

# 13<sup>th</sup> Age 2E: Two-Hour Freeform Adventure

By Rob Heinsoo, with help from Orion Conroy  
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This adventure for 3-6 players is aimed at GMs who are familiar with *13<sup>th</sup> Age 2E*, particularly **Chapter 7: Combat Rules** and **Chapter 9: Running the Game**. It works well as a one-shot at a convention, or as a demo for new players, or to jump-start a campaign when you don't have anything planned ahead of time.

Instead of a single set plotline, this freeform adventure supplies a variety of pre-built encounters that the GM can weave into the backgrounds and uniques that players invent for their heroes. Players end up feeling that the adventure was aimed at what their heroes care about, and the GM gets to be surprised by an emerging story.

**Demo Structure:** The demo has two parts: an hour of character creation followed by an hour or more of play. In a two-hour time slot, the goal is for the players to have fun adding their personal touches to character creation, then fight one battle to get a taste of the combat mechanics.

Groups that play longer than two hours might have a second or third encounter. Or they might talk a lot! We've had groups that got so into their characters that they spent a third hour roleplaying.

## **Part One: Character Creation**

At the start, get a feel for how many players know the *13<sup>th</sup> Age* rules. The follow-up question for those who don't is whether they have played d20 games. If you have multiple players who have never played a d20 fantasy game, you're in for a slightly tougher demo, but explaining their combat options the first time they take their turn generally works out.

**Pre-generated characters:** Instead of attaching a set of pre-generated 2<sup>nd</sup> level characters to this demo, we're putting them the Pre-Generated Characters tab of the *13<sup>th</sup> Age* resources page: <https://pelgrane.com/13th-age/#resources>. In May 2026, we've started with sixteen somewhat involved character options, with two versions of eight classes with the bard still to come. There will be more characters added soon, including 2<sup>nd</sup> level versions of the simpler heroes appearing in the upcoming starter set. If you're an experienced *13<sup>th</sup> Age* GM and you enjoy introducing players to new mechanics, you can make up your own heroes or use other pre-gens created by the community.

If new players have trouble choosing who to play, ask them if there's a character type they often like to play, or simply hand out heroes and tell players they can trade if they wish.

Ability scores, character class, kin power, talents, spells, powers, and feats are all handled by the pre-gens. Combat stats and attacks will have their math worked out, pending possible adjustments from magic items that you might or might not reward before the game. The technical aspects of hero creation are handled by the pre-gens. . . but what isn't handled are each character's One Unique Thing, backgrounds, or icon relationships.

**Uniques and backgrounds:** Mention early that characters have One Unique Thing that sets them apart, and mention examples you like from your games or from the lists on pages 201-205 of the *Heroes' Handbook*. Players will come up with ideas at different speeds, and it sometimes helps to explain backgrounds and how they relate to skill checks while some players are coming up with their *unique*.

If you haven't already shared the One-Page Icon Sheet that's available as Appendix C, *HH*: 319, share it while some people are working through their ideas, since the icons sometimes help players clarify their character concepts.

Players who aren't used to helping shape the story may be leery at first. When you explain how backgrounds are used in place of allocating skill points, and that each player gets to add

story elements to the world with their backgrounds if they want to, that's when most cautious folks tend to light up.

**Icon relationships:** Heroes' *uniques* and backgrounds may have suggested icon relationships already. If not, you can suggest an icon for each character. Using the rules for narrating icon connections is usually too much to spring on a group playing a two hour demo, so when heroes roll 5s and 6s and have an icon connection, the simplest way to use them is to give one or more heroes a gift of a true magic item from the Demo Magic Items section, with a small story about how the icon's people or one of their organizations gave them a gift as a reward or as assistance for the upcoming task.

There's a bit more on icon relationship options in the Battle section.

**Establishing a group identity:** If the players haven't already told you what brought their characters together, take a moment to come up with a story that makes use of the group's identity, or some icon connections, or perhaps just the background or unique that everyone at the table was most amused by during character creation.

You may find it difficult to create one simple story that brings everyone together, but if you can get a few characters linked, the rest will come along.

