



...continues from [Chapter #06, Scene #08](#)

Synopsis

The 20th Day of Ches in the Year of the Sudden Journey

Descending into the gloom of a long forgotten ruin in the northern forest the party have found what appears to be more than a goblin lair. They have despatched many goblins, including a chieftain, Balgron the Fat and his pet torturer. An incarcerated goblin gives them some clues and the party have moved on to locate the chieftain's treasure. Heading into some caves they encountered vermin and strange cave fishers, and even more bizarre creatures, such as kruthik and slimes. Now they have entered some foul smelling chambers and encountered dwarven zombies.

- [Khâlin Grundokri](#) - 4th Level Male Dwarven Marshal (Warlord)
- [Kireth Majere](#) - 4th Level Male Half-Elven Arcanist (Wizard)
- [Tradden Aversward](#) - 4th Level Male Human Weaponmaster (Fighter)
- [Zero Uhlit](#) - 4th Level Male Human Scoundrel (Rogue)

Scene Length

This scene starts on Friday 26 August 2011 and is expected to be completed by the end of Friday 9 September 2011. Players are expected to be able to post at least once a day.

INITIATIVE BLOCK

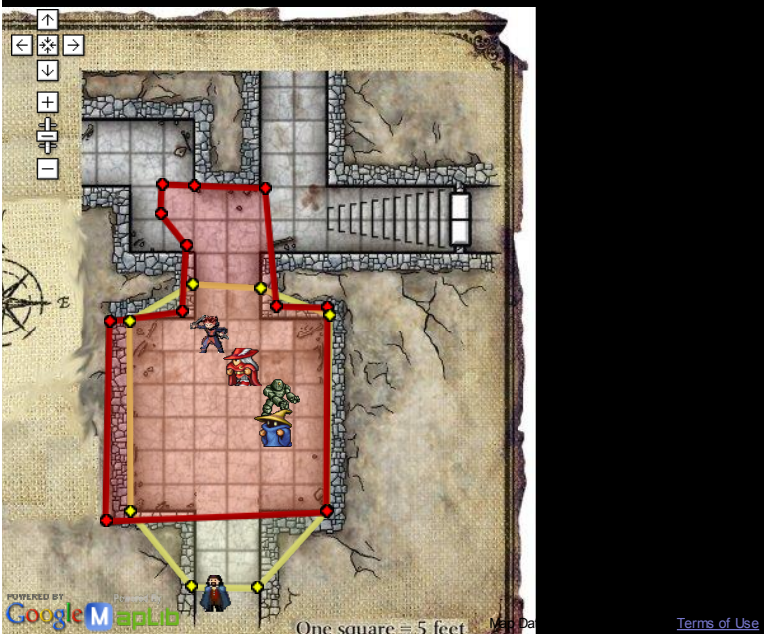
Round #08
Combat Encounter Completed

- 01) [26] Kireth - **1d20+8+2: 26** - HP 32/36 (Grabbed)
02) [18] Tradden - **1d20+5+2: 18** - HP 30/45
03) [16] Zero - **1d20+5+2: 16** - HP 40/40
05) [14] Khalin - **1d20+3+2: 14** - HP 15/41 (Bloodied)
Sp) [01] Goliath Zombie - **1d20-1: 1** Dmg: 14+17+18+16+6+14+7+17+6+9+6+12+11+11+6+12+8=191 (Risen) (Marked by Tradden)

Removed from Play


- 04) [15] Zombie #02 - **1d20-1: 15** Dmg: 9+4+18+11=42 (Bloodied)
Sp) [01] Zombie #03 - **1d20-1: 1** Dmg: 12+5+9+11=45 (Marked by Tradden) (Bloodied)
06) [06] Zombie Rotter - **1d20-1: 6**
Zombie Rotter #01 Dmg: 6=6
Zombie Rotter #02 Dmg: 9=9
Zombie Rotter #03 Dmg: 9=9
Zombie Rotter #04 Dmg: 9=9
Zombie Rotter #06 Dmg: 6=6
Sp) [06] Zombie Rotter - **1d20-1: 13**
Zombie Rotter #06 Dmg: 7=7
Zombie Rotter #07 Dmg: 14=14
Zombie Rotter #08 Dmg: 26=26
Zombie Rotter #09 Dmg: 10=10
Zombie Rotter #10 Dmg: 10=10
07) [01] Zombie #01 - **1d20-1: 1** Dmg: 9+13+7+4+13=46 (Marked by Tradden) (Bloodied)
Sp) [xx] Hobgoblin Zombie Dmg: 8+10+14+6+15+11+22+7+6+7+6=112 (Risen) (Marked by Tradden)
Sp) [01] Zombie #04 - **1d20-1: 1** Dmg: 6+12+15+6+6=45 (Bloodied)

BATTLE MAP





Illumination: Darkness.
Doors: These are made of wood with banded bronze and are closed (unless otherwise stated).
Walls: The walls are smooth stone, and the floors consist of flagstones with mortar between them (unless otherwise stated).

Yellow Polygon: denotes the area of effect of Kireth's Light spell.
Red Polygon: denotes the area of effect of Khalin's torch.

 Matt: "Why don't we ever meet anyone nice?" growled Tradden as he sensed movement off to his right.
Behind him he heard the words of magic starting to be intoned.

Aug 26 ▼

  Neil, me and Random: **Kireth Majere**



Aug 27 ▼

To the surprise of some, Kireth stepped forward into the room. A single word was spoken under his breath and the light from his staff pulsed a light blue colour. [Radiant]
More arcane words started to flow and Tradden, noticing the hairs on his arm raise, knew what was coming.

[Shock Sphere]
[Damage: **2d6+5: 9**]
[Shock Sphere vs Zombie #01's Reflex: **1d20+8: 25**] - hits!
[Damage: **9**]
[Shock Sphere vs Zombie #02's Reflex: **1d20+8: 11**] - hits!
[Damage: **9**]
[Shock Sphere vs Zombie Rotter #03's Reflex: **1d20+8: 17**] - hits!
[Damage: **9**]
[Shock Sphere vs Zombie Rotter #04's Reflex: **1d20+8: 26**] - hits!
[Damage: **9**]

*The crackling of electricity filled the air as **Kireth's** spell lit up the chamber with vivid whites and blues. The charnel stench increased as the energy tore into the walking dead - two of them exploded, with chunks of rotten flesh and bone scattering across the room.*

[Zombie Rotter #03 Dead]
[Zombie Rotter #04 Dead]



  Matt, me and Random: **Tradden Aversward**

Aug 26 ▼

Shielding his eyes from the glare of Kireth's magics, which were as impressive as ever when they worked, Tradden was ready to take in the scene when the fireworks had died down.
There were undead Dwarves to his left, and one very close to his right. There were also two at the other end of the chamber, right ahead of him. There was something about them that his instincts told him were the primary threat in this room right at the moment, so he moved in their direction, flinching as a fetid hand from the nearest zombie clawed out at him...
[Zombie Rotter #01 Opportunity Attack: **1d20+6: 7** vs Tradden's AC(19+2)] - critical miss!

He barrelled into the two more substantial Zombies and cleaved out at them with a wild Dwarven warcry to try and encourage Khalin. He never stopped to think whether this would spur on the dead Dwarves in the room.
[Cleave]
[Primary Attack vs Zombie #01: **1d20+11: 25**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 13**] and [Marked]
[Zombie #02 takes 4 splash damage]

*As **Tradden** rushed in he saw that the two larger figures indeed were zombies, but used to be human, rather than dwarven. They looked 'fresher' than the dwarves, but naked except for filthy rags. He neatly sliced off one of the first zombie's arms and followed through into the second one, and looked rather pleased with himself before he saw a malevolent shadow at the fringes of the flickering torchlight.*

  Nick, me and Random: **Zero Uhlit**

Aug 27 ▼

Zero took a prudent step back and concealed himself partially behind the wall. He then took aim at one of the human zombies on Tradden and squeezed the trigger of his crossbow.
[Gloaming Cut vs Human Zombie #02: **1d20+9+2: 14**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d6+1: 4**] plus [2d8: 12 sneak damage]
[Stealth Check to Hide: **1d20+13: 32**] - success!

Zero's bolt plunged into the zombie's eye, spurting blood and goo over **Tradden**, before the rogue slipped back into the shadows.

 Me and Random: **Zombie #02**

Aug 27 ▼

*It felt a little odd to **Tradden** to be fighting naked men, especially one with a bolt protruding from its eye. However, the charnel smell, the rotting flesh, and the piercing light in their eyes spurred him on. For now, though, he had to dodge flailing limbs that attempted to slam him regardless of the cost to the zombie's body.*
[Zombie #02 Slam: **1d20+6: 17** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - misses!

