

ELDARK CRYPT

Introduction: This is a challenging adventure into a family tomb to save a son at a father's behest.
Designed for an optimized party with strong coordination

A 3-HOUR ADVENTURE FOR 7TH-10TH LEVEL CHARACTERS

BY SEREPHIEL



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CHAPTER ONE, A PLEA FOR HELP

OVERVIEW

In this adventure the party will be approached by Lord Eldark and asked to save his son. His son is an aspiring adventurer whom learned of a magic weapon in the family crypt and set off to retrieve it. After he failed to return, Lord Eldark hired a party of 5 adventurers to search for him but they never returned either. Lord Eldark then stumbles upon the party and beseeches them for help.

This adventure will take the party through the treacherous Eldark family crypt, a resting place for many ancient heroes. The adventure is broken into 3 main fights, each more climatic than the last.

Aaron Eldark, the lord's son, was captured by a distant relative, Issabela Eldark, who is a vampire that has been living in the crypt for the last 150 years with her son Timothy Eldark. The first fight will be between 2 vampire spawn knights and the party, the second fight will be against Timothy and his wights, and the last fight will be against Isabella herself.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The party is approached by a well dressed elderly man with short gray hair and a neatly trimmed beard. His eyes are bloodshot with bags under them, he quickly makes his way over to the party and begs their assistance on a matter he insists is most important.

Hello there, my name is Richard Eldark, and I require your assistance immediately in a matter most urgent. My son has gone missing, and I fear the worst.

If questioned, he will reveal the following information:
-He believes that something bad has happened to his son. His son came into a memoir about an old ancestor, and in it said he was laid to rest with the powerful weapon he used as an adventurer. The son, Aaron, is a strong man and aspiring adventurer. With him still missing, Lord Eldark is worried.
- Lord Eldark hired a party of 5 adventurers a week ago, but they haven't returned either
-Before his son has entered, he doesn't think anyone has entered the tomb in over 100 years. Lord Eldark's parents were cremated.

- He is willing to pay the party 1,000 Gold Peices and allow them to keep any treasures they find if they can safely return Aaron. If an adventurer tries to tell Lord Eldark that his son may be dead, he will always dismiss the claim and say he needs his son back alive.

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If the adventurers accept the quest, he will tell them the location of the crypt just outside of town. In addition, he will give them a Eldark family signet ring. He will inform the party that they must insert it in the keyhole to gain access to the mausoleum. Anyone who can see magic auras will see that it is magical.

Traveling to the tomb:

The tomb is just a short distance outside the gate of the town, it takes the party around 30 minutes to reach it. Once they arrive read this to the party:

As you enter the graveyard you walk through an old open wrought iron gate and see rows and rows of beautiful tall mausoleums. It doesn't take long to find the Eldark family mausoleum, it is a tall beautifully crafted marble structure with 2 large stone dire wolves on each side of the door. The door is made of solid granite with the heraldry of house Eldark engraved on it with a hole in the center.

-The heraldry of house Eldark is two wolves facing each other with teeth barred, with a beautiful oak tree in the background.

Once the signet is pressed into the hole, both the granite doors open up revealing a small room lit by torchlight. The room has a staircase descending from the center and several stone benches along the side. The walls are engraved with noble figures from all walks of life. Several are in plate armor fighting chimeras and manticores. Others are reading from books or painting.

-If the party searches the room, they will find nothing of value
-If they look at the engravings in detail, they will see some of the standout figures wielding flaming weapons and two of them in robes wielding spells. If they inquire about which flaming weapons, one is a Halberd and the other is a greatsword.

Once they decide to descend down the stairs, read this to them:

The stone stairs go down for at least 100 feet, the hallways is 10 feet abreast dimly lit by torches

-If they investigate the torches they will discover that they are magical ever burning torches. They can be pried off the wall with a DC 18 strength check.

Once they reach the bottom of the staircase, read this to them:

At the bottom of the staircase the hallways opens up into a grand hall at least 80 feet wide, over 200 feet deep, and 50 feet tall. There are two rows of tall granite pillars that support beautiful domed ceilings covered in ornate engravings. At the other side of the hall you see a wide staircase leading up 20 feet.