Better yet, the players may have taken care of that while sharing their *uniques* and backgrounds, especially if you've suggested that knowing each other before this adventure would be great. As their hero's backgrounds suggest, the characters have history and previous adventures. So long as you don't get in the way of the player's flow, it can also be fun to mention how a particular choice might play out in a full campaign instead of in the single hour session you're going to play.

Sometimes the players' chosen group identity makes your choice of which battle to run easy. Other times you may need to quickly skim the battle introductions to find one that sparks a fun storyline.

**Miniatures:** If you use them when you play, have at least one mini for each pre-gen ready. Ideally have more player character style minis than that so that players can choose a mini that suits the looks (or the spirit!) of their hero.

You'll also want to have miniatures for all the monsters, since you won't know ahead of time which batch of monsters the heroes will battle.

**A range of tales:** Players aren't *always* wonderfully inventive, but in the years of running the 1E version of this freeform demo, we've had games we'll remember forever, including:

- A group that decided they were the Brat Pack of Axis, a group of hard-partiers whose first battle came because they'd caused too much trouble in town and needed to be sent away as an alternative to being jailed.
- A 'retired' adventuring party that centered itself on a halfling's dream of running a successful winery, with characters like the dwarf who wanted to fly experimenting with gliders on the winery's slopes and the never-do-well rogue showing up just as the undead emerged in the vineyard.
- Thugs knocking off a rival gang's hijacking of a weapons shipment; because you don't always have to be fancy!
- A group that focused on shutting down a Diabolist sacrifice, except at the last minute one of them realized they could achieve their unique's true goal by performing the sacrifice themselves.
- A bardic rock and roll tour arriving in Twisp where the Diabolist was about to launch a new hellhole.

And so on!

None of these games started ambitiously, they just blossomed that way. So long as you

make the players feel like what their heroes care about has been incorporated into the game, and hopefully into their victory . . . mission accomplished!

### ***Tough Cases***

Very rarely, you'll have groups that set themselves up as each other's enemies. For example, in one demo at Gen Con, three PCs felt like bandit/outlaw/former cultist types and two PCs were clearly agents of the Emperor or lawmen. So when the PCs were introduced to the action, I said that the session was starting out as a classic spaghetti Western face-off, bandit vs. pursuers. Then I let each player vote on which side they saw themselves as one of the bandits turned out to be faking as a bounty hunter. Of course, the PCs didn't end up fighting each other: the fully evil bandit cultists turned up before the first initiative roll was made, but this was a way to get very disparate PCs onto the same table.

### **Part Two: The Battle**

We've included five different monster groups that should be fun and balanced against a 2<sup>nd</sup> level party. These fights are balanced for a 4-battle arc, since introducing newcomers to the system with a fight from a 3-battle arc would be harsh!

The monster groups that follow these starting notes are . . .

- Gnolls & Demon
- Cultists & Outlaws
- Orcs
- Undead
- Goblins & Dragon

Use a monster group that suits the story the players have started telling about their heroes!

### ***Option: Using Icon Relationship Rolls...for Treasure!***

Instead of rolling icon relationships normally, you can tell the heroes what they're about to face and then let each player roll one or two icon dice, looking for 5s and 6s. Characters that succeed either have a flashback where someone related to the icon gives them information or a

magic item or some other advantage that will play out in the encounter that's about to happen. With five or six players at the table, someone is going to succeed. The players who don't succeed in their rolls still get to see how the mechanics play out in ways that affect the upcoming battle.

***The demo treasures:*** A selection of simple treasures is attached at the end of this document in the Demo Magic Items section. Select worthwhile treasures from this list unless you're experienced enough with the game to give out others you already know.

If you do give out any treasure, this is the moment to mention that 13<sup>th</sup> Age magic items are alive, provide roleplaying personality quirks for players who enjoy that type of thing, and will take over your character if you have more magic items than your level.

### ***Option: Icon Relationships for Information***

Alternatively, you may want to give a character interesting information that will help them in the upcoming encounter. The simplest little cheat is to tie story information to a +4 bonus to initiative for the entire party, or +10 for that hero to make a definite impact. Or knowing a specific monster's weakness so that it is vulnerable to their attacks. Or you may have a better possibility suggest itself because of the story you set up.