Tradden dodged under one such limb, worried what it might do if it made contact!

 Mark, me and Random: **Khalin Grundokri**

Aug 28 ▼

As the zombies had lurched into action, any doubt in Khalin's mind had quickly melted away. There was nothing left of the proud subterranean race left in these monstrously animated shells, and he quickly turned his hammer to the undead creature to his left.
[Warhammer vs Zombie Rotter #02: **1d20+7: 24**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 12**]

*With one fell swoop **Khalin's** hammer crushed the undead dwarf next to him, crushing its body into the stone floor. Then, without remorse, he strode forwards to join **Tradden** against the larger creatures.*
[Zombie Rotter #02 Dead]

 Me and Random: **Zombie Rotters**

Aug 28 ▼

*The two remaining dwarven zombies began to move, but quickly held their arms up over their eyes, trying to shield themselves from the blinding radiant light that spilled out from **Kireth's** staff.*
[Staff of Light]
[Zombie Rotter #01 takes 1 damage plus 5 vulnerable]
[Zombie Rotter #05 takes 1 damage plus 5 vulnerable]

Their actions were fruitless, though, as the radiant light took hold and destroyed their bodies from within.

[Zombie Rotter #01 Dead]
[Zombie Rotter #05 Dead]

The humanoid directly in front of Tradden lashed out with a lib, trying to club the young fighter into submission.

[Zombie #01 Slam: **1d20+6: 18** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - *misses!*

*The arm crashed into one of **Tradden's** sword, the force of the attack nearly toppling **Tradden** over, the sword cutting right to the bone. The zombie didn't seem to notice, let alone care.*

The hulking figure behind the two humanoids was that of a hobgoblin, fairly fresh and still wearing the armour and weaponry that the creature must have carried when it was alive.

It eyed the fighter and dwarf before it with hatred in its eyes, the crouched down opened its jaws and let out a long, loud moan that echoed around the small chamber.

[Zero Perception Check: **1d20+10: 14**] - *failure!*

*It then grabbed one of the zombies in front of it by the neck with its free hand, and pulled it backwards roughly, before stepping up into the space that had been vacated and swung at **Tradden**.*

[Hobgoblin Zombie Longsword: **1d20+12: 14** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - *misses!*

Off balance after dragging one of the humanoids back, the swing was well off the mark.

This time Kireth kept his distance, pleased with the work of his staff, but still able to contribute from range. Eyes narrowing, he murmured for a moment and then sent forth a searing ball of energy into the zombie nearest Khalin.

[Force Orb vs Zombie #02's Reflex: **1d20+8: 17**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **2d8+5: 11**]

The energy crackled around the zombie and spread to the others.

[Secondary Attacks]

[Force Orb vs Zombie #01's Reflex: **1d20+8: 23**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **1d10+5: 7**]

[Force Orb vs Hobgoblin Zombie's Reflex: **1d20+8: 25**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **1d10+5: 8**]

The energy was too much for the first zombie, and it fell to the floor, turning to dust on the way.

[Zombie #02 Dead]

This battle was going well - these strange zombies of men. dwarves and this bizarre new one were succumbing well to the combination of blade, hammer, bolt and magic.

Still, if there was thing Tradden had learned it was that the only good enemy was a dead enemy. Hmmm. Looking at what was before him, he realised that was an ethos he was going to have to give some more thought to...

[Pass Forward as Move Action - Centered on Zombie Hobgoblin]

[Surprising Stab vs Zombie #01]

[Primary Attack vs Reflex: **1d20+11: 16**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **4**] and [Grants Combat Advantage] and [**Marked**]

[Secondary Attack: **1d20+11+2: 22**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **2d6+7: 13**]

A quick one-two with his blades and the zombie sank to the floor, leaving only the hobgoblin undead before him.

[Zombie #01 Dead]

Zero looked over his shoulder.

Did he hear moans?

He gulped down his fear and took aim at the last undead. One decent shot and he'd be able to rejoin his friends.

[Gloaming Cut vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+9+2: 17**] - *misses!*

[Stealth Check to remain hidden: **1d20+13: 19**] - *failure!*

***Zero's** bolt thudded into the shield of the hobgoblin zombie. It looked up, across the battlefield at the rogue, and let out a long, low moan.*

*From the left and right of **Zero**, within the darkness, came a multitude of replies.*

As the rogue frantically looked around him, he thought he could make out shadowy figures in the gloom of the corridors, advancing slowly.

"Oh dear," he muttered.

"Didn't I say we should move on?" muttered Khalin to no one in particular. *"Yes, I believe I did say we should move on."*

Regardless, the dwarf raised his hammer again. If more of these undead fiends were about to make an appearance then this hobgoblin was best dispatched post haste.

"Hobgoblins. I HATE hobgoblins!" yelled the dwarf, punctuating his complaint with his warhammer, deftly angling his swing to try provoke an off-balance counter-attack from the shambling goblinoid.

[Brash Assault vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+7: 22**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **1d10+5: 10**]

[Target gets free counter with CA - if taken, free counter for Tradden with CA]

***Khalin's** warhammer crashed into the zombie's leg and left the dwarf's flank exposed. As planned, the zombie swung its longsword down in a long arc.*

[Hobgoblin Zombie Longsword: **1d20+12+2: 19** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - *misses!*

Khalin deftly dodged to the side, allowing **Tradden** to sweep in with another blow.

[Tradden Opportunity Attack: **1d20+11+2: 14**] - critical miss!

But the young fighter couldn't make the best of the opportunity.

 Me and Random: **Hobgoblin Zombie**


Aug 31 ▼

The zombie shuffled towards **Kireth** and **Zero** slowly [Shift: N] calling out with a rumbling low moan. From all around **Zero** came replies as figures began to materialise out of the gloom.

With a huge swing of its longsword, the zombie then attempted to slice **Khalin** in two.

[Hobgoblin Zombie Longsword: **1d20+12: 13** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - critical miss!

Khalin easily dodged the swing, though.

 Neil and me: **Kireth Majere**

Sep 1 ▼

Kireth looked down towards the Hobgoblin then quickly back behind Zero. Boxed into this room by the undead was not a position he wanted to be in right now.

"Zero, get in here and behind my light... move it!"


A bolt of light streaked over the thief's shoulder and slammed into one of the zombies

[Magic Missile vs Zombie Rotter #06: **2+4+1: 7**] - automatic hit!

Not waiting for the dust to settle, literally, Kireth started to move forwards.

*And **Zero** was left in the darkness!*

[Zombie Rotter #06 Dead]

 Matt, me and Random: **Tradden Aversward**

Sep 1 ▼

Hearing Kireth's shout and seeing the mage come rushing into the chamber, Tradden realised something was going on in the corridor they had used to enter.

Where was Zero anyway?

Tradden moved towards the entranceway a little [Pass Forward], knowing that both the mage and the rogue may want to take up positions behind him and Khalin.

Of course, there was still the issue of the Hobgoblin, or what was left of it, stood right next to him.


[Frost Longsword vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+11+2: 32**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d8+7: 14**] and [Marked]

The blade bit deep into the torso of the zombie, but the expression on its face remained inert and uncaring.

Glancing nervously at the Northern passageway, Tradden pulled his sword out from the body of the bizarre Zombie.

"Come on - Die!.... Again...!"

 Nick and me: **Zero Uhlit**

Sep 2 ▼

The brief flash of light from Kireth's magic missile revealed a horrific sight to the lone thief: soulless eyes, rotting flesh, grasping fingers, all coming at him.

His body froze as the illumination vanished as abruptly as it had come, plunging him, and them, into dangerous darkness again. His faculties instantly abandoned him in terror. He couldn't even scream. But somehow he wrestled them back, at least for an opportune moment, and he bolted faster than he ever had before, straight into the chamber and the sanctuary of the light.

Fingers clawed at him as he left the darkness and burst out into the light, tugging at his cloak, and drawing him back, but the rogue thankfully slipped their grasp.

 Mark, me and Random: **Khalin Grundokri**

Sep 5 ▼

All hell felt like it was breaking loose somewhere in the gloom. Khalin could hear Kireth sprinting (most un-Kireth like) towards his companions. '*Best place*', thought Khalin mirthlessly.

There were clearly more enemies abroad, but the shambling hobgoblin must be dealt with first, then the situation could be properly assessed. With Tradden flanking the zombie, Khalin hoped he could take advantage...

[Warlord's strike vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+7+2: 20**] - misses!