-If they take an active look around, on a DC10 perception check they will see bones and weapons lying around the western walls. A DC 20 will show 2 sets of black full plate armor on the far wall displayed upright. One has a greatsword held with the tip resting on its feet and it's hands on the pommel. The other one has a longbow resting on it in a similar fashion.

-If any party member casts detect magic the bones will light up with a glow. If they focus on it they will discover it is from the necromancy domain. If they can see magic at the end of the hallway, the bow and greatsword will also show up as magical.

-If the bones are smashed nothing tries to stop them, for each set of bones smashed it will destroy the corresponding skeleton.

-After 30 seconds or so, before the party makes halfway through the great hall, the ambush scene triggers. However, if the entire party is invisible or rolls a 20+ stealth check, they do whatever they would like until they provoke one of the guardians or try to open the door. If they do so, the ambush scene starts

Ambush scene:

As the party make their way through the great hall, everyone hears a door at the far side creak open and see a beautiful woman in a red dress walk to the top of the stairs. She appears to be in her early 30s with long blond hair. "Welcome to our family tomb, what brings you all to these hallowed halls?" she says with a fiendish grin.

-If the party ask who she is, she will reply that she is Isabella Eldark. If they enquirer her relationship to Lord Eldark or Aaron Eldark, she will reply she is a distant relation.

-If they ask her why she is here, she will reply that she is helping her son with his research, and he must not be disturbed. She will not give anymore information on this subject.

-If they ask about Aaron, she tells him he is alive and well. She is insulted if the party asks or insinuates something may have happened to him.

-If they are within 30 feet of her, they only need a DC 15 perception. If they are over, they need a DC 20 perception to notice her dim red eyes and sharp teeth.

-If they confront her on being a vampire, she won't deny it but not understand why the party cares.

-If at any time the party advances on her, insults her, threatens her, or she gets tired of their questions: move to the combat portion of the ambush scene.

Combat:

Once the combat is triggered, or she is attacked, Isabella will announce:

"Well enough of this, Sir Gregor, Sir Roland, take care of these intruders and put them with the others" Isabella orders. The party sees the suits of plate armor shift and ready their weapons, hears the barking of hounds and the sound of skeletons assembling.

She will then head to the door leading to room 1 and open it to let the hell hounds out, then go through it and close it after her.

The armored Vampire spawn start moving, 10 skeletons animate(Assuming their bones haven't been crushed) on the west wall armed with shortswords and shields. 6 more skeletons animate above the stairs armed with short bows(Page 272 of the MM). 6 Death Dogs(MM page 321) run out of the the door to room 1 down the stairs

They have all the stats of a normal vampire spawn(Found on page 298 of the MM) with these exceptions:

Sir Gregor: Switch out the claw and bite attack with: Melee greatsword attack +8 to hit, and 11 magic slashing damage per hit (2d6+4). Change the AC to 19. He is a fighter with the defensive fighting style. Sir Gregor can also cast action surge once per day.(He can make a second multi attack with his greatsword). Sir Gregor is challenge rating 6 and will give 2,300 XP once slain

Sir Roland: Switch out the bite attack with a magic longbow attack, +10 to hit that deals 9 magic damage per hit(1d8+4). It can be used with Multi Attack. Change the AC to 18 as well. Roland is challenge rating 6 and will give 2,300 XP once slain

-If the party is forced to retreat, the tomb door at the entrance is closed and will need a DC 25 strength check to force open.

-If the party wins and searches the room, they will find the magic Greatsword +1 and the Longbow +1 on the vampires, in addition to their platemail armor.

-If they do an active investigation of the room and roll a 15+, they will find a bag of 38 GP stashed amongst the skeletons. If they roll a 20+ they will find a hidden door in the great hall. The door is pushed open with a DC 15 strength check and contains a small room with a tomb. If they pry off the lid of the tomb, they will find a man in the tomb wearing a +1 breastplate with a +2 Mithral longsword next to him with 2 wolves engraved on the pommel. The man looks like he did in life, and is being kept preserved by magics in the tomb. If taken out of the tomb he will decay at a normal rate.