### ***Running the Battle***

Unless you love tracking initiative, get a player to track initiative for you, maybe the most experienced player.

Remember to bump the escalation die up by 1 at the end of each round after the first. Tell people that creatures are either near each other (one move and attack), or far away (two moves), or sometimes engaged!

You don't have to play to the bitter end if the heroes are winning and the surviving monster has a chance to run away!

### ***Things Not to Worry About Once the Combat Dice are Rolling***

If you've run this demo several times, maybe you'll choose to tinker with terrain effects or combat connections with icon dice. But that will be your choice, not something the players *need* in the demo.

#### ***Terrain Effects***

Choose any style of fantasy terrain/setting as the location of the battle. Miserable swamps, ruined temples, ghost towns, haunted orchards, regenerating graveyards, living dungeons, spiral towers, woodlands, grumbling volcanoes—they all exist somewhere in *13<sup>th</sup> Age*.

Unless interacting with magical terrain is somehow the point of the story that has surfaced from the heroes' backgrounds and One Unique Things, you probably don't have to worry about adding terrain effects to the game, magical or otherwise. Moving into and out of engagement and figuring out how to use spells and attacks should be the priority when people are playing for the first time.

#### ***Combat Connections***

The rules for using icon connections in combat (*HH*: 288) don't need to feature in this demo, but if you realize it will help, tell the newcomers they have the option and have fun with it.

#### **About the Monster Stats**

We've cut the Nastier Specials out from most of the monsters because new players don't need to face them. If you use this freeform demo with a standard group, you may want to re-harvest the Nastier Specials.

You'll see that these monster stats are formatted slightly differently than in the 2E *Gamemaster's Guide*. We're experimenting with a format change that gives you a bit more information about each monster or NPC.

## GNOLLS & DEMON

These monsters fit into stories that pit the heroes against the Diabolist 🖤, or if they're fighting on the side of the Crusader 🗡️.

It could also be that the heroes are elves with connections to the Elf Queen ✨ or friends of the High Druid 🗡️, since gnolls frequently act as raiders or corrupters in forests associated with other icons.

**Difficulty:** The fights for 3, 4, and 5 heroes are on the easy side, but still dangerous because the gnolls are higher level than the heroes. For 6 heroes, the fight is slightly tougher than normal, so feel free to help the heroes out a bit if the 6 PC fight is too much for them to handle.

**Gnoll-down:** The gnoll scout in this fight is essentially the gnoll ranger from GMG: 113, but a level lower.

Similarly, the "injured gnoll war leader" in this fight fights like the 4<sup>th</sup> level gnoll war leader in the GMG, but it has fewer hit points and deals slightly less damage.

### Vs. 3 PCs

1 x Gnoll Skirmisher  
1 x Gnoll Scout

### Vs. 4 PCs

2x Gnoll Skirmisher  
1x Gnoll War Leader

### Vs. 5 PCs

2x Gnoll Skirmisher  
1x Gnoll Scout  
1x Gnoll War Leader

### Vs. 6 PCs

3x Gnoll Skirmisher  
1x Gnoll Scout  
1x Gnoll War Leader  
1x Claw Demon

## Gnoll Skirmisher

*They long to prove themselves in battle.*

3<sup>rd</sup> level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

**Gnarly spear +10 vs. AC**—10 damage, or 16 damage if both the target and the gnoll are staggered (*blood fury*).

*Miss:* 5 damage if another gnoll is also engaged with the target (*pack tactics*).

**RANGED: Whistling javelin +8 vs. AC**—8 damage.

*Limited use:* 2/battle, or however much you like.

AC <sub>19</sub>	19	ritual armor
PD <sub>17</sub>	16	battle-made strength
MD <sub>13</sub>	12	mindless fury
HP <sub>50</sub>	55	something to prove

## Gnoll Scout

*Their tracking skills are inhuman, and so is the way they treat prisoners.*

3<sup>rd</sup> level archer [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

**Gleaming hand axes +6 vs. AC (2 attacks)**—6 damage, or 10 if the gnoll and the target are both staggered (*blood fury*).

*Miss*: 3 damage if another gnoll is also engaged with the target (*pack tactics*).

