

GENERATIONS OF GUILT

Level 3

They have the same right than us. But we have shunned them, lied to them for generations.

Lord Vragi Brynjar's Will and Testament

BACKGROUND LORE

BIRTHRIGHT IS CONSIDERED sacred by most folks. It is what keeps the world turning and the powers that be in place. Crowns, properties, and titles are handed down through generations. It is the way of the world. And it is respected by most, even if the odds of their birth do not favor them much. Alas, some families keep dark secrets of how they take advantage of other people's birthrights.

A FUTURE STOLEN

EIGHT GENERATIONS AGO, the heads of the Brynjar and Arvid families discovered several veins of iron and silver in the skirts of a mountain range. The veins were abundant and profitable enough that they would forever change their future for the better. Brynjar was a greedy man at heart and could not conceive sharing the spoils of their discovery with the Arvid family. He murdered his partner and claimed he perished before prospecting the mining site, claiming sole proprietorship of the mine.

A large town prospered around the mine where both families thrived and prospered. The Brynjars as rich owners of the mine and the Arvids as workers and hard-working miners. At the end of his life, the murderous Brynjar patriarch confessed his sin to his heir. The dying man asked his son to correct his mistake and give back to the Arvids what was rightfully theirs. The heir promised he would do so, but he never could. Greed ran deep in the Brynjars' blood. He kept the secret until his death and passed it on to the next in line. And so it has happened for more than a hundred years. In the present, the Brynjars are wealthy rulers in the region while the Arvids remain a hardworking family of miners and laborers. Lord Vraggi Brynjar passed away a fortnight ago. The family secret bequeathed to a young and spoiled lad.

THE FAILED BURIAL

LORD VRAGGI BRYNJAR died young. His first son and current ruler is Lord Ulf Brynjar, a 20-year old lad with little to no experience and who never lacked anything. Ulf ordered his father's remains to be placed in the family crypt in their estate. The lavish funerary ceremony was cut short when undead abominations emerged from the family crypt and attacked the guests, resulting in the regrettable death of several important individuals.

The young lord, trained in armed combat, gathered a party of warriors from the city barracks and his estate's security detail. They went into the tomb intending to destroy all the undead. Less than an hour later, a fraction of the group returned; wounded, but still alive. Lord Ulf Brynjar suffered a terrible, festering injury that led him to lose his right foot; mangling him, crippling him for life.

A reward of 1,200 gp is offered to dauntless adventurers willing to risk it all. They are told that the undead keep saying: "*Break the circle of lies*", "*fulfill the promise*". Lord Ulf claims he ignores what these words mean.