*Steel met steel as **Khalin's** hammer crashed against the parry of the hobgoblins longsword. The dwarf swore that the thing smirked!*

 Me and Random: **Zombie Rotters**

Sep 4 ▼

*Out of the darkness from whence **Zero** had sprinted came another horde of rotting and repugnant dwarves, their flesh in tatters, swinging from their old bones. With a fury they swarmed into the chamber, with the bearers of light their targets.*

[Zombie Rotter #07 Slam: **1d20+6: 13** vs Kireth's AC(17)] - misses!


[Zombie Rotter #08 Slam: **1d20+6: 22** vs Kireth's AC(17)] - hits!

[Damage: **6**]

[Zombie Rotter #09 Slam: **1d20+6: 23** vs Kireth's AC(17)] - hits!

[Damage: **6**]

*Two swipes of their arms caught **Kireth** abruptly, almost shattering his concentration on the Light spell. He steeled himself, however, and remained as calm as he could.*

 Me and Random: **Hobgoblin Zombie**

Sep 5 ▼

*Wisps of black acrid smoke rose like steam off the hobgoblin zombie's skin as the radiant light of **Kireth's** staff bore into it.*

[Staff of Light]

[Hobgoblin Zombie takes **1** damage plus **5** vulnerable]

The hideous creature howled as pain coursed through its veins. [Bloodied]

It transfixed its glare upon the staff-wielding wizard, and strode forwards, ignoring the warriors upon it.

[Khalin Attack of Opportunity vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+7+2: 27**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d10+5: 15**]

[Tradden Combat Superiority vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+11+2: 10**] - misses!

[Tradden Combat Superiority vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+11+2+2: 19**] - misses!

[Zero Attack of Opportunity vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+9: 20**] - misses!

The dwarf's warhammer crashed into its back as it moved onwards, but **Tradden** missed with his chance, **Zero's** bolt flew wide, and the zombie moved in for the kill.

The zombie attempted to cleave the wizard's staff clean in two with a long swipe of his sword.

[Hobgoblin Zombie Longsword: **1d20+12+2-2: 29** vs Kireth's AC(17)] - hits!

[Damage: **1d8+5: 7**]

The staff stood firm, but the recoil nearly jarred it out of the wizard's hands.

[Kireth Bloodied]

[Hobgoblin Zombie Bloodied]



Me: **Zombie #03**

Sep 5 ▼

Figures continued to spill out of the gloom into the light - first, a slim zombie, tall and long-haired, naked as the humans, but elven and female, skin yellowing and flaring purple and green around a large welt of a brand - a circle, with two curved horns - across its bare chest. No longer considered one of the fair race, it staggered forward with only evil intent.



Me: **Zombie #04**

Sep 4 ▼

Another fresh-looking and naked zombie appeared from the eastern corridor, this time a dwarf, although not as ancient and crumbling as the others. It too had the brand on its bare chest, and came forwards without care in its eyes.



Neil, me and Random: **Kireth Majere**

Sep 5 ▼

Even Kireth's highly disciplined minded was shouting "Run, Run". Waves of flesh eating undead descending upon you has caused even the most battle-hardened to falter. "No" Kireth found himself saying outloud. They did not know how many more may come down upon them, nor from what direction. The others needed time to deal with the hobgoblin. Kireth had to draw a line. He held his ground.

He raised his arm, shooting pains swam into his head from the numerous gouges and cuts already caused. It only fueled his resolve.

"Templa Koron" Yelled the mage

[Force Orb vs Zombie Rotter #7's Reflex: **1d20+8: 16**] - hits!

[Damage: **2d8+5: 14**]

[Force Orb vs Zombie Rotter #9's Reflex: **1d20+8: 11**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d10+5: 11**]

[Force Orb vs Zombie Rotter #8's Reflex: **1d20+8: 28**] - critical hit!

[Damage: **1d10+5: 15**] plus [1d6: 6 radiant damage] plus [5 vulnerable]

[Force Orb vs Zombie #03's Reflex: **1d20+8: 22**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d10+5: 12**]

One of the dwarven zombies exploded with an amazing amount of force, decimating everything around it. When the curious fleshy dust had dissipated, three zombies had been obliterated, and another seriously wounded.

[Zombie Rotter #07 Dead]

[Zombie Rotter #08 Dead]

[Zombie Rotter #09 Dead]

[Action Point]

Through the slowly settling dust Kireth spared a quick glance to his right. The walking flesh was still there but he smiled anyway, it was already destroyed... it just didn't know it yet. The Dwarf, at least it was once a dwarf, was more of a concern. Kireth snarled, his fingers curled up like talons and slashed the air in front of him.

[Shadow Claws vs Zombie #03's Fortitude: **1d20+4: 21**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d10+1: 5**]

A shadowy mist rose from the floor in response to **Kireth's** clawed hands and began to curl and wrap around the zombie in front of him. The shadow writhed around the creature as if tugging it back down into the floor.



Matt, me and Random: **Tradden Aversward**

Sep 5 ▼

Once again Tradden was forced to shield his eyes from the flare of Kireth's magic. When the forearm over his eyes was lowered, three of the shambling horrors which had advanced from the north lay in blackened pieces and another showed similar signs of damage. Even as he watched strange, shadowy claws seemed to reach from the floor and grasp at the damaged zombie. The young fighter shuddered.

Kireth was becoming even more powerful. Still, as the zombies' last wave of attacks had shown, the mage was still vulnerable to physical damage.

Parrying the lumbering swipes of the fetid arms of the Hobgoblin, Tradden neatly stepped around it in a half circle which ended with him neatly slipping past the magic user. [Pass Forward]

"Mind if I cut in?" he quipped to both the wizard and the undead monstrosity in front of him.

[Tempest Dance]

[Primary Attack vs Zombie Rotter #10: **1d20+11: 23**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d8+7: 10**]

[No Shift]

[Secondary Attack vs Zombie Hobgoblin: **1d20+11: 29**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d8+7: 11**] and [Marked]

[Shift: NW]

[Tertiary Attack vs Zombie #03: **1d20+11: 18**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d8+7: 9**] and [Marked]

The dwarven rotter fell where it stood, sliced neatly in two by the blade. The other cuts bit deep, caking the party in spurts of congealing blood.

[Zombie Rotter #10 Dead]

[Zombie #03 Bloodied]

Tradden regretted the necessity of exiting melee with the ex-Hobgoblin but the tide of undead coming from the North needed stemming and he now stood in their way.

"Going to have to leave him to you for a minute Chaps!" he called over his shoulder. He turned back to the two zombies now shuffling out of the dark in front of him and readied himself...



Nick, me and Random: **Zero Uhlit**

Sep 6 ▼

Har too close to the Hobgoblin zombie for comfort, Zero moved to his glassy gaze to shift from hero, then swiftly dashed for the shadows.

[Fleeing Spirit Strike]
[Shift 3] and [Stealth Check: **1d20+13: 14**] - critical failure!
[Hand Crossbow vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+9: 29**] - critical hit!
[Damage: **2d6+4: 16**] plus [**1d6: 6** critical damage]
[Stealth Check: **1d20+13: 18**] - success!

In his haste to flee, **Zero** tripped over, rolling away towards the southern corridor in a heap. Regaining his balance he let off a bolt from his crossbow, which nearly tore the hobgoblin zombie's head from its shoulders. He then stepped backwards into the shadows and the darkness, as if the whole manoeuvre was one perfected plot.

The hobgoblin zombie, slowly, but surely, sank to the floor and lay still.

   Mark, me and Random: **Khalin Grundokri**

Sep 7 ▼

Khalin raised his eyebrow at the remarkable front-line displays from the group's 'artillery' - Kireth and Zero. However there would be little time for back-slapping right now. Two zombies remained before them, and who knew how many more were hidden in the shadows beyond and behind.

The dwarf jogged up alongside Tradden, taking a wide berth to avoid any flailing zombie limbs, once again forming a barrier between the enemy and the beleaguered mage.

"Splendid work!" remarked the warlord as he moved into position...

[Minor action - Inspiring Word: Kireth spends a Healing Surge and regains **1d6+9: 15** hp]

...before swiftly bringing his hammer down on the nearest zombie, once again feinting to try draw his opponent into a disadvantageous position...

[Brash Assault vs Zombie #03: **1d20+7: 26**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 8**]
[Free counter with CA to Zombie #3. If taken, free counter to Tradden with CA]

The warhammer crashed into the zombie's shoulder, and the frail elven body looked as though it were about to shatter. However, with blinding speed it threw the other arm across Khalin's face.

[Zombie #03 Slam: **1d20+6+2: 11** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - misses!

