Setup

1 iron golem juggernaut

The adventurers discover that they are not the only agents operating within the heart of Orcus’s stronghold.

As the adventurers enter this area, show the players “View of the Ghost Door” on page 27 of Adventure Book One, then read:

This large common area is empty, but the ever-present stench of the Red Hold suddenly clears as a shimmering veil of silver light fills the air. A massive 20-foot-high door appears within the veil, set in a stone frame. The ghostly door is translucent, but on its face is set a bas-relief silhouette of a raven’s head wreathed in white flame.

The ghost door activates in the presence of the Raven Queen’s most trusted servants—a role the adventurers took on when they became her heralds in E1: Death’s Reach. (If you are not using that backstory, the magic of the ghost door simply conceals it from demons and creatures loyal to Orcus.) After 2 rounds, or as soon as any of the adventurers enters the area of silver light, the door’s wards activate.

The haze of silver light suddenly flares as a huge form takes shape within it—a great golem emerging from the door itself. Another golem begins to take shape within the light even as the first lurches forward to attack.

Tactics

The iron golem juggernaut takes on the closest foes with its cleave, falling back on iron blade attack if the adventurers spread out. It concentrates melee attacks on two targets at a time, but uses its breath weapon whenever it can target three or more foes.

A new iron golem juggernaut is conjured by the magic of the door every 5 rounds. Even if the adventurers leave the area, the ghost door continues to conjure iron golems until a total of five have been created. The golems pursue the party into any area of the Red Hold.

Experience

The XP allotted for this encounter assumes that the ghost door conjures two iron golems before the adventurers disable it. Adjust the XP total depending on how many iron golems the adventurers face.

Disabling the Ghost Door

The protective wards of the ghost door attempt to destroy those who inadvertently discover it.

The ghost door’s magical wards blast the adventurers with arcane power and disgorge deadly constructs set on destroying them. Some of the skill checks in the challenge require the adventurers to be within the field of silver light, as indicated.

Level: 26 (XP 18,000).

Complexity: 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Arcana, Heal, Religion.

Arcana (DC 26, standard action): The character taps into the field of silver light, disrupting its flow. The character making this check must be within the field of silver light.

Heal (DC 26, standard action): The power of the Raven Queen threads the thin line between life and death. By making a Heal check, a character can manipulate the subtle flow of protective energy within the ghost door. The character making this check must be within the field of silver light.
The Ghost Door

The haze of silver light surrounding the door suddenly erupts in a blast of arcane power.

Hazard: The wards of the ghost door lash out at intruders.

Perception
No check is necessary to notice the ghost door.

Initiative +19

Trigger
The ghost door manifests in response to the approach of those who serve the Raven Queen. However, unless the door is opened within 2 rounds, the trap attacks.

Attack
Standard Action Close burst 3
Target: All enemies in burst
Attack: +28 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 radiant damage, and the target is pulled 3 squares and dazed (save ends).

Special: Any creature that ends its turn within the field of silver light (whether pulled by the trap or not) is subject to an attack as above.

On its initiative, the door activates. Every 5 rounds thereafter, the door conjures an iron golem juggernaut. The golem attacks the creature that activated the wards of the ghost door and any of its allies. A total of five iron golem juggernauts can be conjured by the ghost door.

Countermeasures
✦ The wards of the ghost door are disabled by a skill challenge (see text).

Religion (DC 31, standard action): The character draws on knowledge of the Raven Queen’s most powerful rituals to manipulate the energy within the ghost door.

Success: The adventurers disable the magical wards on the ghost door. Though the door still cannot be opened (see Encounter R8 on page 24), the field of silver light disappears and no additional iron golems are conjured. Iron golems already conjured continue to fight until destroyed.

Failure: The adventurers overload the magical wards on the ghost door. A burst of silver light fills the chamber, dealing 3d8 + 5 radiant damage to all creatures within it. Additionally, one last iron golem is conjured by the failing wards. It immediately attacks.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Darkness before the ghost door manifests. Bright light after the ghost door appears.

Ceiling: 40 feet high.

The Ghost Door: This portal is the entrance to the extradimensional lair of the Order of White Fire (see Encounter R8 on page 24). The portal shifts from place to place, appearing as a massive glowing door, translucent but solid, set within a freestanding stone frame. Each side features bas-relief carvings of a black raven’s head set within a corona of white flame.

A DC 26 Arcana check reveals that the raven’s head relief is the magical seal that locks the door, and that it is opened by a magic key (one of the crystal rods wielded by members of the order). The door cannot be opened or damaged by any power or magic available to the adventurers.

Silver Light: A zone of protective silver light surrounds the ghost door in the area indicated on the map. The zone cannot be damaged or affected by any power or magic available to the adventurers.

Development

The adventurers should realize that the manifestation of the ghost door is not a part of the Red Hold. The bas-relief symbol is clearly a sign of the Raven Queen, but the meaning of the aura of white flame is unknown. The Order of White Fire are operatives of the Raven Queen working within the Red Hold (see Encounter R8 on page 24).