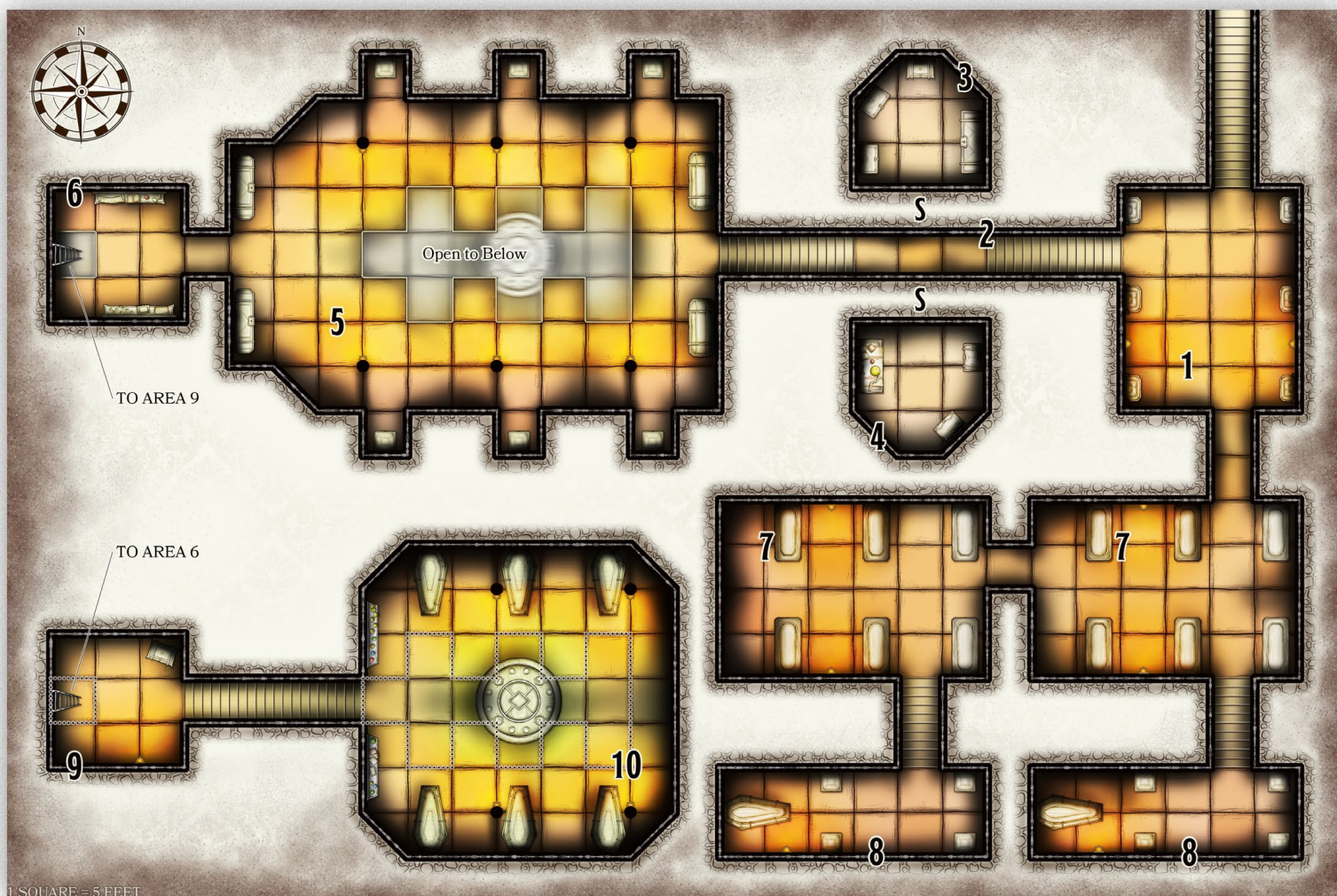
FEATURES OF THE TOMB

The following features correspond to all the areas of the Brynjar Mausoleum map; areas 1 through 9.

Light. Most rooms have magical sconces with *continual flame* spells. They fade out in 1 minute if removed.

Undead Regeneration. All undead in the crypt reform at dawn after 3 days even after being destroyed. Easing their guilt stops this process (see **Development**).

Malignant Aura. Areas 5 to 10 in the tomb are unhallowed ground. All undead in the area have advantage on saving throws against spells and turning effects.



1. CRYPT'S ANTECHAMBER

Strange draconic runes glow around the crypt's entrance. A flight of stone stairs descends to an antechamber that bears the scars of a recent battle.

The chamber features six standing sarcophagi by the walls. There are bloody stains on the floor and walls from Lord Ulf's failed attempt to take over the tomb.

The undead within emerge from their dark enclosures and attack any trespassers. The six **skeletons** wear tattered clothes with the Brynjar's sigil on them.

Inscriptions. The sarcophagi lids are engraved with a message in an old form of Common tongue. They read: "*Here lie the bravest bodyguards of the Brynjar family*".

Treasure. The enclosures contain one chain shirt, a silver bracelet (30 gp), and an ornate dagger (70 gp).

2. STAIRS LANDING

The seemingly empty, 15-foot-long landing features two secret entryways to the crypt's vaults. The walls slide inward after pushing hidden buttons on the walls (DC 17 Investigation). The doors close again after 1 hour.

