

# The Tomb of Rakoss The Undying

**A Fantasy Hero Adventure For Three to Five Standard Heroic Characters  
By Bob Pennington**

## Getting the Player's Involved

The GM has several plot hooks at his disposal to direct the party to this site based adventure. The GM should devise the hook after reading the background section thoroughly. Possible hooks include:

- After a successful adventure the party discovers a map and book relating to the life of Rakoss and the legend of his tomb. The text will hint at the great treasures to be found there.
- A more powerful PC or NPC may commission the characters to find the tomb providing a map to its rumored location in exchange for a portion of the treasure or a particular item that she needs.
- A band of undead spontaneously comes to life in a nearby town as a result of the unstable negative energy that results from the tomb. A local Lord hires the characters to investigate!

Regardless of how the characters become involved, they will travel to the site of the Tomb, eventually finding the cave that leads to area 1.

## Adventure Background

Rakoss was a mage of great power that died over 100 years ago. He served an evil master villain loyally throughout his later life as a military strategist. During a military campaign in which his battle plans proved faulty, he earned the wrath of his master and found himself and his minions trapped in a tomb in the base of a mountain range in your campaign world. Unable to leave the tomb Rakoss became insane and slew his subordinates in ritualistic fashion transforming them into hideous undead creatures. Driven even further insane by the chaotic powers he invoked Rakoss eventually attempted to transform himself into a lich. His insane mind gave way to sloppy preparation and he failed at stepping into undeath. His tomb has remained undisturbed since holding the spoils of his prior military success and the dangers his insane mind created.

## Starting the Adventure

Read or paraphrase the following text to the characters:

Your search for the tomb of Rakoss has brought you to the base of the (Insert Mountain Range Name) on the side nearest (Insert name of Kingdom or City). Until today your efforts to locate the Tomb have proved fruitless. During the morning hours you discovered a long dark cave filled with strange carvings. Nothing grows on the exterior of the cave and for 20' surrounding its mouth.

Although near the warm (insert name of Kingdom or City) border the temperature around the cave entrance is a near freezing coming in cold breaths from the dark cavern before you. There is an obvious crevice in the far wall of the cavern. You believe it may lead to your destination although your heart is filled with unease as you look towards your goal.

Characters entering the crevice will enter area 1. Following this, the text will describe the course of action in the adventure. The following features are common to the dungeon unless contradicted in the text below.

- Rakoss has placed a curse on the tomb as described under Independent Spells in Fantasy Hero on page 134. The spell is detailed below. For more information on the effects of Independent applied to spells see the aforementioned text.
- The entire dungeon is freezing cold (about 20 degrees). This is technically a temperature level -1 or -2. Depending on how tough you want to make the adventure adjust as you see fit. For the effects of extreme temperatures on characters see The Hero System Rulebook pages 297-298. The default playtest assumed Temperature Level -2. Deduct 2 REC and 2 END every 20 minutes. You can segment this to -1 REC and END per ten minutes for ease of play and bookkeeping.
- Unless otherwise noted there are no light sources in the dungeon. Remind newer players of the effects of darkness on movement and combat. This information is available in The Hero System Rulebook pages 226-227.
- All doors in the Tomb are made of a quality hardwood and are DEF 5 BODY 3.
- The door locks are of fine make and quite complicated. Lockpicking attempts are at -6. No multiple attempts can be made without stepping up the time chart one level. Doors are assumed to be unlocked unless noted.

### The Curse

The curse described above is an independent spell cast by Rakoss. It melded with and overwrote a prior containment spell cast by his evil master during his entrapment. The strange spell is quite powerful and unlikely to be dispelled. In essence the spell has the following effects.

- A. The entire area is freezing cold as described above.
- B. An uneasy feeling comes upon all "good" creatures that enter within.
- C. No forms of teleportation can be used within the structure.
- D. No form of extra dimensional movement can be used within the structure.