-A DC 20 investigate of this room will show a hidden compartment at the base of the tomb that reveals a spell book with the spells: Haste, Fireball, Scorching Ray, Darkness, invisibility, Magic Missile, Mage Hand, Booming Blade and Greenfire blade(Found in the Sword cost adventure book) spells inscribed inside of it. It is a beautiful book made of high quality materials and will fetch at least 300 GP if sold.

-A party can short rest without an issue in this room, but if they do a long rest 2d6 hell hounds(MM pg 182) will attempt to ambush them 2 hours in. If they try it again after that, 2d6 wights(MM pg 300) will ambush them after another 2 hours. After that, no more ambushes.

Section 2: The Laboratory of Timothy the Mad

After the defeat of the enemies in the great hall, the adventurers can enter either room 1 or 1a.

Room 1a:

As you push open the heavy wooden door you see a well lit room with several magic orbs sitting atop 6 pedestals. Each one is emitting a bright magical light.

-If touched they are fixed to their pedestals. If somehow the party touches them in the order of Orb 1, 4, 3, 5,6, 2, they will hear a shifting noise and the floor will open up to form stairs going below.

-If they somehow find the tomb below, there will be a fully preserved woman that looks to be in her late 40s in a no magical white wizards robe. Next to her is an ornate black wand of the warmage +2 with golden etchings, and a bag of holding. Inside the bag of holding is a spell component pouch, 12 healing potions, and a 782 GP.

-If they search the room, an investigation roll of 15 will reveal a hidden door, the door will need a dc 15 strength check to open, and if forced open all at once(Which it will be unless the party specifies otherwise), then a massive barrage of crossbow bolts will shoot whomever opened it dealing 10d6 damage(35). The person who get hit will have to make a DC 15 con save or take an additional 10d6(35) poison damage.

Room 1:

The door opens up with a large thud, and into a hallway 5 feet abreast dimly lit by torches. The hallway is musky and the air is still. The hallway goes north for 25 feet and then takes a hard right east. It continues eastward for 100 feet and ends at another sturdy wooden door that leads to room 2.

Room 2:

After you push open the door the brightness of the room almost blinds them. It is a beautiful granite room roughly 80 square feet in dimension. It is cupped with a beautiful domed ceiling with murals of angels guiding valiant soldiers into the afterlife. Below the domed ceiling are various floating light orbs bathing everything in bright white light. On the sides of the room there are rows of beautiful white trees in the middle of small streams of white water that flow the length of the room. At the end of the room there are two heavy wooden doors, and between them a large ornate chair with what looks to be a 15-year-old boy in ornate red robes sitting in it. He is reading a tome and looks up as you enter.

"Mother said you looked like a heartier lot than the last group, my name is Timothy, pleasure to make your acquaintance" he eagerly says and slams his book shut. It is clear from his red eyes he is a vampire.

The party has a chance to talk to Timothy if they so choose, or else proceed to combat

Timothy freely converses with the party and will answer any questions they have for him until he tires of the conversation.

-If the party asked him who he is, he will reply with "I am Timothy Eldark of course"

-If asked how he came down here or how he became a vampire, he will reply with "It happened so long ago. I was

stricken with a sickness that no physician said he could cure. My poor mother and father did everything they could to find someone, resorting to consulting mystics and wizards. We paid them their due, and they did their rituals but none of them worked. Fortunately mother found a traveling merchant. A merchant of all people! Who said he knew a way to save me from my fate. My mother gave him everything we had, and the man sank his teeth into me, and well, here I am. “

-If pressed about how his mother got turned, he will say "Well after he turned me, he gave my Mother "The Gift" of course".

-If asked about the other adventurers, he will say "Oh, sir Gregor and Sir Roland made short work of them, they made for excellent subjects" and give a wicked grin.

