



# **WHERE THE BODIES ARE BURIED**

**PUT AN END TO THE BLASPHEMOUS HORRORS CAUSED BY A CORRUPT RELIGIOUS ORDER**



# WHERE THE BODIES ARE BURIED

AN ADVENTURE FOR 5E DESIGNED FOR 3-6 LEVEL 4 CHARACTERS,  
FOR USE WITH THE 5TH EDITION RULESET.



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## NOTE

This adventure is meant to have a tint of horror. As is often the case, horror doesn't work unless the creature/threat is reasonably scary to the players. To ensure the party is scared by the villain, keep it hidden for as long as possible. Make them doubt its true nature and origin. Also, because horror requires the party to be at a disadvantage, the encounters are set up so that the party has to use their brains, not just their brawn, to defeat their enemy. Fighting head-on might not always be the best way of doing things.

## BACKGROUND

A year ago, under a full moon, the Cathedral of Eternal Sun received a magical message from Chaplain Alunis, a minister in a quaint rural community. He begged for aid, saying that he felt a curse had descended upon his village, Hackern. The leader of his faith and head of the Cathedral of Eternal Sun, Archbishop Doladren, denied Alunis any help, believing the accusations of curses were false. Then, but a week later, Alunis and the entire village were dead. Doladren, fearing that he would face dire consequences, hid the evidence of being contacted and called the village's destruction a tragedy. He even sent holy men to dispatch the villager's bodies and burn any evidence they might find that linked back to the Cathedral's lack of action.

Now, a year later, under a full moon, the ghosts of the past awaken. If they are not laid to rest, Archbishop Doladren will learn that there are fates far worse than death.

## PLOT HOOKS

The adventure has 3 possible plot hooks, none of which alter the main plot of the adventure. Simply choose which one fits your party best:

- **Call for Aid.** The party is somewhat known as a band of helpful adventurers, leading to Archbishop Doladren sending them a magical message/a letter begging for their aid, thus leading to them coming to the Cathedral.

- **A Mystical Calling.** One party member is connected to the divine/the otherworldly. In their dreams, a figure calls out, bringing them to the Cathedral.

- **A Past Connection.** The party is connected to the tragedy, as the original team that was sent to cover it up or something else. Now, in their dreams, they see visions of the villagers. Thus, they've come to the Archbishop for aid.

## CHAPTER 1. THE ARCHBISHOP

In which the party meets a haunted man.

### Chapter 1.1. The Bishop

*Before starting the adventure, ask each party member to let you know their alignment. It will influence later mechanics in the adventure.*

Read this:

*'You have moved towards the capital as fast as your legs could carry you, but even so, you could not reach it before the sunset. That is, although not problematic, somewhat haunting. Since your first contact with the Archbishop, you have even begun feeling unsafe. The hairs down the back of your necks often raise themselves, and you must manage your feelings. And yet, now you've made it. You are at the gates of the Cathedral of Eternal Sun, but there's no sun to speak of, yet another cloudy night. The Archbishop Doladren assured you he'd be waiting for all of you through the night, so you need only knock on the door to make it inside. Before that, however, you take a deep breath and gaze at your companions. Are you all ready?'*

If you are playing this adventure as a one-shot or if this is the first time the party has met, this is the perfect time for them to introduce themselves. Have each party member describe their appearance, abilities, and relationships with each other. Have they just met, or have they been together for longer? Once that's happened, you can proceed.

Read this:

*'You knock on the massive gothic door frame, only to be greeted by an unlikely experience. The moon, almost on cue, reveals itself from behind the clouds and shines directly on you, beckoning you to look above.'*

When the party sees this, they must make a **DC 14 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure, they begin to feel as if the moon is watching them. They gain 1 point of **Dread**.

### MECHANIC - DREAD

This is the perfect point to introduce this adventure's specific mechanic. It's called **Dread**.

**Dread** is a fear-esque mechanic that slowly takes its toll on the party over time. I know I've already developed madness mechanics, but since this is more fear than eldritch-horror madness, I've made it into a different design.