Khalin was ready for the counter, though, and parried the blow with his shield, leaving the zombie elf exposed on its flank. Tradden took the opportunity.

[Tradden Frost Longsword vs Zombie #03: **1d20+11+2: 21**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 11**]

The zombie fell - crushed and sliced.

[Zombie #03 Dead]

  Me and Random: **Zombie #04**

Sep 7 ▼

The dwarven zombie was now stood opposite one of its kin, at least in origin, if not its nature. There appeared to be no recognition of this fact, only a blind hate that drove it onwards, swinging its arms and fists like giant clubs, trying to ignore the pain caused by Kireth's radiant light.

[Staff of Light]
[Zombie #04 takes **1** damage plus **5** vulnerable]

[Zombie #04 Slam: **1d20+6: 16** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - misses!

Khalin dodged the swings with care, watching the creature's moves for any opportunity to strike.

 Me: **Goliath Zombie**

Sep 7 ▼


The scattered remains of a dozen or so ancient dwarven zombies scattered the room, mixed with the rotting parts of other, fresher, undead. Now it seemed only one remained before them.

Then, out of the shadows to the north appeared a looming figure, a behemoth in size, towering even over the lanky **Tradden**. It shambled forwards slowly, a gaunt and hateful look on its face. Its skin was grey, covered in mottled patches and speckled with odd coin-sized growths of bone appearing like pebbles studding its arms, shoulders, torso, and head. In the centre of its chest was the same brand as the others, a circle with two horns, burnt mercilessly into the skin.




The bony ridge jutting over its eyes partially hid the pinpoints of light in its dark eye sockets, betraying it as one of the undead the party had already dispatched.

In its arms it carried a huge hammer-like weapon, needing two arms to carry and massive strength to swing.

It opened its mouth and issued a long, low rumble, that felt as though it shook the room.

 Matt: "Erm...." whispered Tradden, with an audible "gulp", awestruck by the shambling monstrosity which lumbered into view at the end of the corridor.

Sep 7 ▼

   Neil, me and Random: **Kireth Majere**

Sep 8 ▼

He smelt it before he saw it. That much rotting flesh coming down the corridor was overpowering to them all but to his keen sense, ergh, it was too much. Kireth began to turn but his eye was drawn back to the now still corpses that lay around them. Something just wasn't right, he couldn't put his finger on it but, if he had a sixth sense, it sure was tingling.

He spared a moment, brief as it might be, to take one last look at the slain hobgoblin that lay at his feet.

[Arcane check on Hobgoblin Zombie: **1d20+11: 18**] - success!

The scattered remains of zombie bodies and dust appeared to be inert and harmless, but wisps of necrotic energy clung on to the hobgoblin zombie like a writhing scarf. It appeared to be just a shell on the floor, lying still, but **Kireth** could sense that a great magic had been placed upon it, and the spirit that bound it to the undead plane hadn't yet been fully destroyed.

Kireth placed a boot across the creature's throat, just to ensure it couldn't get up quickly, and then fired an arcane blue bolt through its temple.

[Magic Missile vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **2+4+1: 7**] - automatic hit!

A huge piece of flesh was obliterated at the side of the hobgoblin's head, revealing a stark white skullbone beneath. The wisps of energy surrounding the silent corpse shook and slithered, but did not dissipate entirely. The mage withdrew his boot slowly, backpedalled, and gripped his staff ever tighter.




   Matt, me and Random: **Tradden Aversward**

Sep 8 ▼

"What the ...?" said Tradden, glancing over his shoulder whilst moving forward to meet the new threat. "He's dead again ... **Kireth!** THESE ONES!" he gestured finally, slicing at the remaining dwarf-zombie as if to make his point.

[Frost Longsword vs Zombie #04: **1d20+11: 17**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 12**] and [Marked]

The blade cut deep into the dwarf-zombie's side, but the monstrosity kept on moving.



Nick, me and Random: **Zero Uhlit**

Sep 8 ▼

Zero saw the hideous giant looming over his friends and gawked in horror.

It was clear where his next shot would be aimed.

He pointed his crossbow at the bulky, misshapen head and squeezed the trigger.

[Gloaming Cut vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+9+2: 15**] - misses!
[Stealth Check: **1d20+13: 28**] - success!

The bolt simply bounced off the colossal figure, not even penetrating the skin.

Zero gulped as he saw the shot cause no harm, but kept his nerve, and silence, and remained as still as he could in the shadows.



Mark, me and Random: **Khalin Grundokri**

Sep 8 ▼

The goliath shambled towards the group, and Khalin and Tradden stood shoulder to shoulder again before it. But the remaining dwarf zombie would have to be dealt with, and quickly.

[Warhammer vs Zombie #04: **1d20+7: 21**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 15**]

A low sweep from Khalin caught the zombie on its kneecap, and a crack of ancient bone followed by a minor stumble and fall told the dwarf that the thing before him was literally on its last legs.

[Zombie #04 Bloodied]



Me: **Hobgoblin Zombie**

Sep 9 ▼

Kireth watched the hobgoblin zombie carefully as the necrotic shadows gathered pace and thickness around it. The mage looked on with arcane fascination rather than horror, as the thing slowly rose from the ground [Move Action] and picked up its weapon and shield - it's pinpoint white eyes now a dull red, searching out the bearer of the light.

After a moment it spotted **Kireth** by the wall, holding out his staff. Pillars of black acrid smoke emanated from the zombie's skin as it was burnt by the searing radiant energy atop the mage's staff. The zombie lurched forwards, movements awkward and ungainly, but ever onwards towards the exposed wizard.

[Staff of Light]
[Hobgoblin Zombie takes **1** damage plus **5** vulnerable]



Me and Random: **Zombie #04**

Sep 9 ▼

The dwarven zombie in front of **Khalin** managed to steady itself, standing and moving with its left leg at an awkward angle. Its gaze was ever directed towards the mage and cared not for the warriors in front of it except to get them out of the way and open a path to the wizard and the source of the searing light.

As the radiant light burnt into the zombie's flesh, it slammed its body into **Tradden**.

[Staff of Light]
[Zombie #04 takes **1** damage plus **5** vulnerable]

[Zombie #04 Bull Rush: **1d20+6: 15** vs Tradden's Fortitude(19)] - misses!

A little surprised, **Tradden** almost fell back, but his reflexes kicked in and he stood his ground.



Me and Random: **Goliath Zombie**

Sep 9 ▼

The huge giant lumbered forwards from the edge of **Khalin's** torchlight towards **Tradden**. It seemed to be charging at the young fighter, although the pace was somewhat slow. However, what it lacked in pace from its undead legs it made up for in bulk and it crashed into **Tradden** with a huge sweep of its giant weapon.

[Goliath Zombie Maul: **1d20+10: 26** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - hits!
[Damage: **2d6+6: 14**] and [Push **1**]

Tradden took the full force of the blow and staggered back.




The goliath lumbered forwards, though not after the fighter, its gaze had turned towards the mage and the light that he bore. As the creature stumbled forwards it left it's flank open for **Khalin** to attack.

[Khalin Opportunity Attack vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+7: 20**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 14**]

The dwarf's hammer did its work, thumping into the side of the goliath. However, it hardly seemed to notice and kept moving, shambling past **Tradden**, who had managed to recover from the giant swing of its maul. The young fighter gathered his wits and struck out at the moving behemoth.



[Tradden Combat Superiority vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+11+2: 33**] - critical hit!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 15**] plus [**1d6: 2** cold critical damage]

The blade hit home, and stopped the goliath in its tracks. [Combat Superiority]



Matt: "By the Gods!" snarled Tradden as he tried to stand his ground against the huge behemoth trying to push past him to reach the mage.
"Do you owe these fellows money or something, Kireth?"

Sep 9 ▼



Neil and me: **Kireth Majere**

Sep 12 ▼


A glance over his shoulder confirmed his fear, he could take one more step back but that would put him in the corner. He was no fighter but he knew enough to know that you never let yourself get boxed into a corner. He made the decision to start circling the zombie round the other way, carefully so not to allow it a free swipe. [Shift: S]

As he moved right, staff held out in front, the familiar light pulsed.

[Magic Missile vs Hobgoblin Zombie: **2+4+1: 7**] - automatic hit!

The force bolt just seemed to dissipate as it hit the shadows whirling around the creature. Whatever compulsion drove the creature onwards appeared to be more powerful than **Kireth** had thought. The mage's only consolation was that his light still seemed to be burning its skin.

"A little help over here?"