**The Curse of Rakoss the Undying:** (Total: 500 Active Cost, 96 Real Cost)  
 Chilling Cold: Change Environment 64" radius, 2 Temperature Level Adjustment, Altered Shape Any Area (+0), Conforming (+1/2), Reduced Endurance 0 END (+1/2), Persistent (+1/2) (95 Active Points); Independent (-2), Confines of Crypt Only (-1) (Real Cost: 24) **plus** Uneasy Feeling of Dread: +10 PRE, Uncontrolled (+1/2), Usable Simultaneously (x16 Number of Targets +1 1/2), Area Of Effect (3" Any Area; +1), Conforming (+1/2) (45 Active Points); Independent (-2), Confines of Tomb Only (-1), Evil undead inhabitants only. (-1/2), Only for offensive fear based presence attacks or to resist presence based turning (-1/2) (Real Cost: 9) **plus** No Teleportation or Dimensional Movement: Suppress 12d6, Uncontrolled (+1/2), Reduced Endurance 0 END (+1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Variable Effect (Teleport or Extra Dimensional Movement) Two Powers Simultaneously (+1/2), Continuous (+1), Area Of Effect (96" Any Area; +1 1/2), Conforming (+1/2) (360 Active Points); Independent (-2), Confines of Tomb Only (-1), Magical Teleport or Extra-Dimensional Movement Originating Inside Tomb Only (-1), No Range (-1/2), Limited Special Effect (Magic) Very Common SFX (-1/4) (Real Cost: 63);

### The Encounter Areas

1. Through the crevice you enter a large uneven cavern that slopes up to a leveled off platform of stone tile. This jagged patio is partly collapsed with a door against a worked section of wall at the caves terminus. In front of the door is a 20' deep pit filled with jagged spikes. There appears to be plenty of space available to move around the pit towards the door. Inside of the pit is a humanoid skeleton picked clean of all flesh. There are no items in the pit.

Exploration of the pit will confirm that there is nothing of value there. An unfortunates soul died attempting to breach the tomb long ago and was picked clean of goods long since. The doors are locked as detailed above.

2. The door opens to reveal a 10'x 40' long hallway with one strong door at its terminus. There are no lights in the hallway. The length of the wall includes mosaic stones that depict creatures coming up from the grave under skies of mauve and gray.

The trap halfway down the hall is a standard spiked pit trap. Please read Fantasy Hero pages 360-364 for traps. The pit is easy to leap over once detected.

- **Trigger:** 30 or more lbs. pressure on cover or falling in once open.
- **OCV:** Automatic unless character aborts to grabbing sick sides, requires dive for cover at -1 and generate BODY sufficient to lift self on strength chart (typically 2).

- **Damage/Effect:** The character(s) falls 3 game inches down onto a bed of 6" long spikes. Character(s) impaled with  $1/2d6+1$  (2-4) spikes, each applying damage separately but coordinating for "Stunning". Damage is  $1d6+1K$  AP +1 Stun x; per spike.
- **Find:** -1 (assumes light and active searching)
- **Disarm:** Not Applicable.

3. The door opens to reveal a 10' x 90' long hallway with seven doors not counting the door you entered by. At the north end is a 12' tall stone statue of a fiendish knight carrying a dire flail and a tower shield. Near the statue on the northwest wall is a door. There are three other doors on the east wall, and two others on the west. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way south in the corridor is a skeleton of a humanoid with a busted and corroded sword lying on a pile of rust.

All of the doors in the hall are unlocked except for the doors to areas 9, 11 and the secret door. Descriptions of the doors are noted in the text to that room. Anyone that discovers the secret door to area 7 and attempts to open it will trigger the animation of the large stone statue. The door is hidden (-1 to concealment and -4 to perception rolls not counting the effects of light) and has a tricky lock mechanism (lockpicking -6).

The Ancient Stone Warrior will animate attacking all within the halls. See its character sheet at the end of the adventure for details on this dungeon denizen. This construct will cease any attack if the offender (the one who touched the door) goes down or leaves the hall. It will then return to its pedestal and wait to be called on again. If smashed, the statue crumbles to reveal a large ruby worth 100 gp in its hollow interior.

4. You open the large wooden door to reveal a 25' x 35' room. In the rear of the room are two stone altars. In front of the altars is a brass basin of immense size. A brass bull serves as the pedestal for the blood caked basin. The remarkable pose warrants pity for the overburdened beast. On the south wall a red tapestry depicting the battle colors of General Rakoss and his fierce legions.

There is nothing of value in the room save for the brass basin. It is far too heavy to move.

5. You enter a 25' x 25' bunkroom in a state of complete disrepair. There are five old rotted bunks, two tables, and two footlockers in the room. Just as you gain your measure of the room 5 skeletons animate from the bones of the floor. They are all armed and armored as warriors from the armies of Rakoss.