**Dread** grows over time, based on checks and saving throws. When a party member gets their first point of **Dread**, they are considered **on edge**. When a party member is **on edge**, they suffer no effects. Upon getting a second point of **Dread**, they become **paranoid**. When they are **paranoid**, characters might react in one of two ways. Make them roll a d20:

- On a roll of 1-10, inform them that they now have an uncontrollable urge to investigate things. This will prove dangerous in the adventure, as many locations and objects are traps or sources of more **Dread**.
- On a roll of 11-20, they will vehemently oppose the exploration and investigation of occult-looking objects and locations.

Upon getting a third point of **Dread**, the characters are considered **frightened** of the occult. While on maps 2, 3, and 4, they are always under the **frightened** condition, but their speed is doubled.

A point of **Dread** can be removed via the *ceremony*, *lesser restoration* or *calm emotions* spells, or via finding clues that influence **Dread**. Those clues will specify their effect on **Dread**.

*There are other madness type systems (like the one coming to Steinhardt's Guide to the Eldritch Hunt). This is just one I've created with the goal to be simple and self-contained for this adventure. It alters the play experience just enough to make this adventure work in a fun new ways.*

Once the party has made their saving throws, any party member proficient in the **Nature** skill may make a **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check**. On a success, they'll realize that this is the third or fourth night in a row with a full moon.

Then, once their investigation of the moon ends, the door will crack open with a creak. Inside, looking through with a troubled gaze is Archbishop Doladren.

### **Archbishop Doladren (priest)**

**Information:** The Archbishop is a deeply haunted man of human origin, with large bags beneath his eyes and a slim face, despite his otherwise large frame. He seems troubled by the things happening around him, but he tries to hide it. His clothes looked unwashed, and his hair uncombed. He's clearly let himself go.

As the party makes it within the Cathedral, bring them to map 1 and introduce them to the Archbishop. He'll welcome them by saying he feared they might never reach him. He'll ask about the journey and try to divert attention from how distressed and fearful he is. During his discussion with the party, any party member may attempt a **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check**, revealing how panicked he is on a success.

With pleasantries out of the way, he will ask the party to join him at his desk (area 2), where he has something to show them. As they move there, any party member with a **passive Perception above 16** will notice a shadowy figure move, then disappear, almost as if it was never there. When they look for it again, it's no longer there. All party members who noticed the figure will have to succeed a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**.

Then, the party will arrive at area 1, where they see a lengthy piece of parchment sprawled onto the table. With tears in his eyes, Doladren will ask a party member to read it (preferably a cleric or paladin).

When a party member decides to read it, read this:

*'Your eyes quickly scan over the parchment. You can see the writing get more and more scrawly. Someone has slowly been losing their mind, or at the very least their patience while writing all of this. It begins with the following words: "Archbishop, it is with the utmost fear that I begin writing you this. My town is tearing at the seams, and I am powerless to stop it. I beg of thee to aid me, but I understand you might not*

want to do that without all of the information. Because of that, I am writing you as detailed an account as I can of all that has happened thus far..." As you read, you begin to hear the voice of the Archbishop: "This was a letter from Chaplain Alunis. However... it never got to me. It was found on his desk, inside Hackern's chapel, and brought to me. It's been a year since all of it, and I cannot help but feel his spirit has returned, corrupted and driven mad." The Archbishop clasps his trembling hands together, looking at you intently. He is distraught.'

Before going any further, check the alignment of the person who read the document. If they are of a good alignment, they are fine. If they are of a non-good alignment, they must succeed a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**.

Then, the Archbishop will begin to panic. He'll detail to the party how this document goes on and slowly descends into madness. Something corrupted the priest. He will, however, avoid saying anything about not sending aid to the Chaplain. The party can try to calm down the Archbishop with a **DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion), (Deception), or (Intimidation) check**. If he calmed down, the Archbishop will confess what he did. If not calmed down, he will rush down to the statue at area 2 and begin praying for forgiveness. This will have an effect in the following chapters.

Once the party has succeeded or failed at calming down the Archbishop, you may proceed to the next chapter.