**RANGED: Hefty longbow +9 vs. AC (one nearby or far-away enemy)**—8 damage.

*Natural even hit or miss*: The gnoll can make a second *longbow* attack (no more) as a free action.

*Quick shot*: When the gnoll scout is unengaged and an enemy moves to engage it, it can make a single *hefty longbow* attack against that enemy as a free action just before becoming engaged. (No follow-up shot, even if the natural attack roll is even.)

**AC**<sub>19</sub> 18 heavy game skins  
**PD**<sub>17</sub> 17 hair-trigger senses  
**MD**<sub>13</sub> 13 surprisingly patient  
**HP**<sub>50</sub> 50 hardened by exposure

## Injured Gnoll War Leader

*Someone already took a bite out of the leader, and he's not picky about who pays for that.*

4<sup>th</sup> level leader [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +9

**Heavy flail +9 vs. AC**—12 damage.

*Natural 2+*: Unless the target succeeds at an immediate normal save (11+), they are marked for death. Until the end of the battle, all gnoll attacks against the target gain a bonus to their crit range equal to the escalation die.

**AC**<sub>20</sub> 19 dented iron shield  
**PD**<sub>18</sub> 19 wicked strength  
**MD**<sub>14</sub> 16 supremely stubborn  
**HP**<sub>60</sub> 50 trying not to show weakness

## Claw Demon

*Technically it's a claw-claw-claw-claw demon, but you don't get time to say that.*

3<sup>rd</sup> level troop [DEMON]

Initiative: +9

**Hooking claws +8 vs. AC (1d4 attacks, up to 2 against any one target)**—5 damage.

*Miss*: 1 damage.

**AC**<sub>19</sub> 20 blocking claws  
**PD**<sub>17</sub> 17 stutter step quick  
**MD**<sub>13</sub> 14 annoyingly confident  
**HP**<sub>50</sub> 44 enjoys the pain

## **CULTISTS & OUTLAWS**

They could be death cultists who lost their necromancer, working for the Lich King †. They could be demon cultists trying to impress the Diabolist ♠ enough to be trusted with a summoned demon. They could be criminals in a city or brigands in the wilds. They seem clumsy to be working for the Prince of Shadows ♡, so maybe the Prince has somehow invited the heroes to tie up these loose ends.

Fights involving the corrupted warrior are dangerous because they're technically a bit too tough for 2<sup>nd</sup> level heroes. We held the line at 1 corrupted warrior per battle and we also removed one of their potentially dangerous abilities.

### **Vs. 3 PCs**

2 x Brutal Outlaw  
1 x Death Cult Neophyte

### **Vs. 4 PCs**

2 x Elemental Initiate  
1 x Death Cult Neophyte  
1 x Corrupted Warrior

### **Vs. 5 PCs**

2 x Elemental Initiate  
3 x Brutal Outlaw  
1 x Death Cult Neophyte  
1 x Corrupted Warrior

### **Vs. 6 PCs**

3 x Elemental Initiate  
3 x Brutal Outlaw  
2 x Death Cult Neophyte  
1 x Corrupted Warrior

## **Elemental Initiate**

*Sometimes, you only need two spells.*

*1<sup>st</sup> level caster* [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +3

**Very short sword +6 vs. AC**—4 damage.

**RANGED: Elemental flare +6 vs. PD (1 nearby or far-away enemy)**—7 cold or fire damage (see below).

*Natural odd hit:* The damage is cold damage, and the target must make an immediate easy save (6+) or be stuck until the end of its next turn.

*Natural even hit:* The damage is fire damage, and the target also takes 3 ongoing fire damage. [As usual, unless specified otherwise, ongoing effects end with a normal save, 11+]

**RANGED: Lightning burst +6 vs. PD (1d3 + 1 enemies in a group)**—8 lightning damage.

*Miss:* 4 lightning damage.

*Limited use:* 1/battle when the escalation die is 2+.

*Determined:* After failing a disengage check, the elemental apprentice can add +2 to the check by dealing 1d4 fire or cold damage to themselves.