-If asked if Aaron could be returned, he will say "Perhaps..” If the party member can make a good case as to why he should and pass a DC 20 persuasion roll Timothy will tell the party to stay where they are, and he will ask mother. He will Dimension Door away and return in 2 minutes, telling the party that mother said 'no', but they can ask her if they want. If they accept, this will bypass the fight for this room, and he will point them in the direction of mother(past the door to room 3). If they accept but start advancing far into the room while he is gone, trigger room 2 combat but with just the wights. Timothy will be enraged and attack when he comes back

-If the party inquires about the nature of his experiments, he will ask them if they want to see. If they say yes, combat will begin

-If asked about how Aaron is or what he thinks of Aaron, he will reply "I don't know why we need him, I am the only one Mother needs"

-If asked if Aaron has been turned, he will scoff and say "The stubborn fool keeps refusing mother, someone like him doesn't deserve it"

-A perception roll of 15 will show that there are bones and weapons scattered loosely around Timothy's chair

Room 2 Combat

Once Timothy tires of them, is attacked, or the party moves to far into his room, he will drop all facade and just start laughing manically as 10 Wights(MM page 300) phase through the walls(5 on each side), and then initiative is rolled. At the start of round 3, 6 Specters(mm pg 279) will emerge through the walls and join the is backed into the hallway, they will emerge behind them.

Timothy is a vampire spawn(as shown on page 298 of the MM) but with these exceptions:

He will not use a claw or bite attack, but is a spell caster. Once over half the wights are dead or if he is being attacked he will use animate dead each turn to animate 3 skeletons with shortswords(Page 272 of the MM). If there are over 5 animated Skeletons still alive, he will cast level 1 magic missiles at the party member he thinks is the most wounded. His magic missiles shoot out 3 projectiles that deal 1d4+1 and automatically hit. He has 2 3rd level slots he will use for counterspell as his reactions until those 2 slots are used up. He is also a CR 8 monster who will give 3900 XP when slain).

If the party tires to flee, the wights will give chase but Timothy will remain where he is unless given a compelling reason to pursue. The Wights will chase all the way to the entrance of the tomb.

DM note: If you think the party will struggle, you can have Timothy watch the fight until most of the wights are dead. Alternatively, if your party is strong, you may have 2 flesh golems(pg 169) Enter the fight from the Laboratory(room 3a) at the end of the second round)

Post Battle:

Once the fight is over, if they loot the room they will find the expensive tome timothy was reading worth 75GP. The adventures of Sir Edgar Eldark.

-The party can take a short rest without issue, but as with before, devil dogs and then wights(Pg 300) will ambush if a long rest is attempted.

Room 3a:

You push open the heavy wooden door and see what can only be Timothy's Laboratory. On the Northern wall if the large 50 x 50 stone room there are cages and blood splatters. Some cages have skeletons and humans in varying states of decay. On the western wall, you see shelves filled with all sorts of Al chemical equipment and vials. On the southern wall there is a tall desk and several shelves full of notes. The air is hard to breathe, the entire room reeks of chemicals and death.

Searching room 3a: In the Al chemical station you find: 1 Potion of Darkvision, 1 Potion of Jump, 1 Potion of Cat's Grace, 1 Potion of Delay Poison, 1 potion of Reduce Person, 1 potion of bull's strength, 7 potions of healing and 1 potion of Remove Blindness/Deafness

In the desk and shelves around it you find notes detailing his theories on animation and the creation of undead as

well as 3 scrolls of Animate dead and 1 scroll of create undead.

Nothing is obvious in the caged area, but if the party investigates, a roll of 15+ will let them find a piece of flesh with the words "HELP" scrawled on it. A DC 18 will reveal that the creature did it to itself with its own finger nails.

Room 3:

The heavy wooden door leads into a long and tall 10 foot wide hallway. It goes forward 100 feet and reeks of death and is dimly lit by torches on the walls. In each 5 foot square of wall there is a slab with a name on it and the dates they lived and their accomplishments in life. Judging by the dates, the most recent death was 143 years ago. At the end of the hallway large double doors reinforced with iron lead to room 4.

