

# THE ASHEN VAULT

*Free Preview for Dungeon Masters*

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## WHAT THIS SAMPLE SHOWS

- \* A table-ready campaign tone: ash, oathbound dead, sealed treasure, and one hard choice.
- \* A usable opening hook, a keyed encounter excerpt, and two NPC motives from the full starter pack.
- \* Enough detail to judge whether the paid pack fits your next session before you buy.

## OPENING HOOK

- \* When the bell of Emberfall tolls under a moonless sky, grey snow begins to drift upward from the graveyard.
- \* The village reeve begs the party to enter the old dwarven vault before dawn. Last night, three miners came back from it speaking in voices that were not their own.
- \* The Ashen Vault was built to imprison a war-priest who burned his own legion to win a siege. Someone has cracked the seal, and the dead now negotiate.

## READ-ALoud: VAULT THRESHOLD

- \* The stone door is warm. Soot gathers in the carved runes like fresh ink. Beyond it, a corridor slopes into red-black dark, and every footstep answers with the faint ring of a funeral bell.

# ENCOUNTER EXCERPT

## *Room 2: The Cinder Reliquary*

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### **SCENE PURPOSE**

- \* Introduce the vault's central bargain: the dead are dangerous, but not mindless. They want release, revenge, and witnesses.

### **AT THE TABLE**

- \* Three ash-wights kneel before cracked bronze urns. They do not attack unless the characters touch an urn, speak the war-priest's name, or draw steel first.
- \* A character who offers a sincere memory of a fallen ally gains advantage on the first social check here. A character who lies hears their own voice echo from inside an urn.
- \* Treasure: a blackened signet worth 40 gp, two fire opals, and a wax-sealed map fragment marked with the phrase "Below the Last Bell."

### **NPC TEASER**

- \* Marta Venn, village reeve: practical, exhausted, and hiding that her brother opened the vault to pay old debts.
- \* Brother Caldus, ember-priest: knows the correct funeral rite, but using it will condemn one trapped spirit instead of freeing all three.

### **WHAT THE FULL \$12 PACK ADDS**

- \* Complete adventure outline, keyed rooms, escalation clock, NPC dialogue cues, treasure pacing, and twist-ending hooks for a one-shot or short arc.