Matt, me and Random: **Tradden Aversward**

Sep 12 ▼

This was turning into a long battle. Tradden's legs and arms were starting to tire but there was nothing to do to all he could do was grit his teeth and carry on. To stop now was to commit to a grisly death for him and his

This was turning into a long battle. Tradden's legs and arms were starting to tire, but there was nothing to do to air he could do was grit his teeth and carry on. To stop now was to commit to a grisly death for him and his comrades, and that was no choice at all.

In front of him was a nightmare of a creature. Only the Gods would know what it had been before, Tradden had certainly never seen it's like, but right now it was a big undead brute that could not be ignored. And yet, there was a call from Kireth, whose staff alone was proving to be of great effect in this fight. Should the mage be overcome not only would its power to damage these foul creations be lost, but that would mean only Khalin's torch would light the chamber.

Decision time...

[Cleave]
[Frost Longsword vs Hobgoblin Zombie: 1d20+11: 18] - misses!
[Marked]


[Spend Action Point]

[Sweeping Slash]
[Primary Attack vs Hobgoblin Zombie's Reflex: 1d20+11: 18] - hits!
[Push 1 square: SW]
[Primary Attack vs Goliath Zombie's Reflex: 1d20+11: 31] - critical hit!
[Push 1 square: N] and [Marked]

In quick succession Tradden whirled his longsword around his head, once and then twice. The first did not land, and neither did the second, although even the seemingly unstoppable undead creatures nearest to Tradden were forced to step back lest they be struck by the frost-rimmed blade. Crouching for a second to give himself extra spring, the young fighter then threw himself at the hulking figure in front of him [Shift: N]. He had done all he could for now - he and Khalin would hold these two or die trying, but it was up to Kireth and Zero to take down the seemingly unkillable Hobgoblin!

[Secondary Attack: Shortsword vs Goliath Zombie: 1d20+10: 17] - misses!

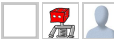
The angle of the blow was just a bit too awkward though, the flat of the blade, rather than the edge, slapping the imposing zombie beast on the chest and causing no discernable damage.

 Nick, me and Random: **Zero Uhlit** Sep 12 ▼
Zero did not like the look of the giant pile of reanimated body parts one bit. But at least it was a sizable target.

He took his shot, hoping for the best...

[Gloaming Cut vs Goliath Zombie: 1d20+9+2: 23] - hits!
[Damage: 1d6+1: 6] plus [Sneak Attack: 2d8: 12]
[Stealth Check to remain hidden: 1d20+13: 14] - critical failure!


Zero's bolt flashed out of the darkness and plunged into the huge zombie with an unnerving squelch. Congealed lumps of blood slowly oozed out of the body as the thing roared and yanked out the offending projectile and crushed it easily within one hand. Zero gulped, and stumbled, kicking a loose pile of stones on the floor, betraying his position in the darkness.

 Mark, me and Random: **Khalin Grundokri** Sep 13 ▼
There was just enough of a hint of - how could it be put? - discomfort in Kireth's call to alert Khalin that the stoic mage might soon be in real trouble. A quick glance over his shoulder confirmed that the (re?)reanimated hobgoblin was going to prove harder to bring down than the first time. But there was still a brace of foes before the dwarf and human, and Khalin couldn't disengage yet.

"Hold the fort!" the marshal yelled to Kireth, hoping the half-elf's impatience wouldn't grow too great in the interim ...and that he would still be standing when the zombies before them fell. With that the dwarf quickly considered the two opponents before him. The hulking goliath seemed most dangerous...

[Shielded Assault vs Goliath Zombie: 1d20+7: 23] - hits!
[Damage: 2d10+5: 16]
[Allies gain +2 to damage rolls vs target till end of next turn]

The warhammer crashed into the thighs of the brute before the dwarf and the sound of splintering bone could be heard even by Zero back in the darkness. The goliath swayed with the blow, almost falling over, but kept its balance, forever keeping its eyes transfixed on Kireth and the light that he bore.


 Me: **Hobgoblin Zombie** Sep 14 ▼
The zombie had composed itself from the effects of Tradden's attack and turned its eyes once again to Kireth and to the staff the mage bore. It grasped out at the staff, clutching onto it with a crumbling hand, the brilliant radiance emanating from the tip burning into the zombie's rotten flesh. It almost seemed to smile at Kireth, as though victory was at hand.

[Staff of Light]
[Hobgoblin Zombie takes 1 damage plus 5 vulnerable]

But the searing light was too strong - the shadows holding the shell of a body together could not keep the radiance at bay, and the flesh began to sear and burn, great bubbles of flesh rising and popping on the surface of the creature.


As slowly as it had risen the zombie sank to the floor, its eyes never wavering from the staff. The shadows left and with a brilliant white light the zombie turned to dust.

[Hobgoblin Zombie Dead]

 Me: **Zombie #04** Sep 14 ▼
The dwarven zombie tried to move forwards once more, ignoring Khalin and Tradden's persistent efforts to keep it back. It too was focused on Kireth, but had not the strength of the larger hobgoblin or goliath to break through the defensive ranks. It issued a guttural roar in frustration and was about to try one last time. Before it could force the issue, however, its skin began to burn, as the other creatures had, in Kireth's light, and it too fell to the floor - a blackened shell of a corpse, with no life or unlife left within it.

[Staff of Light]
[Zombie #04 takes 1 damage plus 5 vulnerable]

[Zombie #04 Dead]

 Me and Random: **Goliath Zombie** Sep 14 ▼
There was one foe left in front of the defensive wall, albeit a giant of a creature. It seemed to ignore the taunts, blades, and hammer of the pair in front of it, with only one target on its mind. Its grey skin burned in the light of Kireth's staff, but the creature did its best to ignore it, sweeping its giant maul at the fighter in front of it to clear a way towards the wizard.

[Staff of Light]
[Goliath Zombie takes 1 damage plus 5 vulnerable]

[Goliath Zombie Maul: 1d20+10: 22 vs Tradden's AC(19)] - hits!
[Damage: 2d6+6: 17] and [Push 1]

The blow landed heavily on Tradden's shoulder, and he staggered back, almost senseless from the blow. The goliath moved forwards, ignoring the dwarf to its left (Move: S) who swung round with his own hammer.


[Khalin Opportunity Attack vs Goliath Zombie: 1d20+7: 20] - hits!

Damage: **1d10+5: 14**

Ignoring the dwarf was a poor move for the zombie - **Khalin's** swing caught it on it's already broken thigh bone, and the warlord felt the satisfaction of felling the unnatural beast and cutting it down to size. The goliath crashed to the floor, still and lifeless, and a broad smile swept across **Khalin's** face.

Then, shadows began to rise from the floor, and swept around the zombie's body, coalescing into darkness even with the brightness of **Khalin's** torch and **Kireth's** light.

"We're not done yet," shouted **Kireth** from beside the wall.

 Neil, me and Random: **Kireth Majere**

Sep 14 ▼

"Hold it back as best you can," called Kireth. "It seems we cannot damage them in this state but my staff can... it just needs time. Give me what you can".

He manoeuvred himself around the room so that Tradden and Khalin provided the best obstacle.


"Hmm, it's worth a shot," he muttered to himself.

[Nightmare Eruption vs Goliath Zombie's Will: **1d20+8: 21**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+4: 7**]

There was a shudder from the zombie on the floor as **Kireth's** psychic assault hit the mind of the creature. It may not have been living and have a normal mind or soul, but there was a force driving it onward, and **Kireth's** magic assaulted it nonetheless.

The shadows swirling around the creature writhed ever faster after the attack, and the body began to be lifted, still and motionless, from the floor like a plank of wood being hoisted upwards.

Kireth's mouth widened into a smile as he marvelled at the rising body. "Ooh that's clever. I want it."

 Matt, me and Random: **Tradden Aversward**

Sep 14 ▼

Tradden groaned loudly as he pulled himself up from the half-kneel that the gigantic zombie had punched him down into. His whole body still shook slightly from the blow. He wasn't going to be able to take another one like that...


"More time?" he said, his voice getting stronger as he spoke. "*He wants more time...*?" he finished, flatly. "*Right.*".

Taking a deep breath he scampered past the now-prone creature [Pass Forward - Ending in Square North of Khalin]. He then looked to pull the thing further away from Kireth, and put it inbetween himself and the Dwarf Warlord.

[Footwork Lure vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+11+2: 31**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7+2: 17**] and [Marked] and [Pull 1: NE]
[Tradden **Shift 1**: N]

The swipe of the sword cut a large welt across the back of the Goliath, and dark sticky blood oozed out of the wound. Shadows darted in and out of the wound, and the zombie's eyes flickered open.

