*Dinnai Eckert glared into the black of the tunnel beyond, seeing nothing more than rocks. He licked his lips and crawled further. He hoped the guide’s information was good, that he had been sold a true map and -even had the dealer been honest- that the quakes hadn’t shifted the passageway enough to twist such instructions to falsehood.*

*Up ahead, he heard drums. That was promising.*

*Slowly, his eyes shifted from darkvision to regular as he caught dancing torchlight from beyond the end of the tunnel. Going careful slow now, he crawled until he could see out the edge.*

*Harpies; three of them and perhaps two dozen zombies ringed around them. The undead banged at drums while the feathered witches worked on a corpse on an altar – it’s middle open and various organs splayed across the table. Without thinking about it, Dinnai started playing with a spot of lyric about, ‘oh the silly birds, fly below the stones, pecking out the hearts, of good men.’ He peered at the dead man on the altar, wouldn’t want to disrupt any old ritual unless this was the right one. Green eyes, thatch colored hair, and a tattoo of an ankheg on his arm; yup, this was the merchants son and yes he was quite dead.*

*Time to collect his ransom.*

*With a slight \*whuff\* Dinnai flipped from the tunnel overlooking the scene, landing easy and strumming his lute. The harpies turned, cocked their heads like quizzical chickens. Dinnai had often found that starting with a song bought him more time than opening with an arrow or spell. He began to sing.*

*The witches gestured and the zombies dropped their drums, turned to lurch at Dinnai. Too late. When Dinnai struck the last chord -just so- they stopped in their tracks, and now it was Dinnai’s turn to gesture towards the harpies and the undead to stumble that way, intent on bashing the bird fiends to death.*

*Necromancers always got so mad when you took away their toys; it was really quite funny. Dinnai added a bit to his song about it, doding out the way of a thrown dagger.*