The five skeletons are detailed at the end of the adventure. They are not average skeletons as they are imbued with the negative energies of the tomb. The skeletons are all armed as follows: 1 and 2 have longswords, 3 a mace, 4 a flail, and 5 has a spear. The armor they wear is chainmail, but it is so old and rusted that it offers no protection any longer. Besides the weapons and old armor the skeletons have nothing. Checking the two lockboxes (lockpicking at no penalty) reveals 60 gp, a 50 gp bloodstone, and a 90 gp azurite.

6. You enter a large combination kitchen and mess hall. The mess is an appropriate name for the stench filled room. Inside the 35' x 30' room the air is nearly un-breathable as the stench of rotten food hangs in the frigid air. Even so there must be some food still here for infesting the room are 4 giant red ants. They appear to have descended through the fireplace as their bodies are covered in soot. They immediately turn to face you.

The Giant Ants are detailed at the end of the adventure. They are large and aggressive and will fight for control of the rotten food in the room. They are uncomfortable in the cold of the room, but not enough so to leave without their food stash.

7. (a) You open the secret door to reveal a 10' x 35' long hallway that ends in a curtain of blood red. Although the entire place has been freezing so far, it feels even colder now! (b) As you open the curtains to see what is beyond two mummies shamble towards you across the room.

For these mummies use the mummy statistics from The Hero System Bestiary page 122. Do not add the additional powers unless you feel your party is too powerful.

After the characters defeat the mummies they can search the room. It is obviously a Wizards lab. All of the material components are long since ruined by the cold and negative energy. A bookshelf contains several books on varied subjects including Morlin's Guide to Alchemy, A Primer for Siege Warfare, The Dwellers Below, and A Planewalkers Primer. In addition to these books is Rakoss' spellbook. The book is damaged but may contain useful spells depending on how your campaign handles magic spell research. There is a wizard's desk that is locked (Lock picking -1). Inside are 48 gp, 230 sp, three 10 gp pearls, and strange silver glove. The "Ghost Grip Glove" is a new magic item detailed at the end of the adventure. Modify the book list to provide plot hooks for future adventures.

8. This large room measures 30' x 35' and is dominated by a large stone table. On the table is a relief model of (country characters are in) completed in great detail. Flags of several units are placed about the map. Several leather backed chairs surround the table. There are numerous long sticks designed for the manipulation of the units on the table. Shelves containing additional models, units, and clay surround the room. Various maps and charts also line the shelves. The room is in surprisingly good condition.

The books and maps in the room are worth quite a bit to historians or military strategist. There are 10 in all ranging in with a value of 2d6x10 gp each. The models may be of some use to military strategist, but are otherwise mere toys.

9. (Door is locked as detailed under doors at the beginning of the adventure.) You enter into a crypt measuring 20' x 30'. The room contains 4 gold covered coffins.

In the 4 coffins are the following treasures:

- Coffin #1: 50 gp
- Coffin #2: 100 sp, a fine work greatsword made of elven steel.
- Coffin #3: 90 gp
- Coffin #4: 40 gp, a glowing shortsword, a frozen healing potion (Fantasy Hero page 282), and a steel ring.

For details on all magical treasure and unique items see the end of the adventure. For campaigns where magic is rare or unspectacular you may wish to replace these items with fine work weapons and alchemical salves.

10. This room serves as a storage area. For some reason it is not nearly so cold except for the area near the door. The room is 15' by 25' and contains barrels and sacks of various spoiled goods. You would expect the room to stink but it does not. Bags of alchemical compounds that hang from the ceiling seem to be negating the stench of the rotted goods.

This room is provided as a safe haven for the characters to rest in. It is not safe from the giant ants, but otherwise should prove to be a warm place to recover from the cold and the hazards of the dungeon. If the giant ants have been defeated the party can rest here for a night without event.

11. (Door is locked as detailed under locked doors at the beginning of the adventure.) You enter a large room measuring 70' x 30'. This room is lit by continual flame spells placed on torches surrounding the room at 20' intervals. A large crimson tapestry depicting a hideous demon lord sits behind an altar of bloodstained granite. Two large stone pews are in the

rear of the temple room along with a stone table. A third pew flanks a rug made of a gigantic tiger skin.