The doors to the room open easy, and before the party is 3 open tombs in this grand room styled much like room 2. There is a beautiful dome over it with more depictions of heroes sitting beside angels with bright light orbs floating underneath making the room very well lit. The room is an octagon with 20 foot long sides, and on the far side you can see a sleeping man resting on a stone bench, with Isabella beside him stroking him.

She will attempt to converse with the adventurers as they enter the room

"You got past Sir Gregor and Sir Roland, and somehow convinced my son to let you pass, well done" she says, the idea of her son being dead doesn't even cross her mind

-If she is told her son is dead, she will jolt up, instantly teleport behind the person who said it, and strike them with 2 claw and a bite attack. Any will crit if she hits regardless of the roll. This will be counted a surprise round, initiative will be rolled after.

-If she is asked about Aaron, she says he is young and will only willingly give him the "gift", she will not let anyone take him from her, she says he just needs time to understand.

-If she is asked about her husband, she says she left him when Timothy and herself received the gift and never saw him again.

-If asked about her family, she reveals that the Eldarks are a family of war heroes and adventurers, and inform them that some of the greatest adventurers the world has ever seen are resting here with us. If the party shows interest,

she will let them know that there are tomes in each of the crypts in here that tell of these heroes conquests. In this room lie the very best he family has ever had.

-Once the conversation has run its course, she will ask the adventurers to leave her and Aaron alone and to tell lord Eldark that his son will be safe with her. The party can leave safely at this point. If they refuse, combat starts

Room 4 combat:

"What a shame, well Timothy will enjoy having you in his collection"

Isabella Eldark has the stats of a vampire spawn (Page 298 on the MM), but has lived a long time and has some augmented abilities: She has an AC of 18 and a HP pool of 185. Her multi attack gives her 3 attacks, her claws are also larger and stronger than most other vampire spawn and have the following stats:

Claws, Melee Weapon attack +10 to hit, reach 5ft, Hit 14 (2d6+4 slashing)+(1d6 poison)

Each round she can take a bonus action to teleport to any square she can see within 60 feet. She also can cast counterspell once per turn as a reaction as a level 3 spell.

Once per battle she can furiously rage and have all of her successful attacks crit regardless of the die roll.

She has a legendary action where she can make a claw attack at a creature within range after a player's turn. She can use it twice per round.

Tactics: She will go for the least armored adventurers first, and focus on down before she goes to another. If she has been informed of Timothy's death, she will focus the person who told her regardless though, screaming "How dare you lie about such things!!!", "You will die for this!" and other similar things.

She is far more powerful than a newborn vampire spawn and is a CR11 monster who gives 7200 XP if defeated.

After the Battle:

Once defeated, the party may search the room. On Isabella's body the party finds a ring of protection (DMG pg 191) and bracers of armor (DMG 156). If the dress is intact, it seems like it would sell for 85 GP. Upon her death, the doors to the crypt can now be freely opened from the inside.

In the north coffin lies Imeric Eldark, looking as regal and powerful in death as he did in life. He has jaunty features of a man in his late 40s, powerfully built with jet black hair. Next to him lies an ornate halberd with the Flametongue ability (DMG pg 170) and at his feet lies a thick tome. Inside the tome the phrase he used to ignite his halberd is written many times, it will take 6 hours of reading the tome to find it first mentioned. On his body he is equipped with a beautiful silver Fullplate +1.