**AC**<sub>17</sub> 16 robes that spark

**PD**<sub>11</sub> 12 former peasant?

**MD**<sub>15</sub> 14 new to this

**HP**<sub>30</sub> 32 tough enough

## Brutal Outlaw

*Light armor, a medium shield, a heavy mace, and a bad attitude.*

1<sup>st</sup> level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +2

**Heavy mace +7 vs. AC—6 damage.**

*Natural even hit or miss:* Teamwork—the next attack by any brutal outlaw deals +6 damage. (Let the players know this is coming; it's no secret.)

AC <sub>17</sub>	18	light armor, shield
PD <sub>15</sub>	14	already bruised
MD <sub>11</sub>	12	thinks for themselves
HP <sub>30</sub>	30	reacts with attitude

## Corrupt Warrior

*This might be an anti-hero who has devoted their life to an unholy vow that makes them part of an elite cadre. Or it could be a deluded schmuck who is about to sacrifice a good deal more than their life.*

4<sup>th</sup> level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +7

**Spiked flail +10 vs. AC—12 damage.**

*Miss:* The next corrupt warrior that hits with a *spiked flail* attack deals +4 damage (cumulative). (Hint broadly to the players that this damage is on its way, but because there's only one corrupt warrior in this fight, it's a bonus for \*this\* warrior if they survive to attack again!)

AC <sub>20</sub>	21	big shield
PD <sub>18</sub>	16	boots too heavy
MD <sub>14</sub>	16	deluded confidence
HP <sub>60</sub>	60	fanatic

## Death Cult Neophyte

*He chants a dirge at a whisper, but you can hear it as if he's speaking into your ear. How does he know your name?*

3<sup>rd</sup> level spoiler [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +7

**Sacrificial dagger +7 vs. AC—10 damage.**

*Miss:* 3 damage and the neophyte takes 3 damage.

**RANGED: Whispered chant +9 vs MD (one nearby or far-away enemy)—** The target is

weakened (easy save ends) unless they choose to take 15 psychic damage, instead. If the target is already weakened, they must take the damage.

*Miss:* If the target is weakened, they take 10 psychic damage.

*Special:* The foe targeted by the chant cannot make an opportunity attack against the neophyte unless the neophyte misses.

*Death curse:* When the death cult neophyte drops to 0 hit points, the nearest conscious enemy that is 4<sup>th</sup> level or lower must choose between taking 10 ongoing psychic damage or being weakened (save ends). If the target is already weakened, they take the ongoing damage. No effect on 5<sup>th</sup> level enemies.

AC <sub>19</sub>	18	skulls, trinkets, erratic moves
PD <sub>13</sub>	14	clumsy & committed
MD <sub>17</sub>	19	whispers are too loud
HP <sub>50</sub>	44	already dying

## ORCS

The Orc Lord ♣ is dead, but that doesn't mean that orc raiders have put down their swords and gone home. The heroes might be defending a village or chasing a raiding party after it has snatched halfling captives. The Emperor ♠ and the Dwarf King ▲ might be the most interested in fighting orcs, but the Priestess ♀ might need help defending a temple or a traveling healer, the Elf Queen ♣ is never fond of orcs on the loose, and so on. If one of the heroes has a backstory involving orcs, here are their targets!

**Six is a crowd:** The battle math balances out so that the fight is slightly above the curve only when there are six PCs, which seems fair.

**Rager in the house:** The orc rager is a 2<sup>nd</sup> level version of the Orc Berserker from GMG: 142.

### Vs. 3 PCs

1 x Orc Blood Shrieker  
2 x Orc Warriors

### Vs. 4 PCs

1 x Orc Rager  
1 x Orc Blood Shrieker  
2 x Orc Warriors

### Vs. 5 PCs

1 x Orc Rager  
1 x Orc Blood Shrieker  
4 x Orc Warriors

### Vs. 6 PCs

2 x Orc Rager  
1 x Orc Blood Shrieker  
5 x Orc Warriors

## Orc Rager

*Just too scary.*

2<sup>nd</sup> level elite troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

**Greataxe +7 vs. AC—11 damage.**

*Natural 16+ hit:* Critical hit, unless the orc is staggered.

*Unstoppable:* When an orc rager drops to 0 hit points, it does not immediately die. Ignore any negative damage beyond 0 hit points, roll 2d4, and give the berserker that many temporary hit points. No other healing can affect the berserker or give it more temporary hit points; when the temporary hit points are gone, the berserker dies.

