

# Session 31: Corpse Eaters

**Date:** Nov 11th, 2025

## Summary

From their vantage point over a thousand feet away atop a distant rooftop, the party surveyed the landmarks of Drakenheim: Castle Draken, the Kleinberg Estate, and the notorious Slaughterhouse Square. In the center of the square stood the Executioner, a massive construct motionless beside the fountain, waiting with its guillotine blade. The party had bodies to dispose of—two mages and a rogue—and Tark volunteered to fly high above the square, soaring to two hundred feet before releasing the corpses. As the bodies plummeted, the Executioner sprang to life with terrifying precision, slicing one corpse cleanly in half mid-air while catching another directly on its blade. The construct then stood over the remains, seemingly puzzled that they had already been dead before meeting its edge.

With their grim task complete, the party debated their next destination. Though the Kleinberg Estate lay nearby, they ultimately decided to continue toward the Cathedral, nearly five miles distant along a river route. Multiple factions had expressed interest in the Cathedral—rumors spoke of a powerful scepter and a brazier of the sacred flame housed within its walls. Rather than risk the dangers of traveling on foot through the ruined streets, they chose to fly, planning a route that would take approximately forty-one minutes and carefully avoid crossing directly over Slaughterhouse Square.

As they traveled through the debris-strewn ruins, unusual sounds echoed from the rubble—more frequent and disturbing than the typical noises of Drakenheim. Without warning, a grotesque plague rat covered in pustules leaped from the debris, while from the opposite direction, a large carrion crawler scurried up from beneath the surface. The party found themselves caught between these monstrous creatures as combat erupted. Syndle charged forward in a rage, his form surrounded by multicolored protective lights that shimmered with magical energy, and launched himself at the plague rat with a powerful kick before striking it twice with his battle axe. Each blow caused the creature's pustules to burst violently, spraying Syndle with necrotic corruption even as he wounded the beast.

Oiroa called upon divine power to bless Syndle, Tark, and Yazy, strengthening them for the battle ahead. Syndle's companion struck at the plague rat while Syndle himself invoked death magic against it, and Ned hurled bolts of fire that scorched the creature's diseased flesh. The carrion crawler lashed out with its tentacles at Tark and Yazy but failed to connect. Tark entered his own battle rage and attacked the crawler while Yazy struck it with radiant energy. The plague rat retaliated against Syndle, sinking its teeth into him, but the real horror came when an enormous

carion crawler—far larger than the first—burst from a pile of debris to the north, spitting out half a corpse before fixing its attention on Ned.

The massive crawler struck Ned with its claw, then turned its attention to Tark, lashing him twice with poisonous tentacles. Despite his formidable constitution, Tark succumbed to the venom and stood paralyzed, unable to move or act. Xakarium responded with devastating force, channeling divine energy to unleash a bolt of lightning so powerful it dealt maximum damage, causing the huge crawler to bleed from multiple wounds. Syndle pressed his attack on the massive creature, enduring a strike as he closed the distance, his protective aura causing the crawler's pustules to explode and spray him with more corruption. He kicked the beast and followed with two powerful strikes from his axe.

Oiroa attempted to resist the plague rat's influence but failed, painful pustules beginning to erupt across their skin. Gathering their focus, Oiroa wove a spell of temporal distortion that slowed the plague rat's movements, though both crawlers resisted the effect. Ned teleported to safety in a shimmer of magic before hurling more fire at the plague rat. The smaller crawler struck Tark again with its tentacles, the poison coursing through his veins and leaving him paralyzed once more. The plague rat scurried into a crate and released a sphere of acrid yellow gas that spread through the area, while the huge crawler exhaled a cone of putrid fumes that engulfed Oiroa and Xakarium, searing them with necrotic and acidic corruption.