## Chapter 1.2. The Organ

Once debriefed concerning Hackern, the Archbishop will ask the party to remove the document and burn it. He feels himself losing his mind with it, as it reminds him of how he failed those people.

Then, all party members with a **passive Perception above 12** hear the distant sound of an organ. The Archbishop will smirk and say, "Even now, from time to time, I hear the organ playing and fear it might be the Chaplain's ghost." He feels he is going mad, but, unbeknownst to him, the party heard it too. Once the party tells him they've also listened to the organ, he'll send them up to inspect it because he's too afraid to do it himself.

*Maps by CzePeku:*  
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### MAP 1

The party must go up to the organ (map 2) and investigate it. On their way, they can also explore map 1.

Each party has its degree of agency and curiosity. Some parties might require additional prompts, while others will only need you to show them a map before they peek around into every nook and cranny. That said, I encourage you to detail the surroundings to your heart's content. If you feel you might need to give your party more notes on what seems of interest for them to check it out, do so. If not, simply let them run rampant through the maps.

## AREAS OF THE BASE FLOOR

### 1 - DESK

Besides the document, there are also scribbblings and notes, but nothing of much interest. Any player that reads the manuscript must also make a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread** if they are of a non-good alignment.



## 2 - STATUE OF ATONEMENT

Read this:

*'A beautiful, magnificent statue of the Goddess of Eternal Sun. Her beauty envelops the room and gives you a sense of purpose. It's comforting and overpowering all the same.'*

If a party member gets closer, their vision will begin to blur, and they'll see the statue cry a single tear from its stone eye. If the party member is of a good alignment, they may remove 1 point of **Dread**.

If they are of a non-good alignment, they must succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**. In addition, they are afraid of liquids or the rest of the adventure. They cannot drink or touch water or drink potions.

Any party member can also make a **DC 17 Intelligence (Religion) check**, revealing that this is often a sign of great pain shown by the goddess in hopes of guiding her children.

## 3 - STAIRS

These lead to the next level (map 2).

## 4 - CHOIR SEATS

When a party member approaches the choir seats, they will hear the crying of children in their ear.

If they are of a lawful alignment, they must succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**. They can, however, also make a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. On a success, they find a choir song with the following verses:

*"When the moon whole for a week shines / There be no reason one divines / It is clear as is foretold / That a curse has taken hold."*

If they are of a non-lawful alignment and hear the crying, until the end of the adventure, whenever they see the ghost of a child, they must spend their action to sing as loud as they can.