AC <sub>18</sub>	16	shirtless intimidation
PD <sub>16</sub>	16	festering biceps
MD <sub>12</sub>	12	committed but careless
HP <sub>60</sub>	70	unfeeling

## **Orc Blood Shrieker**

*The Orc Lord may be dead, but the spirit of wanton slaughter lives on in the power of the blood shriekers.*

*3<sup>rd</sup> level leader* [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

**Accursed spear +8 vs. AC—8 damage.**

*Natural even hit or miss:* If the blood shrieker is not staggered, deal 4 psychic damage to a different nearby orc and an equal amount to the target, as the blood shrieker drains both their life forces.

**RANGED: Shrieking curse +8 vs. MD (1d3**

**nearby enemies)—6** psychic damage, and for the rest of the battle, melee attacks by orcs against the target can be rerolled once if they are a natural 2–5.

AC<sub>19</sub> 18 covered face, uncertain moves

PD<sub>13</sub> 12 fragile frame, bloated ribs

MD<sub>17</sub> 16 voices too loud

HP<sub>50</sub> 60 never shrieks in pain

## **Orc Warrior**

*Their war cries are manifestly heartfelt.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> level troop* [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

**Jagged sword +7 vs. AC—8 damage.**

*Natural 16+ hit:* Critical hit, unless the orc is staggered.

AC<sub>18</sub> 17 loose leathers

PD<sub>16</sub> 17 trained strength

MD<sub>12</sub> 10 dim

HP<sub>40</sub> 50 toughest of the once-many

## UNDEAD

Use the **Undead** if the players seem like enemies of the Lich King †, or defenders of the natural order, or unlucky!

This monster group throws more creatures at the heroes because most of its creatures are lower level than the heroes. If your sense is that the players could use an easy victory, and the party includes a cleric or other holy-damage-using hero, the fact that undead that are vulnerable to holy damage could be the ticket.

On the other hand, if the heroes have neither a magic weapon, nor a cleric, or even a paladin, the resistance abilities of the wights and skeletons could make for an exciting battle. If things go horribly pear-shaped, the heroes don't have to suffer a TPK: you could teach them about retreating and taking a narrative loss (*HH*: 299), especially if you frame the setback as setup for a possible next adventure!

**Inevitable decay:** The Decayed Wight is a much-weakened version of the 4<sup>th</sup> level Barrow Wight from the *GMG*. Maybe you'll have a fun story about why these wights are past their expiration's expiration date, or maybe they're wights based on small humanoids of ages past!

### Vs. 3 PCs

2 x Decayed Wight  
1 x Skeleton Archer

### Vs. 4 PCs

1 x Decayed Wight  
1 x Skeleton Archer  
2 x Ghoul Forager

### Vs. 5 PCs

2 x Decayed Wight  
2 x Skeleton Archer  
2 x Ghoul Forager

### Vs. 6 PCs

4 x Skeleton Archer  
2 x Decayed Wight  
2 x Ghoul Forager

## Decayed Wight

1<sup>st</sup> level troop [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +4

Vulnerability: holy

**Sword of the tomb +6 vs. AC—5 damage.**

*Natural 2+:* Unless the target succeeds at an immediate normal save (11+), the attack also deals 5 ongoing necro damage [normal save ends, 11+].

*Resist non-magic weapons and non-holy energy 14+:*

When such an attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 14+ on the attack roll or it deals only half damage.

AC<sub>17</sub> 15 will not dodge  
PD<sub>11</sub> 13 detached from this world  
MD<sub>15</sub> 15 ancient mind  
HP<sub>30</sub> 35 parts flaking off

## Skeleton Archer

*Their bows are strung with someone's tendons.*

1<sup>st</sup> level archer [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +9

Vulnerability: holy

**Bony hands +6 vs. AC—5 damage.**

**RANGED: Reeking shortbow +8 vs. AC (a random nearby or far-away enemy)—7 damage.**

*Resist weapons 16+ until staggered;* so half-damage from weapon attacks that roll natural 15 or less, but the resistance ends when the skeleton is staggered.