The giant tiger rug is worth 150 gp. The Tapestry is worth 50 gp. The secret door is concealed (-4 to perception or -1 to concealment) but not all that well. Everything else in the room is mundane.

### Caverns

The Curse effects and the cold do not extend into the caverns. The roof of the caverns is between 40' and 50' high and is dome shaped with an exit hole directly above. The floor is roughly even with only some irregularity. The exit hole leads to another cave about 200' above the entrance. This entrance is well hidden from the outside and accessible only after a dangerous and exhausting climb. (In other terms GM's should not permit the circumvention of the dungeon by finding this alternate entryway.)

12. You enter through the secret door and warm air blast at your body. You welcome the heat stepping into the large cavern. Above a crevice exits the cavern some 50' above. The cavern walls are irregular, but the floor is mostly flat. Passages branch off to the northeast and the south.

Loud noises upon entering the caverns are likely to alert the Manticore in area 14. It will not automatically attack, but instead will set an ambush for an unsuspecting party.

13. The cavern splits to the west revealing a skeletal corpse against the far wall. The body is sprawled and still wearing a shiny suit of light chain and green boots. Next to the body are a darkwood staff and a small sack.

One of Rakoss' men was an elven ranger that died here in the caverns. He was never given a proper burial, as by this time Rakoss was completely insane. The diseased ranger wears unreal elven chainmail (see end of the adventure) and mundane boots. The darkwood staff is fine work and has +2 DEF. Near the body is a sack with 33 sp and 5 gp.

14. The cavern that split off to the east holds a real terror. A large brutish looking creature with a lion's body and an oversized man's head turns to face your approach. Its large maw is filled with three rows of razor-sharp teeth. From its back sprout a pair of ink black bat wings. Worst of all is the spiked tail sprouting from its hindquarters. The tail whips through the air with menace as the beast prepares for combat.

The manticore may be waiting to attack given any noise from earlier activity in the caverns. It frequents this cave after patrolling for food in the dangerous mountain passes. Its lair is in the upper cavern through the aforementioned crevice. If seriously wounded it will attempt to flee in that direction. The manticore will often start combat with its shooting spines attack. For more details see the Manticore statistics on page 103 of The Hero System Bestiary.

15. (A deadfall trap guards the secret door.) Inside this secret room it is completely dark save for the faint glint of coin.

The door (DEF 8 Body 12) is quite rugged. The trap is a simple deadfall trap detailed below. Inside is Rakoss' treasure horde.

Treasure: 20 pp, 100 gp, 1200 sp, a fine work light crossbow, a fine work large steel shield, a dwarven steel scroll case (empty), a fine set of calligraphy pens, a fancy vase (200 gp value), and three 5 yard spools of fine silk.

Deadfall Trap: Please read Fantasy Hero pages 360-364 for traps. This deadfall trap is quite similar to the one detailed there.

- **Trigger:** Pressing on the secret door area indicated on the map with 20# or more pressure.
- **OCV:** Targets hex DCV 3 with accurate OCV 10 attack that is also 10 shot autofire
- **Damage/Effect:** Each hit deals 6d6 Normal. In addition any character hit by three or more hits is trapped under the rocks. These act as a 2/5 entangle with +1 Body per rock past the third. Every segment 12 anyone trapped under the stones takes 1 DC Killing Damage from the crushing weight per stone on him or her. Stones can be removed manually. Each weighs 300 kg.
- **Find:** -3 (assumes light and active searching)
- **Disarm:** -3. A hidden keyhole (the key long since lost) can be tampered with to unclasp the pressure trigger.

### New Items

The enchanted items listed below are created using the guidelines given in Fantasy Hero starting on page 276. The author assumes a high fantasy style campaign. GM's wishing to adjust the power or frequency of magic items should do so, either removing the items altogether or substituting with higher or lower powered items. None of the items is a quest item and therefore excluding or removing any item is unlikely to affect the course of the adventure. In general the items are listed in order of their appearance in the text.

The Ghost Grip Glove: This silver glove appears to be the size of an average man's hand. There is no obvious sign of age or wear on the glove and absolutely no dirt or dust has collected on it. Close inspection reveals the delicate embroidery of ancient runes of power. The gloves will adapt to fit any small to large humanoid hand, even adding or subtracting a finger if needed. Although "righty", the glove can adapt to a left-handed wearer as well. Once worn the glove sends a tingle down the arm as if the arm and hand had been asleep. The sensation passes in a few short seconds with no obvious effects. The glove allows the wielder to attack desolid creatures with their bare hands or with any melee weapon held in that hand. The desolidification must be of the special effect normally associated with ghosts and apparitions.