Xakarium struck back with another bolt of lightning, the energy crackling through the huge crawler and causing additional damage as storm magic surged around him. Syndle called upon draconic power, his battle cry emboldening his allies as he struck the massive crawler twice more, finally drawing enough blood to visibly weaken it. Oiroa moved through the toxic gas to reach Tark, placing a hand upon him and channeling restorative magic that purged the poison and paralysis from his body. Freed from his affliction, Tark immediately struck back at the huge crawler. Then Ned unleashed a massive fireball that detonated behind a building corner, the flames engulfing both the plague rat and the huge crawler. Both creatures were consumed by the inferno—the plague rat was completely incinerated, its pustules exploding harmlessly within the flames, while the huge crawler was burned to death.

The remaining smaller crawler attacked Tark with its tentacles, poison flowing into his veins once again and paralyzing him, but he shook off the effect almost immediately through sheer force of will. Yazzy struck the creature with radiant energy and destroyed it. However, the battle was not yet over—a third enormous crawler emerged from the rubble near Ned's position. Its tongue lashed out and wrapped around Ned's neck, then its jaws clamped down on him. Paralyzed by the creature's venom and held fast by its tongue, Ned was helpless as a tentacle emerged from the side of the creature's head and pulled him closer. Because he could not resist, the crawler swallowed him whole, and inside the beast's gullet, Ned was bathed in digestive acids and necrotic corruption that brought him to the brink of death and infected him with disease.

Syndle kicked the massive crawler and struck it with his axe while Oiroa cured Syndle of his disease and pustules, the healing magic granting Syndle the strength to strike again. Oiroa's own pustules burst painfully across their skin. From within the crawler's stomach, Ned summoned bolts of pure magical force that struck the creature from the inside. The combined assault proved too

much—the huge crawler exploded in a death burst of foul acidic pus that sprayed across everyone nearby. Most of the party managed to avoid the worst of the spray, though all were splattered with the vile substance. When the creature's belly split open, Ned was found half-protruding from the torn flesh, barely alive.

In the aftermath, Oiroa moved quickly to stabilize Xakarium and continued channeling restorative magic to cure the diseases and pustules afflicting the party. The battle had lasted only minutes but had left nearly everyone wounded, with Syndle, Xakarium, Tark, and Ned all badly hurt. As they caught their breath and tended to their injuries, they noticed rhythmic movements in the surrounding rubble—more carrion crawlers watching them from their hiding places, debating whether to emerge. The party discussed whether to risk resting in this dangerous place or to press on toward the Cathedral, ultimately deciding to wait before making that choice. Oiroa offered healing to those most in need, restoring some of their strength as they prepared to continue their journey through the deadly ruins of Drakenheim.

## Scenes

### Observation of Slaughterhouse Square and Body Disposal

From a distant rooftop, the party observes Slaughterhouse Square and the imposing Executioner, then disposes of several bodies by dropping them into the square from above.

- The party gains a clear view of Castle Draken, Kleinberg Estate, and Slaughterhouse Square from a high vantage point over 1,100 feet away.
- They observe the Executioner, a massive construct, standing motionless by the fountain in Slaughterhouse Square.
- A party member flies high above the square at approximately 500 feet altitude, carrying the bodies of two mages and a rogue.
- The bodies are dropped from 200 feet above the square, plummeting towards the Executioner.
- As the bodies fall, the Executioner swiftly slices one in half mid-air and catches another directly on its guillotine blade, then stands over them examining why they were already dead.

# Journey Toward the Cathedral

The party debates their destination and decides to fly toward the Cathedral rather than the nearby estate, taking a river route to avoid dangerous areas.

- The party discusses whether to investigate the nearby Kleinberg Estate or continue to the Cathedral as originally planned.
- They recall that multiple factions have interest in the Cathedral, including mentions of a scepter and a brazier of the sacred flame.
- The party decides to proceed to the Cathedral, which is nearly five miles away along the river route.
- They choose to fly rather than walk to avoid ground-level encounters, planning a route that skirts along the river without crossing over Slaughterhouse Square.
- The journey is estimated to take approximately 41 minutes of flying time.