Tradden's footwork was, of course, fancy and in a flash he had skipped into position and dragged the foul mound of zombie behemoth with him. It wasn't going anywhere without he and Khalin having a big say...

 Nick, me and Random: **Zero Uhlit**

Sep 14 ▼

Stepping back out of Kireth's area of illumination, Zero melded with the shadows and let a bolt fly at the reanimating Goliath.

[Gloaming Cut: **1d20+9-2: 26**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d6+1: 6**]
[Stealth Check to Hide: **1d20+13: 33**] - critical success!

The bolt plunged into the carcass of the Goliath and shadows whirled around its shaft. The shadows continued to rise, pulling the body upright and the eyes began to focus once more on the wizard.

 Mark, me and Random: **Khalin Grundokri**

Sep 15 ▼

"*Why can't these bloody things stay dead?*" muttered Khalin. The dwarf sounded almost personally affronted that his victim had simply risen from his apparent 'killing' blow and started advancing again.

"Head up Tradden my boy. Looks like we're earning our gold today!" he encouraged.

[Minor action: Inspiring Word - Tradden spends a healing surge and regains **1d6+11: 16** hp]

"Right, want some more do you?" challenged the warlord as he took a defensive stance and raised his hammer once again...

[Warhammer vs Risen Goliath Zombie: **1d20+7+2: 26**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 9**]

Another strike from the warlord on the goliath's legs caused it to wobble and stutter as it was rising from the floor. The shadows wavered and coalesced around the head of **Khalin's** hammer for a moment, but then returned to continue to lift the creature.

 Me and Random: **Goliath Zombie**

Sep 15 ▼

The shadows had brought the zombie up to a standing position and its eyes were focussed on the bearer of the light. Already the light's radiant glow had started to take its toll on the wisps of shadows, and the grey skin of the creature was slowly burning.

[Staff of Light]
[Goliath Zombie takes **1** damage plus **5** vulnerable]

In front of the zombie was **Khalin**, his warhammer and shield raised defensively as a barrier. The goliath raised its maul and crashed it down onto the dwarf, attempting to batter him out of the way.


[Goliath Zombie Maul: **1d20+10: 29** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - hits!
[Damage: **2d6+6: 13**] and [Push 1: S]

As best **Khalin** could try, he could not hold back the onslaught of the creature, and he staggered backwards with the blow.

The creature moved forwards, shuffling and dragging its oddly-angled legs, but onwards towards **Kireth**. **Tradden** took the opportunity to slice at the creature's hamstrings as it started to shuffle away.

[Tradden Combat Superiority vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+11+2: 24**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 12**]

The blow was a true one, and the creature fell to one knee with a howl of frustration, it's movement, for the time being, stopped. [Combat Superiority - Goliath Zombie stops movement]

 Neil, me and Random: **Kireth Majere**

Sep 15 ▼

Watching the the way the wisps of shadows rolled, undulated and retracted Kireth could tell that this impressive magic was starting to falter.

"Almost there" he urged the fighters "stay on target".

Holding out the staff that had already offered them so much aid against these foes, he called on the last spell once more.

[Nightmare Eruption vs Goliath Zombie's Will: **1d20+8: 25**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+4: 11**]

*The creature's body convulsed as **Kireth's** psychic bolt penetrated its defences. Shadows fell from the body as tattered ribbons, and it sank lower to the floor, not being held by their strength. Barely perceptible tendrils still clutched it upright, however, and it tried to lumber onwards regardless of its shattered legs.*

   Matt, me and Random: **Tradden Aversward**

Sep 15 ▼

"Stay on target..." repeated Tradden grimly to himself as he continued to hack away at the fell creature, chopping down with his longsword.

[Basic Melee Attack vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+11+2: 17**] - misses!
[Marked]

The young fighter then again moved, skipping over the prone Goliath [Pass Forward] to take up a position next to Khalin, back in the stronger light and once again imposing himself between it and Kireth, who's magic appeared to be having the most affect.

"You ever seen anything like this before?" he asked of Khalin, through heavy breaths.

   Nick, me and Random: **Zero Uhlit**

Sep 16 ▼

"Drop, you ugly bugger," Zero growled as he notched another bolt and took aim once again.

[Gloaming Cut: **1d20+9+2: 16**] - misses!
[Stealth Check to remain hidden: **1d20+13: 14**] - critical failure!

Zero slipped as he pulled the trigger on the crossbow - the noise of the fall and subsequent expletive could be heard echoing around the chamber. He had been somewhere hidden in the darkness to the south, but was now pinpointed by his own noise.

  Me and Random: **Khalin Grundokri**

Sep 16 ▼

Khalin strode forwards once more, blocking the entrance to the chamber alongside Tradden, forming a barrier between the giant zombie and Kireth. [Move: N1]

"You keep working on how to destroy this thing," he huffed at Kireth as he raised his warhammer. "The lad and I will keep it at bay."

He swung the warhammer down again, trying to crack the other leg, and cut the creature down to size.

[Brash Assault vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+7: 13**] - misses!
[Target can make free attack, Ally within 5 can make riposte]

The warlord's swing missed, and it left his shoulder exposed. The zombie continued to push forwards, slamming its maul down in a large arc.

[Goliath Zombie Maul: **1d20+10+2: 28** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - hits!
[Damage: **2d6+6: 13**] and [Push 1]

***Khalin** staggered back with the force of the blow once more. The creature had been battered and worn by the warriors' blows, but whatever force drove it on was still strong.*

"Now!" shouted **Khalin** in frustration, and **Tradden** sliced across the zombie's legs once more.

[Tradden Frost Longsword vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+11+2: 21**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 11**]

***Tradden's** sword cut across the goliath's legs and it stumbled forwards. But, instead of crashing to the ground, the shadows swirling around it held it upright, and it kept on moving forwards, its eyes still focused on the light.*

  Me and Random: **Goliath Zombie**

Sep 16 ▼

*The giant, driven on by the obsession of **Kireth's** light, staggered forwards on shattered limbs bolstered by whirling shadows. The shadows were faltering in the radiant energy from the wizard's staff, but even the pillars of smoke blowing from the creature's grey skin and the audible hissing of the rotting flesh burning failed to stop it in its tracks.*

[Staff of Light]
[Goliath Zombie takes 1 damage plus 5 vulnerable]

It cared little for the young fighter behind it, that tried to stem the movement. [Move: S1]

[Tradden Combat Superiority vs Goliath Zombie: **1d20+11+2: 18**] - misses!

Neither did it care much for the dwarven warlord that tried to block it's path. [Move: SE1,S1]




[Khalin Opportunity Attack: **1d20+7: 21**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 12**]

***Khalin's** final strike did, however, appear to have some lasting effect - a crack of bone and tear of flesh nearly took the zombie's leg off at the knee. Gouts of blackened, congealed blood fell out of the gaping wound, the lower half of the limb held on only by a thin strip of the grey flesh. The zombie stumbled forwards, dropping its maul, the shadows gathering like a dark cloud around its arms, and it made a grab for both **Kireth** and the staff.*

[Goliath Zombie Grab: **1d20+10-2: 21** vs Kireth's Reflex(17)] - hits!

*The goliath leant against **Kireth**, its weight bearing down on the wizard and pushing him backwards and downwards towards the floor. One of the zombie's spade-like hands held onto the staff, starting to pull it out of the wizard's grasp - the other was clutched around **Kireth's** shoulder, digging into the muscle and bone like a blacksmith's vice.*

The shadows leapt up from the goliath's arms and began to swirl around the staff, heading for the light on the amber tip. The room began to dim...

   Neil, me and Random: **Kireth Majere**

Sep 16 ▼

That particular battle was the staffs and the staffs alone. He could no more influence the light from it than he could that of the sun's. As for his chance of pulling the staff free from the Goliath's grip... probably even less.

No, his action (and hopefully not his last on this plane) had to be a continued attack on the creature's mind, or what ever was left of it.

[Nightmare Eruption vs Goliath Zombie's Will: **1d20+8: 25**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 8**]

*As the last words of **Kireth's** spell left his lips the goliath jerked backwards, and its head snapped back. The shadows swirled with increasing vigour around the end of the staff, but the goliath's hands went limp and **Kireth** pulled back his possession with anger.*

Then the goliath lurched forwards - the shell of a body falling towards the hapless wizard. It bore down on him with increasing speed, and he found he had nowhere to go.

With a sickening crunch the pair landed on the stony floor, **Kireth** trapped underneath the behemoth. The shadows had fled, the shell of the goliath no longer able to fuel them, and the chamber seemed suddenly empty. A small groan emanated from somewhere under the goliath.

Then **Kireth's** light went out.

 Me: [...Combat Encounter Complete...]