AC<sub>17</sub> 15 open frame  
PD<sub>15</sub> 14 suggestions of sinew  
MD<sub>11</sub> 10 unthinking  
HP<sub>30</sub> 32 never gives up

## Ghoul Forager

*They sniff out the dead to feast on them, and if they can't find enough corpses to eat, they'll make some.*

*3<sup>rd</sup> level spoiler* [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +9

Vulnerability: holy

### Reeking claws and fetid fangs +8 vs. AC –8

damage, and the target is ghoul-stricken until the end of the ghoul's next turn. If the target is already ghoul-stricken, they are both ghoul-stricken and shocked until the end of the ghoul's next turn. Attacks by undead against ghoul-stricken characters have their crit range expanded by 2. [[*Shocked*: Roll twice for all d20 rolls and use the lower result.]]

*Miss*: 2 damage.

*Infected bite*: Any creature that is slain by a ghoul and not consumed rises as a ghoul the next night.

AC <sub>19</sub>	18	unnatural speed
PD <sub>17</sub>	16	quick but careless
MD <sub>13</sub>	12	wandering mind
HP <sub>50</sub>	60	nerves also dead

## GOBLINS & DRAGONS

These monsters may serve The Three ✦ or come direct from Drakkenhall. The Three hate nearly everyone else, so there's no shortage of heroic or ambiguous icons who could oppose them. The goblins might also be trying out at new recruits for the Crusader ⚔, enemies of the Elf Queen ✦\* or Dwarf King ⚔, or unlikely comrades who rescued each other once and have stuck together.

**Higher difficulty:** Battles with dragons are more complicated than other battles and dragons are tougher than their level indicates, not least because they use the escalation die like the PCs. And you'll want to make sure you reread the rules for stoking breath weapons! (GMG: 92)

The battles built below take draconic toughness into account somewhat, but this fight probably only makes sense for beginning players if it's underground or indoors, somewhere where the dragon can't freely fly above the heroes.

### Vs. 3 PCs

1 x Young White Dragon  
3 x Goblin Grunt

### Vs. 4 PCs

1 x Young White Dragon  
3 x Goblin Grunt  
1 x Goblin Sorcerer

### Vs. 5 PCs

1 x Young White Dragon  
4 x Goblin Grunt  
2 x Goblin Sorcerer

### Vs. 6 PCs

2 x Young White Dragon  
5 x Goblin Grunt  
2 x Ranged Goblin Grunt (See "Nastier Specials")  
1 x Goblin Sorcerer

## Young White Dragon

*White dragons are a debased and even cowardly lot, cut off from the power of their slain icon.*

2<sup>nd</sup> level troop [DRAGON]

Initiative: +6

Vulnerability: fire

**Claws and frigid bite +7 vs. AC (2 attacks) —5 damage.**

*Natural 16+:* Deal 2 damage to a different engaged foe.

*Miss:* 1 damage.

*Stoke:* If the dragon does not use *icy breath* on its turn, increase *stoke* by +1. Whenever it uses *icy breath*, reduce *stoke* by 1 (minimum 0).

**CQ: Icy breath +7 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies) —7 cold damage,** and if the hero has 15 hit points or fewer they are stuck (save ends). The victim or any adjacent ally can use a move action to free the victim.

*Special:* Crit range of *icy breath* is expanded by 1 per *stoke*.

*Natural odd hit or miss:* The dragon takes 1 damage from the effort.

*Miss:* 1 damage.

*Limited use:* 1/battle, but when expended, roll a d6 at the start of the dragon's turn; on a 5+, *icy breath* recharges.

*Resist cold 16+:* When a cold attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it deals only half damage.

*Flight:* Especially skillful in cold gusts that trouble other fliers.

AC <sub>18</sub>	19	dragon scales
PD <sub>16</sub>	17	whip-quick
MD <sub>12</sub>	11	cowardly
HP <sub>40</sub>	50	frigid flesh

## Goblin Grunt

*They love a good fight.*

1<sup>st</sup> level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

**Spiked club +7 vs. AC—4 damage.**

**Gleeful smash +8 vs. AC—8 damage.**

*Miss:* 1 damage.