## Ambush in the Rubble

While traveling through the city ruins, the party is suddenly ambushed by monstrous creatures emerging from the debris.

- The party hears unusual sounds in the rubble, more frequent than typical for Drakenheim.
- A grotesque plague rat covered in pustules jumps up from the debris.
- A large carrion crawler scurries up to the surface from the other side of the party.
- The creatures position themselves to attack the party from multiple directions.
- Syndle rages, activating wild magic that surrounds him with multicolored protective lights granting a bonus to AC and causing attackers to take force damage.

## Battle with Plague Creatures

The party engages in intense combat against a plague rat and carrion crawlers, facing exploding pustules, poison, and paralysis.

- Syndle charges the plague rat and attempts a boots kick, but the creature saves against being knocked prone.
- Syndle strikes the plague rat twice with his battle axe, causing pustules to pop and explode, taking necrotic damage in return from the bursting pustules.
- Oiroa casts Bless on Syndle, Tark, and Yazzy, granting them additional power in combat.
- Syndle's companion attacks the plague rat, then Syndle casts Toll the Dead on it, dealing necrotic damage.
- Ned casts Firebolt at the plague rat, dealing fire damage and causing it to become bloody.
- The carrion crawler attempts to attack Tark and Yazzy with tentacles but misses both.
- Tark rages and attacks the carrion crawler, dealing damage.
- Yazzy stabs the carrion crawler with radiant damage.
- The plague rat attacks Syndle, dealing piercing damage.
- A second, enormous carrion crawler emerges from a pile of debris to the north, spitting out half a corpse.
- The huge carrion crawler attacks Ned with its claw, dealing damage.
- The huge carrion crawler strikes Tark twice with tentacles, poisoning and paralyzing him despite his constitution saves.

## Escalating Combat

The battle intensifies as the party faces multiple threats, with powerful spells being unleashed and debilitating conditions spreading.

- Hakarium unleashes a maximized lightning bolt using a channel divinity, dealing 54 points of lightning damage to the huge carrion crawler, causing it to become bloody.
- Syndle moves toward the huge carrion crawler, taking an attack of opportunity that deals piercing damage, but the crawler also takes force damage from Syndle's protective aura.
- The force damage causes the crawler's pustules to explode, dealing necrotic damage to Syndle.
- Syndle performs a boots attack on the huge carrion crawler, which fails its save, then attacks it twice with advantage, dealing significant damage.
- Oiroa attempts a constitution save against the plague rat's effects and fails, developing painful pustules on their skin.
- Oiroa casts Slow, successfully affecting the plague rat but the huge carrion crawler and regular carrion crawler both save against it.
- Ned uses Misty Step to reposition and casts Firebolt at the plague rat.
- The smaller carrion crawler attacks Tark with tentacles, poisoning and paralyzing him again.
- Tark attempts to save against paralysis but fails.
- The plague rat skitters down into a crate and releases a 20-foot radius sphere of acrid yellow gas centered on itself.

- The huge carrion crawler exhales a 15-foot cone of putrid gas, forcing Oiroa and Xakarium to make dexterity saves.
- Oiroa fails the save and takes 26 points of necrotic and acid damage (though halved from necrotic resistance to 13 total).
- Xakarium saves and takes 13 points of damage (half of 26).

## Turning the Tide

The party begins to overcome their monstrous foes through strategic healing and devastating magical attacks.

- Xakarium casts another lightning bolt at the huge carrion crawler, dealing 25 points of damage and causing additional lightning damage from Heart of the Storm ability.
- Syndle attacks the huge carrion crawler twice with advantage from Draconic Cry, dealing 12 and 14 points of damage, making it bloodied.
- Oiroa fails a constitution save while starting their turn in the yellow gas cloud.
- Oiroa moves to Tark and casts Lesser Restoration, curing his paralysis and poison.
- Tark uses his reaction to make a weapon attack on the huge carrion crawler, dealing 15 damage.
- Ned casts Fireball behind a building corner, targeting the huge carrion crawler and plague rat with DC 15 dexterity save.
- Both creatures fail their saves and take 30 points of fire damage.
- The plague rat is completely incinerated by the fireball, its pustules exploding harmlessly in the flames.
- The huge carrion crawler is killed by the fireball, removed from combat.
- The remaining smaller carrion crawler attacks Tark with double tentacles, both hitting for 12 poison damage total.
- Tark fails two DC 13 constitution saves and becomes paralyzed again, but immediately makes another save on his turn and recovers.