3. NORTH VAULT

The dark chamber contains three stone chests and a large stone coffer. The thick layer of dust on everything suggests no one has visited this area in decades. A leather-bound journal is hidden under other papers and dirt (DC 15 Investigation). It belonged to a family patriarch four generations behind the current Lord Ulf Brynjar.

The Journal. A character can spend 10 minutes reviewing the contents of the journal. This reveals that the patriarch back then shared the family secret with other people in the family and announced his intention to give the Arvids a share of their wealth. Before doing that, he details his suspicions that his relatives conspire to assassinate him. The records stop shortly after that.

Treasure. The enclosures contain a *+1 chain shirt*, a silver bracelet (300 gp), and an ornate dagger (70 gp).

4. SOUTH VAULT

The chamber contains two chests and a decrepit stone table with several trinkets scattered on it.

Treasure. The chests contain a leather sack with 400 gp, a silver tiara (25 gp), an ornate belt (30 gp), a *+1 dagger*, a *potion of healing*, and a *spell scroll of hallow*.

5. GRAND BRYNJAR HALL

A large, irregularly-shaped opening looks down to the lower crypt. Funerary plinths and sarcophagi line the walls of this lavish, domed chamber.

The opening by the room's center leads down to area 10. It is a 40 feet drop to the floor below. The guardians of this chamber come forth when a trespasser reaches the mid-section of the hall. Four **skeletons** form from the ossuaries in the plinths and two **ghouls** exit their stone enclosures. After three rounds of combat, two **shadows** float up the opening and attack the weakest individual.

Treasure. The coffers contain a parcel of fine linens and rugs (900 gp) and six pieces of jewelry (45 gp each).

6. UPPER CRYPT LANDING

The ladder by the west wall leads down 20 feet to area 9. The shelves contain numerous embalming tools and implements that remain in serviceable condition. There are numerous flasks with embalming solutions too.

7. COMMON TOMBS

Common family members rest for eternity in this chamber. The dead appear to be in peace.

The remains in this chamber are somewhat unaffected by the patriarch's influence. They are sentient and aware in their enclosures but the **skeletons** do not fight unless attacked. They repeat these phrases over and over every few seconds: "*Give the Arvids what is theirs*", "*A life of stolen riches, what a shame!*" or "*Clean our name*". None of these undead reply to questions or conversation.

Treasure. Each enclosure contains 30 gp but the **skeleton** within must be defeated to retrieve the gold.

8. COLUMBARIUM OF SERVANTS

People who spent their lives as servants or employees of the Brynjar family have earned their position in this columbarium. The dead here remain inert and are unaffected by the guilt of the patriarchs in area 10.

9. LOWER CRYPT LANDING

The ladder by the west wall leads up 20 feet to area 6. The chest contains linens and rusted, worthless trinkets.

10. HALL OF PATRIARCHS

Six ornate sarcophagi surround a stone circle engraved with the family sigil. The voices from long-gone patriarchs utter heart-wrenching laments.

The six patriarchs' guilt over eight generations caused them and other people buried in the crypt to return as undead. Their only goal is to unveil the truth and give back to the Arvid family what they deem fair. The patriarchs (**ghouls**) explain their predicament to the characters and request their help in convincing Lord Ulf Brynjar to surrender half their assets to the Arvid family. Should the characters refuse, the patriarchs unleash their rage upon them and fight fiercely until slain.

DEVELOPMENT

THE CHARACTERS REACH the end of this adventure and face the consequences of their deeds.

If the characters return to Lord Ulf Brynjar to negotiate, the young ruler refuses. He knew about the generational secret but refuses to give any credence to it. In addition, his recent injury at the behest of his ancestors causes him to act out of spite and hatred.

Lord Brynjar sends a military expedition to vanquish all undead and their remains. It is bound to fail because the guilt-ridden undead regenerate every few days. The characters can attempt to convince the young lord of what is right. Or they can threaten to spread the truth to everyone willing to hear it, potentially unleashing a civil revolt in town. Lord Ulf doesn't have much leverage but he is stubborn enough to oppose the characters for as long as possible. But that is an adventure for another day...