In the south eastern tomb lies Eltharion the blind, who still has his blue blindfold wrapped around his eyes. Next to him lies an ornate greatsword that has the Flametongue (DMG pg 170) ability. There is a tome at his feet that has the password for it as well. He is garbed in ornate white robes that would sell for around 50GP

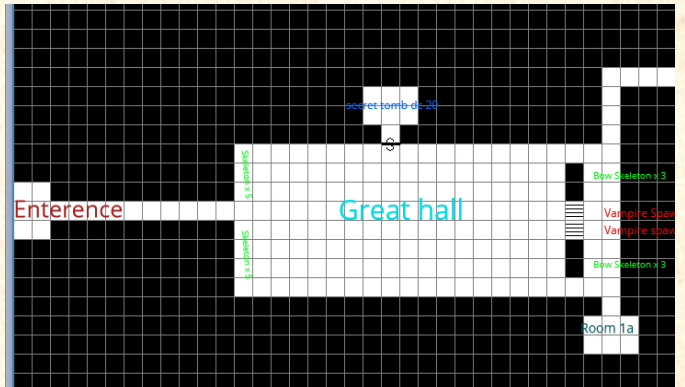
In the south western tomb lies Maslikar Eldark, an old man looking to be in his 70s. On his right hand is a Ring of Spell Storing (DMG pg 192), and he is adorned in a beautiful white robe worth 125gp. Inside that robe if searched is an empty bag of holding (DMG pg 153). At his feet lies a tome of his adventures, if read in 58 hours of read time the order of the white orbs in room 1a will be said.

Returning Aaron to his father

Aaron can be shaken out of the magical daze he was in, and quickly tells of the horrors he was shown with how the vampires kept trying to persuade him to become a monster and how he watched as they butchered the adventurers sent to save him. He earnestly thanks the adventurers for rescuing him and is eager to get back to his father. If asked about his family he has little knowledge of his ancestors and is fine with the adventurers taking anything they want, after this he has decided to give up adventuring.

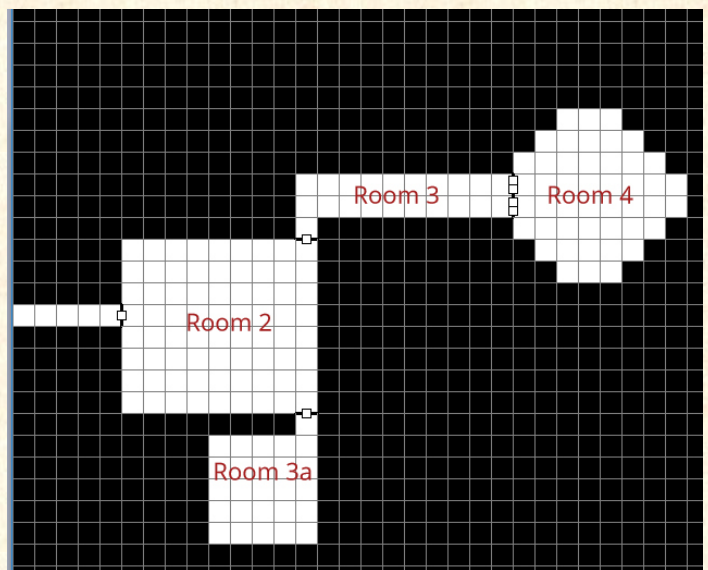
Lord Eldark is waiting for the party as they exit and rushes to his son. He pays the party 1000 GP and offers to house the party at his estate and throw them a feast. If the party accepts they are taken by coach to Eldark Manner, a massive 40 room estate inside the town, and thrown a feast worthy of heroes. If Lord Eldark is asked about his family, he just replies that they were fools who died young and is glad that Aaron won't follow them to their early graves.

He offers to board them for the night, and gives them each nice rooms in the east wing. If they decline he says farewell and says he will always be in the party's debt. If they say they are welcome to leave as they convince, and the lord will thank them for their service and promise he will never forget.



I hope you enjoyed!!

Here are some maps I made, this is of the great hall, the scale is one square = 10 feet. The light green markers on the left are each 5 skeletons, the light green on the right on top of the stairs are each 3 bow skeletons. The 2 red markers on the right are Vampire spawn. The dark to the side of the stairs leading to the vampire spawns are just there to symbolize different elevations, the skeletons can shoot the room from up there. The blue hard to read text is the secret tomb with the hidden door



This monsters are straight forward in this section, so I just labeled the rooms.

If you enjoyed this adventure, please leave a review and a comment! If people like my work I'll be happy to do more!