Sep 16 ▼

 Me: **Short Rest**

Sep 16 ▼

Healing Surges
Healing surges are applied.
Khalin spends 3 healing surges (6 left) to get to 41/41 hp.
Kireth spends 1 healing surge (6 left) to get to 36/36 hp.
Tradden spends 1 healing surge (7 left) to get to 41/45 hp.
Zero spends 0 healing surges (7 left) to get to 40/40 hp.

Encounter Powers
All encounter powers are recharged.

Milestones
No milestone reached.

Levelling
No characters ready to level.

 Matt and Neil: And then the world went dark.


Sep 19 ▼

Kireth was alone. He was in a forest. It felt like it was the forest he had grown up in but looked nothing like it. The trees were all charred and blackened. Heavy smoke hung in the air, deadening sound and limiting vision. Something was out there, he could hear it whispering. What was being said was just out of his reach, just beyond him.

Where was it coming from? The mage whirled around looking into the smoke. No, wait. Not into the smoke... it was the smoke... only it was no longer smoke.... it was shadow. *"I... I see you"* And with that, a large weight was lifted off the mage.

With a grunt Tradden rolled, more than he lifted, the goliath over and away from the prone mage.

"Nearly a crushing defeat, eh?" the young fighter quipped, with a wink, holding his hand down for the half-elf to help him up. Tradden had no doubt that the wizard would appreciate such razorsharp wit.

 Mark: *"Zero? You still out there?"* called Khalin, keen in the failing light to get the rogue's opinion on what might lay back in the corridor.

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 Nick: "Yes," replied the rogue, emerging from the darkness of the southern corridor.

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He looked a little twitchy.

"Erm, some bones in there," he reported. "And another chamber, I think."

 Matt: Tradden, still holding his hand out, whipped his head around in the direction of the Rogue.


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"When you say...." his mind wandered to the Skeletons he and Khalin had fought in the marshes"... bones..." He cleared his throat. *"Do you mean 'piles of', or do you mean 'walking around with bloody great swords and glowing red eyes'..."*


 Nick: "Oh, piles," Zero explained. "For now at least."

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He smiled, mostly to reassure himself everything would be OK.

 Matt: "Good!" replied Tradden, visibly relieved. *"I have had enough undead to last me a lifetime. Are you getting up or what, Kireth?"*

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 Me: **Kireth** rose to his feet unsteadily, somewhat lost in his own thoughts. He rubbed the back of his head a few times before murmuring and relighting the end of his staff, thrusting the tip down towards the goliath and started to inspect the creature.

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Khalin lifted his torch higher, trying to get a better view of the chamber they were in. It was fairly square and appeared to be fairly well maintained, with the exception of the littered remains of the undead strewn across the floor. It was strange to think that only a couple of tendays previous that the Warlord was on standard patrol with the Border Watch, with only the occasional wild boar or feral dog as an enemy - now he was thigh deep in the remains of undead dwarves warriors, slaughtered by his own hand, and he was barely batting an eyelid. He had come a long way in such a short time.

As the dwarf cast his keen eye around the chamber he noticed for the first time the small recesses in the walls, a foot or two high, three or four deep and five or six long. Perhaps they were burial chambers for the dead, perhaps the dwarves, although why they were stood in the chamber to attention, waiting for something was anyone's guess. Someone, or something, had obviously animated the corpses and left them 'orders' to guard; that was the only simple explanation. However, it didn't explain what they were guarding, or where the other, fresher, zombies fit into the puzzle.

He knelt down next to one of the ancient dwarves that the party had left relatively intact. Although it bore no weapon, it still wore pieces of armour - rusted and pitted with age, probably a few centuries old by his reckoning. The hardier zombie had been a pair of humans, an elf, and another dwarf, all naked and weaponless with the same circular brand with stylised horns on their chest. Something about that image flickered memories in **Khalin's** mind, but he couldn't place it for now. He then, stood, his decision made.

"Let's investigate south," he said to everyone. "There's nothing further to find here."


 Me: "What?" queried **Zero**, "towards the bones?"

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The rogue looked at the rest of the group, and at **Khalin** who looked quite serious.

"Oh," he managed, realising that **Khalin** meant it. "And I suppose you'll be wanting me to go first, eh?"

He sighed with resignation when there was no immediate answer and turned back towards where he had been hiding in the shadows, and crept forwards, this time with **Khalin's** and **Kireth's** lights right behind him for comfort.

 Me: **Zero** slowly padded forwards, keeping his keen eyes out for anything unusual. Next to him was **Khalin**, carrying a torch, and behind came both **Tradden** and **Kireth**, the mage still lost within his own thoughts.

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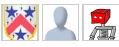
It was much easier for the rogue to understand the layout of the new chamber now that he had light to guide him, it was about twenty feet across and a hundred or more long, with ten massive stone sarcophagi, five on each wall, lining the walls. Scattered across the floor, in no particular order were bleached white bones, maybe of men, maybe smaller, interspersed by small pieces of rock and rubble. Towards the end of the chamber, by the last pair of sarcophagi, were a pile of three or four hobgoblins, obviously dead.

Zero quickly inspected the closest sarcophagi - it was made of granite and bore a relief image of a dwarf in full plate armour, and had indecipherable, at least to him, script adorning the lid. It was

born and chipped, but to his relief didn't appear to have been opened in any way. He glanced across to the others, and some of those further down the chamber appeared to have had the lids removed. However, judging by bits of rubble here and there on the chamber floor, it might even be possible for the lids to have exploded.

The rogue gulped. What if the lids had exploded from within?

To the east the chamber, or crypt, opened into a higher, wider area from which a starry glow emanated.



Matt, me and Random: Almost in unspoken agreement, Tradden and Kireth adopted a central position, the two central sarcophagi flanking them.

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Despite the drained look of horror on Zero's face, Khalin beckoned him. "Come on Mr Nothing - we check them all." He hefted his warhammer in a way he hoped assured the human. Zero simply grinned nervously. Methodically they checked each of the strange sarcophagi, from west to east. The first job was a cautious check as to whether there were any obvious occupants. At the same time, Zero checked for any signs of danger or traps - "It does pay to be careful after all..." he muttered. At the same time, fascinated by the stonework and the increasingly apparent influence of his kin in this place, Khalin looked to see whether he could report any issues of interest or at least work out what had happened in this chamber - had ancient dwarven warriors really burst forth from these tombs?

[Khalin Perception Check: 1d20+2: 19]

[Zero Perception Check: 1d20+10: 23]

Most of the sarcophagi appeared intact, only the very last two, at the far eastern end appeared to have been damaged. Zero noticed that a couple here and there appeared to have had attempts to lever them open judging by the scratches and chips in the stone, but had stood firm. Khalin stroked his beard as he contemplated whether the final two sarcophagi had indeed been opened from the inside, and against his normally down-to-earth mindset, he had to agree they had. There were no remains inside the final two, yet there were bones strewn around the chamber that seemed to match a dwarven physique.

Whilst all this was going on, Kireth and Tradden had not been idle.

"Well?" Snapped the mage. "Make yourself useful and search through these bones!" The wizard clearly had other things on his mind, and was currently staring intently at the currently unexplored eastern end of the chamber, perhaps studying the eerie glow.

"Erm... alright... seems, er, reasonable..."

[Kireth Perception Check: 1d20+2: 11]

[Tradden Perception Check: 1d20+4: 10]

There didn't appear to be anything unusual about the bones, except they were slightly smaller than human ones, but perhaps slightly sturdier.

[Kireth Arcana Check: 1d20+11: 27]

The dim light at the end of the crypt was certainly magical, of that Kireth was sure, but it didn't seem to stem from any arcane source that he was aware of.

By this point, the increasingly on-edge Zero and Khalin had moved through all the Sarcophagi to the two most eastern of the lot. There lay the pile of hobgoblins.

[Khalin Perception Check: 1d20+2: 19]

[Zero Perception Check: 1d20+10: 11]

There were three corpses, perhaps a tenday or two old judging by the state of decay. Cuts and lacerations about the face and upper body suggested that they had been assaulted by something, but it was difficult to pinpoint a source. The three bodies seemed to have been neatly piled up, right between the centre of the final two sarcophagi. Their armour and weapons - longswords - were still with them, but there were no other items on their corpses.

Beyond the hobgoblins lay the antechamber, and from their viewpoint Khalin and Zero could see within. Silvery-white light from above suffused the whole antechamber area, cast by a dome above depicting a fantastic, regal dragon with silver scales in flight across an endless sky. Altars stood on either side of the antechamber, inscribed with elaborate script, visible even at distance. Behind each of the altars were relief images of what Khalin surmised were dwarven soldiers, fitted with plate armour and on their knees, possibly in prayer.



