across his cheek.


 Mark, me and Random: Khalin was confident his dwarvish senses and battle savvy would guide his hammer to the foe... Nov 22, 2010 ▼
[Perception check: **1d20+1: 18**]

...But a wise warrior tempered confidence with guile, and the dwarf stayed his hammer and jabbed hard with his shield - a skeleton would surely splinter and fall, but if his instinct failed him an armoured comrade could still ride the blow...

[Furious Smash vs Decrepit Skeleton #3: **1d20+6-5: 2**] - critical miss (hits Tradden)!
[Damage: **3**]

The dwarfbumped into Tradden, smashing him with his shield, just as he cried "Over here!" to his companion.

 Me: The words "Hello" and "Over Here" echoed around the mists, muffled reflections of their own voices taunting the comrades. Somewhere out there was a least one more skeleton, but there didn't seem to be any sound from Caldring. Nov 22, 2010 ▼

 Me and Random: Tradden moved slowly towards his friend, or at least towards where he thought Khalin was. The shield had bashed him on the back of his shoulder, but the shield and dwarf had disappeared back into the mist. He kept on solid ground, slowly edging towards the muffled sounds of bones clacking. Nov 23, 2010 ▼

[Perception Check: **1d20+3: 10**]

Tradden thought he could sense the dwarf near him, but also the splashing of a skeleton in water. Blind, but creful, he struck out.


[Sure Strike vs Decrepit Skeleton #03: **1d20+11-5: 26**] - critical hit!
[Damage: **1d8+3+1d6: 15**]

With a crash Tradden slammed his blade into the skeleton, and it splintered into pieces, dropping into the water below.

 Me: "Is that them all," shouted Tradden, hoping his friend was nearby. Nov 23, 2010 ▼

"No need to shout, young 'un," piped up Khalin, stood behind the young warrior. "Don't want to bring any more up out of the swamp. Now, where's that elf?"

The two friends stood back to back for a while trying to gain their bearings. Slowly the mists caused by Caldring's fire dissipated and the marsh began to take shape again. They were still near the cartwheel, jutting up out of the water, but there was no sign of Caldring.

 Me: Khalin looked over towards the cartwheel and moved cautiously into the water, prodding and poking the ground before him with his warhammer. When he was thigh deep he started swirling his arms around in the cloudy water trying to find any sign or clue for where Caldring had gone. Nov 23, 2010 ▼

As if on cue, to further dampen their mood, thunder pealed across the heavens, and great globs of rain began to fall.

"She'll be round here somewhere, Master Tradden," said the dwarf, eyeing the fighter warily. "She'll be alright, don't you worry!"

Just as Kireth finished his words there was a loud scream from nearby, behind where the party stood. A female scream.

Tradden whirled round trying to peer through the murk, but couldn't see anything. Khalin piped up, "There!" He pointed off to the northeast - two hunched figures standing over a prone body. A lightning bolt struck a nearby tree, sending flames shooting up into the air, and Tradden could see more clearly.

The figures were a ghastly pale colour with lonk lank hair and long extended fingers ending in vicious claws.

"Hey, there!" shouted Tradden at the top of his lungs, "you leave her alone!"

And he charged off towards them, weapons drawn.

 Me: [...continued in [Scene #03...](#)] Nov 23, 2010 ▼