## AREAS OF THE UPPER FLOOR

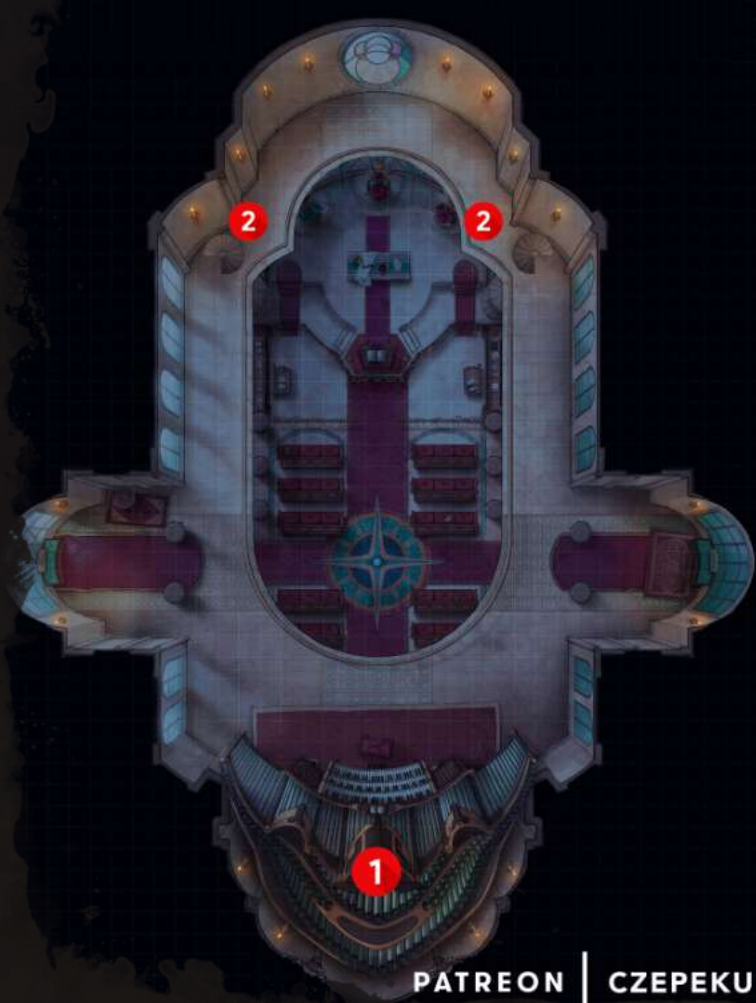
### 1 - STAIRS

These lead back down to map 1.

### 2 - THE ORGAN

Read this:

*'You approach the organ only to see no figure truly there. It is untouched, at first glance, at least.'*



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MAP 2

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Any party member may make a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or (Arcana) check** to inspect the organ. On a success, it's been tampered with.

In addition, any party member on this map may make a **DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check** to look on the walls. On a success, they notice shadows of people that are not there.

Once all party members have turned their back on the organ, A **specter** will play a note on it again. Then, proceed to the next chapter.

## Chapter 1.3. The Chapel Ghosts

Read this:

*'You hear a note ring through the air once more. Then, a voice screams out in pain. Roll for initiative.'*

The party must now fight a **specter** and **6 shadows**. If the Archbishop has been calmed down, he'll aid the party in the fight.

Once the party has defeated all enemies, the Archbishop will reveal that he is not going crazy but be saddened by the fact that there genuinely are ghosts haunting him. He'll ask the party to go forth towards the ruins of Hackern and find the root of this evil, whether it be a curse or something else, and thwart it. If they can do that, he'll reward all of them handsomely. To aid in their journey, he'll give them a *scroll of remove curse* and 1 *potion of healing* to aid in their journey.

With that, you may proceed to the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 2. THE RUINED CHAPEL

In which the party reaches Hackern.

## Chapter 2.1. The Moonlight

Read this:

*'You exit the cathedral only to look above and find the moon staring right back at you, as round as a coin. It feels like a watcher from above, detached yet filled with hatred. You'll have to be wary of it, that's for sure. But first, you must travel to the ruins of Hackern and find the truth of what once rested there.'*

The party members must make a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**. Then, their journey begins.

*Every party has its definition of what is truly terrifying. As such, I encourage you to go about and make however many horrifying encounters you want. The party should pass through a few of them before making it to the chapel. You should keep in mind that these are a village's ruins. It is broken down and filled with angry ghosts.*

First, have the party choose one member to lead the journey. That party member must make a **DC 16 Wisdom (Survival) check**. On a success, the party must only roll once on the Ghost Encounter Table. On a failure, they have to roll twice.

## GHOST ENCOUNTER TABLE

D6

ENCOUNTERS

1 The party stumbles upon the cemetery, where a bunch of the villagers lies in a common hole after being found dead. The party must fight **4 zombies**.

2 The party makes it onto the main road, where the ghost of a child is playing. If any party member makes noise, its ghostly parent, a **ghost**, will attack the party.

3 The party goes through the forest, where long-dried blood is splattered in a circle. All good-aligned players must make a **DC 17 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**.

4 The party gets to the well, where a body is still hanging, having hung himself inside the well. All party members must make a **DC 17 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**.

5 The party hears whispers leading them to a shed. The lock can be broken with a **DC 13 Thieves' Tools check**. Inside are the bodies of an adult and a child, hugging. The adult has scratched out the words "vengeful" on the ground. There's also a **dagger of venom** on the body.