Neil: Looking about the room, a thought clearly occurred to Kireth as a single eyebrow raised. Very slowly he raised his hands in a "halting" fashion and calmly advised "Nobody takes another step".

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Matt: Tradden, who had already started stepping forward, his eyes on the longswords poking out of the pile of bodies, froze, one leg sticking out into the air.

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"Erm..."



Neil and Matt: "Shsch" snapped the mage. His thumb and his first finger rubbing quickly against one another, his eyes darting about from one location in the room to another, his mind whirling away.

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"Ok" he finally concluded "we're all fairly suspicious of these Sarcophagi and with good cause no doubt." No one seemed to argue that point. He continued "look how they are laid out leading up to those two altars, as if ceremonially guarding them. If we rush on over with out taking proper precaution or, might I suggest, the proper respect, we might just find out what is in them. I don't yet know what the way round this is but I suggest we all take a moment to see if there is any guidance around here"



Neil, me and Random: I very slowly and carefully Kireth approached the nearest Sarcophagi. Holding the light from his staff a little lower he peered at the strange writings carved upon it.

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He fumbled within his pouches and produced some parchment and chalk. "Ok look here" he said "If I can understand this writing it might give us some understanding about what is going on around here. If not this, then maybe the script up there" he pointed towards the altars. "But I'm going to need something of value for this to work. Something worth around 10 gold pieces. May be one of those gems you pick up Zero?". The thief was doing his best not to hear this and was looking rather purposefully at the nearest wall "ahem... Zero" persisted Kireth.

With mutterings of sacrilege and something about "starving children" a gem was handed over. "Good. Get comfy, this will take about 10 minutes. And" he stared directly at Tradden "don't touch anything".

[Kireth Arcana Check: 1d20+11: 18] - success!

Several minutes passed. Kireth made numerous scratches on the parchment, cursed, screwed it up and started again. Finally came the noise of "ahhhh" quickly followed by "grrr". Kireth's mutterings and a quick kick of one of the Sarcophagi seemed to suggest the sullen mage was getting somewhere but that the age and decomposition of the writing on them was hampering things. It was no good, he would have to approach the altars.

The dark elf made slow, careful tracks towards the northern altar. It was clear he was convinced approaching them was a bad idea but had reluctantly decided it was the only avenue left.

"I thought he said..."

Tradden was quickly cut off by a dwarven elbow to the ribs. Khalin had a bit more respect for the mage's powers, dark as they sometimes seemed, and he had also developed a good sense of when the mage's mood was getting worse.

He was about as close as he dared go and was straining his neck forward trying to make up the extra inches it would take to read in the dim light. His mouth was moving silently trying to get around the strange words until, all at once


"The Platinum Dragon is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer. He is my stronghold, my refuge, and my armour against the foes of life - I need only kneel and offer him my praise."

[Religion Check: 1d20+6: 21] - success!

Kireth concentrated on the script for a little longer, and then stared up at the domed ceiling and the soaring dragon above.

"Bahamut," he muttered, almost to himself. "The Platinum Dragon. God of justice, protection, and honour. So they say. Hmm."

The wizard leant more on his staff and closed his eyes, thinking deeply.

 Me and Random: Tradden, always thinking, piped up at this point.

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"Dragons... why are we always seeing dragons?"


He held up one arm, and the stylised ornate dragon on his bracer flashed strangely due to a combination of the dim eerie glow of the room mixed with the flickering, dancing light provided by Khalin's torch.

He then used his other hand to point with his shortsword to Khalin's sheild. "Dragon." He addressed Khalin direction. "Wasnt there also a dragon on that necklace we found, and wasn't one of the magic using kobolds in the big cave dressed up to look like a dragon?" He turned to Zero. "Z - do you remember the mausoleum outside of Blackengorge? There were dragon statues, or something like that there as well?"

His attention turned to the relief now the almost singular attention of Kireth. He stared along for a moment. "Dragons..." he whispered.

[Tradden Perception Check: **1d20+4: 18**] - success!

Almost as if answering his whispered call, **Tradden** suddenly noticed that there was an odd scratching noise coming from the chamber. They'd all been so transfixed on **Kireth's** study of the altar that they'd barely noticed it before.

 Me: **Zero** suddenly let out a yelp and the rest of the group turned round to see him almost jump into **Khalin's** arms.

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"What in the nine hells has got into you, lad?" barked the dwarf, pushing the rogue slightly away.


Zero just pointed towards the floor, near the hobgoblins.

"The bones," he managed. "They're moving!"

When the group turned to look they confirmed **Zero's** fears. At the edge of **Khalin's** torchlight, the bones were moving very slowly over the chamber floor, scraping and sliding, moving towards the centre of the room, near the second-easternmost pair of sarcophagi.

Their movement was incredibly slow, but steady, and relentless.

"Isn't someone going to do something?" inquired the rogue, his voice slightly higher than normal.

 Matt: A small flash of light accompanied the unmistakable sound of a sword being drawn from a scabbard. Tradden's long sword was now held out along with his short sword. He stepped forward, to create a little space between him and Kireth.

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"Get behind me."

Zero and Khalin were already on their way, the Rogue taking up a position behind the wall that was now Tradden and the Dwarf.

"Hmmm. I may have to ask you to hurry, Kireth." asked Khalin, over his shoulder and as calmly as he could.

"No pressure." Added Tradden.


"....." Added Zero, wondering how a crossbow bolt was going to do any effective damage against the closest bone. It appeared to be a femur.

 Mark, me and Random: As the bones continued their inexorable creep across the stone floor, Khalin glanced up at the dragon motif high above...


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[Religion check: **1d20+2: 12**]

Khalin recognised the motifs as one belonging to the clergy of Bahumut, although he'd never really seen something on this scale before. His own beliefs were more tied to Clangeddin and Moradin, although he had always had some respect for the god of justice and honour. There didn't seem to be anything else obvious about it.

 Me: The bones were starting to congregate at the edge of the torchlight and slowly piece themselves together. Then from the darkness came a new noise - the low rumble of stone being slid against stone.

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 Matt: Tradden's imagination was not usually lacking, and already images of tomb covers being pushed aside by restless inhabitants were forming in his mind.


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He had to stop himself from involuntarily taking a step back.

"Whatever you are going to do Kireth, you had better do it fast!"

"Get a grip!" he thought to himself. Right, if the mage needed time, he would do all he could. He looked around, trying to ascertain if there was any difference he could make. The only obvious and visible threat at the moment were the bones. Hmmm. Hopefully they were still just bones.


"Back in a sec..." he said to Khalin as he suddenly rushed forward towards the nearest bone pile now starting to collect together at the edge of the light from the Warlord's torch. Allowing his right leg to be pulled back slightly more than he would otherwise have done when running normally, he followed through and planted a good, solid hefty kick into the middle of the bones, adding an unnecessary, but perhaps adrenalin-fueled "Ah ha!" as he did so.

 Me: The bones scattered into the darkness beyond the edge of **Khalin's** torchlight, but those that remained in view just changed direction and started heading towards the blackness with increasing speed, scuttling and scraping across the ground.

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Then, giving **Tradden** a start, the sarcophagi nearest the young fighter began to scrape, and to his horror he saw that the lids were beginning to move, slowly sliding to the side on their own.

He stepped backwards towards the dwarf and the safety of the light.

 Me: A white, bony hand reached out from the nearest sarcophagus and felt around in the air. After a moment it grabbed the side of the granite structure and another skeletal hand appeared, taking hold of the lid. The scrape of stone on stone intensified and the lid was pushed fully to the side. Rising up from the tomb was a squat skeleton, broad and powerful, dressed in the tattered remains of plate armour.


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The group watched in stunned silence as it took hold of an ancient weapon from its casket, and climbed out and onto the floor. As it hefted it's handaxe carefully, it was joined by another skeleton from the sarcophagus opposite, similar in size and adornment to the first, but carrying a warhammer.

Even at the edge of the torchlight it was obvious that these pair were once dwarves, and **Khalin's** heart began to beat just that bit faster.

From further down the antechamber the sound of ancient granite lids, once sealing their occupants in perpetual sleep, crashed down to the floor, releasing those interred within.

At the very edge of the torchlight, almost indistinguishable in the gloom, the group could see two further skeletons, bones still stitching themselves together in their dwarven frame, as they came together in a mockery of life.

 Me: Menacingly, the skeletons raised their weapons and headed for the party.

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 Me: [...continued in [Chapter #06, Scene #10](#)...]

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