**Ghost Grip Glove:** Naked Modifier-Affects Ghostly Desolidification on Up to 50 Active Points, Reduced Endurance 0 END (+1/2), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1) (30 Active Points); Independent (-2), Hand to Hand Attacks Only (-1), OIF (-1/2). Total cost: 7 points.

Foebreaker "The glowing shortsword": Foebreaker appears to be a wide bladed shortsword of remarkable balance and design. The steel is ghostly white with a green jaded pommel and a decorative hand guard. When grasped the blade glows with a bright green light, easy on the eyes save at the bright blade edge. There are dwarven runes on both faces of the blade. One side records the name Foebreaker and the other reads House Defron. The wielder of the blade gains the following abilities and strangely understands their use upon grasping the handle of the blade.

**Foebreaker:** Sight Group Images, Reduced Endurance 0 END (+1/2), Persistent (+1/2) (20 Active Points); Independent (-2), Only To Create Light (-1), OAF (-1), No Range (-1/2) (Real Cost: 4) **plus** Killing Attack - Hand-To-Hand 1d6 (plus STR) (vs. PD), Required Hands One-Handed (+0), Armor Piercing x1 (+1/2), Reduced Endurance 0 END (+1/2), Persistent (+1/2) (37 Active Points); Independent (-2), OAF (-1), STR Minimum 10 (-1/2) (Real Cost: 8) **plus** +2 OCV (10 Active Points); Independent (-2), OAF (-1) (Real Cost: 2) (Total: 67 Active Cost, 14 Real Cost)

The magic ring found is The Vanguard Ring. It appears to be a normal steel band with no exceptional inscriptions or writings. It will magically adjust to fit any size hand up to a large humanoid hand. The powers of the ring only work when worn.

**The Vanguard Ring:** Enhanced Perception (+3 to PER Rolls for All Sense Groups) (9 Active Points); Independent (-2), IIF (-1/4) (Real Cost: 3) **plus** Danger Sense (Area: General Area, Function as a Sense, Intuitional,

Sensitivity: Any Danger) (32 Active Points); Independent (-2), IIF (-1/4)  
11- (Real Cost: 10) (Total: 41 Active Cost, 13 Real Cost)

Unreal armor is defined in Fantasy Hero (page 280). The unreal elven chain will protect locations 9-13. It can accommodate a thin man, a human woman or elf of either sex.

**Unreal Elven Chain Armor:** Armor (7 PD/7 ED) (21 Active Points); Independent (-2), Locations 9-13 (-1), Armor Weight (8.1 kg) Half Mass (-1/2), OIF (-1/2) Total cost: 4 points.

### Concluding The Adventure

The wrap up assumes that the characters have successfully met the challenges in The Tomb of Rakoss the Undying. Following the adventure the characters must deal with the plot hook patron if any from the start of the scenario. If there was no patron and the Tomb was discovered via map or random explanation, you can move right to rewarding experience. For most GM's the game is not over.

There may be hazardous travel back, and the characters will be bearing substantial treasure. Bandits are a natural extension of the adventure as are enemies from "Hunted" from the character's disadvantages. The patron can be allowed to deal fairly with the characters or in the case of an evil patron; there may be a double cross. Victorious party members back from investigating the spontaneous undead ploy hook are sure to gain a reward for their efforts and possibly another quest.

Enterprising GM's should not find it difficult to expand the cavers surrounding The Tomb for larger parties or a longer quest. If this is done, adjust the experience awards in a fitting manner. The following assumptions are made regarding experience. If these assumptions do not fit your game follow the remedies given or award experience with GM's discretion

- The game is for 3 to 5 characters of starting 75+75 power level. Grant a bonus of +1 if 3 or fewer characters complete the adventure. Dock 1 ep if the characters involved are extremely powerful or have earned 50+ep.
- The adventure assumes high fantasy magic and healing are available. Add 1 if this is not the case to compensate for the many combats in the game.
- The adventure assumes 1 session. If the adventure last 2 sessions or more than 8 hours of game time award a bonus point for long adventure.
- The base EP is 2 before these modifiers. If the GM resolved campaign disadvantages add 1 to make the base 3.