## Final Confrontation

The party faces the last remaining threat as it attempts to consume one of their members, leading to a desperate final push.

- Yazy attacks the remaining carrion crawler and defeats it with a radiant strike.
- A third huge carrion crawler emerges from rubble to the north where Ned is positioned.
- The new huge crawler attacks Ned, dealing 22 points of damage with its tongue attack.

- Ned is grappled by the creature's tongue and takes 17 additional points of damage from a bite attack.
- Ned fails a DC 16 constitution save and becomes paralyzed.
- A tentacle emerges from the side of the creature's head and grapples Ned, dealing 6 acid damage.
- Syndle performs a boots kick on the huge crawler, which fails its save and takes 3 points of damage.
- Because Ned is paralyzed, he is automatically swallowed by the creature without a saving throw.
- Inside the creature, Ned takes massive damage and fails a DC 16 constitution save, becoming diseased.
- The combined damage reduces Ned to zero hit points.
- Syndle attacks the huge crawler twice, one hit landing for damage.
- Oiroa casts Lesser Restoration on Syndle, curing his disease and pustules, which grants Syndle a reaction weapon attack dealing 12 more points of damage.
- Oiroa's own pustules burst, dealing 3 points of necrotic damage.
- Ned casts Magic Missile from inside the creature, dealing 12 damage.
- The huge carrion crawler explodes in a death burst of foul acidic pus, forcing everyone to make DC 16 dexterity saves.
- Most of the party succeeds on their saves and takes 13 acid damage (half of the full amount).
- Xakarium fails the save but is already diseased, so suffers no additional effects beyond damage.
- Ned is found half-sticking out of the ripped-open belly of the dead creature.

## Aftermath and Recovery

Following the brutal encounter, the party tends to their wounds and discusses their next steps.

- Oiroa stabilizes Xakarium with healing.
- Oiroa continues casting Lesser Restoration to cure diseases and pustules from party members.
- The party notes they have been traveling for only a few minutes, not yet reaching an hour.
- Multiple party members are at or below half health, including Syndle, Xakarium, Tark, and Ned.
- The party discusses whether to attempt a short rest, which would require a 1d8 roll with a random encounter occurring on a match and no rest gained if an encounter happens.
- They decide to wait for Dan's input before making a decision about resting.
- Oiroa offers to cast Healing Word on injured party members.
- Oiroa casts Healing Word on an injured party member, restoring 6 hit points.

- The party observes rhythmic movements in the rubble suggesting more carrion crawlers may be nearby, watching them.

# NPCs

## The Executioner

A huge, motionless construct standing by the fountain in Slaughterhouse Square, wielding a guillotine blade. When bodies are dropped into the square, it demonstrates remarkable speed and precision, slicing one body in half mid-air and catching another on its blade. It then examines the bodies, seemingly puzzled that they were already dead before it could execute them.

## Plague Rat

A grotesque, ferocious rat-like creature covered in pustules. When struck, its pustules explode, dealing necrotic damage to nearby attackers. It can release a 20-foot radius sphere of acrid yellow gas from its rear that lingers in the air and heavily obscures the area. The creature was eventually incinerated by Ned's fireball.

## Carrion Crawler

Large worm-like creatures with multiple tentacles that attack with poison, capable of paralyzing victims with DC 13 or DC 14 constitution saves. Multiple specimens were encountered, including regular-sized ones and enormous huge-sized variants. The huge variants can exhale 15-foot cones of putrid gas dealing necrotic and acid damage, and possess the ability to swallow paralyzed victims whole. When killed, they explode in a death burst of foul acidic pus.