*Limited use:* Use only if the goblins and their allies outnumber the heroes. Treat mooks, double-strength monsters, etc. either as one monster each or as the number of monsters corresponding to their strength—your discretion.

*Shifty bugger:* The goblin gains a +5 bonus to disengage checks.

### Nastier Specials

*Clever archer:* Goblins who learn to use a bow don't have to fight on the front line, so they train hard to become archers.

**RANGED: Bow of bone and sinew +8 vs. AC—8 damage.**

AC <sub>17</sub>	19	scavenged armor
PD <sub>15</sub>	14	untrained moves
MD <sub>11</sub>	10	single-minded
HP <sub>30</sub>	24	hacking cough

## Goblin Sorcerer

*She uses dark power filched from the Lich King.*

3<sup>rd</sup> level caster [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

**Pointy spear +8 vs. AC—6 damage.**

**CQ: Gather necro energy (closest enemy)—1 necro damage.** (Describe the sorcerer visibly accumulating a scary amount of necro damage and make it clear the sorcerer is going to let loose with something big. The fun is in the heroes trying to stop the *dark vortex* from going off.)

**RANGED: Dark vortex +7 vs. PD (up to 2 nearby or far-away foes in a group)—18 necro damage.**

*Miss:* 5 necro damage.

*Limited use:* Only if the goblin sorcerer used *gather necro energy* the previous round.

*Shifty bugger:* The goblin gains a +5 bonus to disengage checks.

AC <sub>19</sub>	17	rough cloth
PD <sub>13</sub>	15	stolen luck
MD <sub>17</sub>	15	seen too much
HP <sub>50</sub>	60	necrotic tissue

## DEMO MAGIC ITEMS

You can use these as rewards for things the heroes accomplished before the adventure, or loot that the heroes can dream about using later! Of course substituting other items in will be fine! These are just items that seem simple to us.

We took the icon symbols suggested in the GMG off the items because they could work as rewards from any icon, particularly if you make up new names and descriptions. Many of the items lack quirks or quiddities, so if you see a chance to gift an item with an intriguing personality, play it up.

We also spliced the default bonuses into the item descriptions to make it easier for players to see what their new item provides.

**Armor of Heedlessness:** +1 AC.

In addition, gain a +2 bonus to AC during the first round of a battle.

*Quirk:* Leap before looking, even twice in the same day.

**Boots of Ferocious Charge** (once per battle):

When the escalation die is 2+ and you start your turn unengaged, you deal +1d8 damage with your first melee attack against an enemy you move to engage that turn (champion hero: +2d8; epic hero: +4d8).

*Also:* a +1 bonus to disengage checks, initiative checks, and other checks involving fancy footwork!

*Quip:* "YEE-AAGH!" or a battle cry to that effect.

**Sandals of the Slippery Eel** (1/arc): Reroll a failed disengage check.

*Also:* a +1 bonus to disengage checks, initiative checks, and other checks involving fancy footwork!

*Quiddity:* Wants to walk on the most interesting surfaces.

**Stalwart Cloak** (2/arc, but just once per battle):

When an attack against your PD hits, make the attacker reroll the attack.

*Also:* +1 PD!

*Quip:* "Unscathed." "Stalwart."

**Helm of the Undaunted Hero** (recharge 11+): Roll an immediate save against one temporary effect.

*Also:* +1 MD!

**Symbol of Surging Power** (1/arc): When you cast a cleric's spell for power, you can also choose a different target to affect with the broad effect version of the spell.

*Also:* +1 attack and damage with divine spells and attacks.

**Blood-touched wand** (recharge 6+): Until the end of this turn, when you hit with an arcane spell attack while staggered, deal +5 damage.

*Also:* +1 attack and damage with arcane spells and attacks.

☠ ✦ **Bloodthirsty** (any weapon): After you crit with a natural 20 using this weapon, it becomes "bloodthirsty" until the end of the battle. While bloodthirsty, it deals +15 bonus damage

*Also:* +1 attack and damage with the weapon's attacks.

🦋 🖐 **Steady** (ranged weapon; 2/arc): Before rolling a ranged attack with this weapon, choose 10 as the natural roll for that attack.

*Also:* +1 attack and damage with the weapon's attacks.