6 The party is guided by the sound of screams into a partially-burnt house. They make it inside a home office, where a ghost attempts to scare them. All party members must make a **DC 17 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**. After that, they can investigate the office with a **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check**, they find a **scroll of protection against good and evil**.

After making it through the needed number of encounters, the party will finally make it to the chapel. Proceed to the next chapter.

## Chapter 2.2. The Ruin

Read this:

*'You walk confidently until you finally reach the bottom of a small hill. The Archbishop instructed you to take this path, and now you are, looking up at the ruins of the chapel. You're unsure as to what happened here... But something did. And you must uncover the truth. The moon shines directly on the broken-down tower. This was once the place of god.'*

The party can now investigate map 3.

## AREAS OF THE RUINS

### 1 - GRAVES 1

*The party can approach these graves and investigate them, but make sure they remember how Dread might affect them.*

On the graves, written in blood, is the following phrase: "Death is forgiveness. My fate is worse." Upon seeing this, all party members must make a **DC 17 Charisma saving throw** or take 4d6 psychic damage, as visions of the chaplain's life force themselves into their minds. The party sees how he uncovered a truth beyond comprehension, which lead to the death of the entire village. What was it, though?

### 2 - GRAVES 2

*The party can approach these graves and investigate them, but make sure they remember how Dread might affect them.*

On the graves, written in blood, is the following phrase: "We cannot contain the true evil. The howling never stops." Upon seeing this, all party members must make a **DC 17 Constitution saving throw** or take 3d8 thunder damage, as they hear a deafening howl. Is there a wolf here?

### 3 - TOWER

If a party member climbs atop the tower, crows will begin cawing at them, before attacking them. They must make a **DC 16 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 4d6 damage on a failure and being blinded for 1 minute. On a success, they take half damage and are not blinded.

From above the tower, if they are not blinded, the party can see light of the moon beautifully reflect onto the stained glass. The stained glass also has claw marks and blood spattered on it. Something was strong enough to knock this tower over.

### 4 - RUINS

As the party approaches the ruins, any party member with a **passive Perception above 15** can hear the sound of snarling. As the first party member

approaches, **Alunis, undead werewolf**, alongside **2 specters**, will reveal himself from hiding and attack the party. They must roll initiative and defeat him before investigating the area. They can also hide and run, if they wish to.

With **Alunis** defeated, the party can examine the area. A **DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check** will reveal the crypt's entrance (map 4). If the party goes down into the crypts, proceed to the next chapter.

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### MAP 3





## Chapter 2.3. The Crypt

As the party makes into the crypt, party members, must make a **DC 17 Wisdom saving throw** or gain 1 point of **Dread**. Then, they may investigate the areas.

*As the party investigates this area, keep track of their time. It will come in relevant because they might end up surrounded by Alunis after his body restores itself.*

### AREAS OF THE CRYPT

*If the party is particularly healthy, don't be afraid to place some traps in the crypt.*

#### 1 - ARRIVAL AREA

The party arrives here.

#### 2 - BROKEN STATUE

Any party member may pry open the wooden door with a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check**. Then, upon opening the door, the party will gaze upon a statue that was torn to shreds. All party members with at least 2 points of **Dread** must succeed on a **DC 17 Wisdom saving throw** or take 3d6 psychic damage, as visions of Alunis losing his mind and destroying the statue cloud their brains.

#### 3 - CURSED URN

Read this:

*'The unholy feeling within this crypt is overpowering. Something inside here is evil. You're just unsure as to what. This doesn't just hide the bodies of saints, but the curse itself.'*

With a **DC 16 Intelligence (Religion) check** or a *detect evil and good* spell, the party can notice the broken urn as the source of the curse. They can remove the curse in one of the following ways:

- a vial of holy water
- a prayer
- a scroll of remove curse
- a ceremony spell

## CHAPTER 3. BROKEN CURSE

In which the party banishes the curse.