# Locations

## Slaughterhouse Square

An enormous city square featuring a fountain and the imposing Executioner construct. The square is marked by a sluice gate where bodies can be dropped. The party observes it from over 1,100 feet away on a rooftop.

# Castle Draken

A castle visible from the party's high vantage point, one of the landmarks they observe while surveying the city.

# Kleinberg Estate

An estate visible from the party's position, considered as a potential destination but ultimately bypassed in favor of the Cathedral.

# The Cathedral

The party's intended destination, nearly five miles away along a river route. Multiple factions have interest in this location, including mentions of a scepter and a brazier of the sacred flame. The party plans to approach it but has not yet arrived.

# Rubble-strewn area

A debris-filled section of the ruined city where the party was ambushed. Features piles of rubble, broken buildings with corners to hide behind, and crates. The area is infested with carrion crawlers and plague creatures that emerge from the debris.

# Items

## Boots of Kicking

Magical boots worn by Syndle that allow the wearer to make a special kick attack as part of movement. The target must make a dexterity saving throw (DC 14) or take damage and be knocked prone. While effective against smaller foes, the boots proved less damaging against huge creatures, though the prone condition still granted advantage to allies.

## Battle Axe

Syndle's primary melee weapon, used to strike enemies multiple times during the battle, causing significant damage and triggering the plague rat's exploding pustules.

# Spells

## Bless

Cast by Oiroa on Syndle, Tark, and Yazzy, granting them a d4 bonus to attack rolls and saving throws for the duration of the spell, providing crucial support during the battle.

## Toll the Dead

A necrotic damage cantrip cast by Oiroa and Syndle against the plague rat, requiring a wisdom saving throw. The spell proved effective, with the plague rat failing its save and taking damage.

## Firebolt

A fire damage cantrip repeatedly cast by Ned at the plague rat and other targets, dealing consistent damage throughout the battle without expending spell slots.

## Lightning Bolt

A devastating spell cast multiple times by Xakarium during the battle. The first casting was maximized using a channel divinity to deal 54 points of lightning damage to the huge carrion crawler. Subsequent castings dealt 25 points of damage. The spell proved crucial in weakening the massive creatures.

## Slow

Cast by Oiroa in a 40-foot cube area, this spell reduces targets' speed by half, imposes a -2 penalty to AC and dexterity saves, prevents reactions, limits actions or bonus actions (not both), restricts melee/ranged attacks to one per turn, and requires a d20 roll to cast spells. The plague rat failed its wisdom save and was affected, while the carrion crawlers successfully resisted.

## Misty Step

A bonus action teleportation spell used by Ned to quickly reposition himself to safety during the battle, allowing him to escape immediate danger.

# Lesser Restoration

A crucial healing spell cast multiple times by Oiroa throughout and after the battle to cure paralysis, poison, disease, and pustules from various party members including Tark, Syndle, and Xakarium. The spell proved essential in keeping the party functional against the debilitating effects of the creatures.

# Fireball

A powerful area-of-effect spell cast by Ned, strategically positioned behind a building corner to catch both the huge carrion crawler and plague rat while avoiding allies. Both creatures failed their DC 15 dexterity saves and took 30 points of fire damage, with the plague rat being completely incinerated and the huge crawler being killed.

# Shield

A reaction spell used by Ned to increase his AC by 5 when targeted by the huge carrion crawler's attack, successfully deflecting what would have been a hit.

# Magic Missile

An unerring force damage spell cast by Ned from inside the huge carrion crawler after being swallowed, dealing 12 points of damage and contributing to the creature's defeat, causing it to explode in a death burst.

# Healing Word

A bonus action healing spell offered by Oiroa to restore hit points to injured party members after the battle, restoring 6 hit points to one party member.

# Draconic Cry

An ability used by Syndle that grants advantage on attack rolls to allies against a chosen target, used to focus attacks on the huge carrion crawler.

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