### Chapter 3.1. The Finale

Read this:

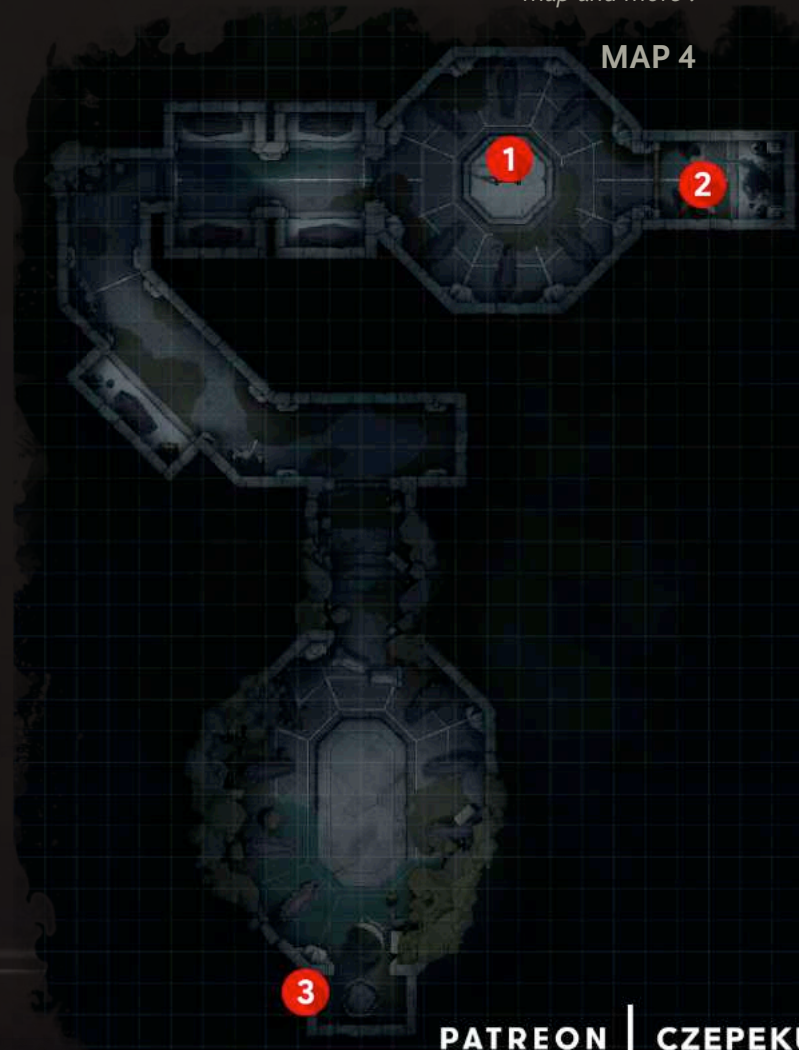
*'As you focus on the curse, you feel it finally let go. What follows is the distant sound of a howl, louder than anything you've heard before, despite you being underground. Whatever was left of Alunis up there howled from unlife, then... silence. You feel an energy course through you, almost like a pulse of thankfulness coming from the goddess herself. The curse is dispelled.'*

The party can return to the Archbishop without facing any peril. All's well when it ends well. They've saved it all. The Archbishop rewards them all with 300 gold each and sends them on their way.

The End.

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# APPENDIX:

## Alunis, Undead Werewolf

*Medium humanoid (zombie), chaotic evil*

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)  
Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)  
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17(+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)

**Saving Throws** Str +5

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +5, Stealth +4

**Damage Resistances** poison

**Damage Immunities** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

**Senses** darkvision 90 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common (can't speak in wolf form)

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** Alunis has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Endless Curse.** If the Alunis is killed, it regains all its hit points in 1 minute unless its curse is broken or remove curse spell is cast on him.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Alunis makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

**Claws.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature with at least 1 point of Dread, it takes another 10 (4d4) points of damage and loses all points.

**Create Specter.** Alunis targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under the Alunis' control. Alunis can have no more than seven specters under its control at one time.

# THANK YOU!

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW AND SUPPORT ME, WITHOUT YOU I COULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT THIS PROJECT TO LIFE.

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AND NOW ONTO THE NEXT PROJECT...

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A MASSIVE THANK YOU TO ALL MY PATRONS!

