

A Lonely Hilltop

An Introduction

The winds rush across the plains, gusting around you and your party as you make your way through this desolate landscape. Your destination is a tall craggy hill that has been slowly growing on the horizon for the last few hours. You hope it will be a good vantage point to survey the area and a secure place to camp for the night.

As the daylight begins to fade you arrive at the foot of the hill and begin to make your way up. A rough path has been carved into its steep banks. Stone steps, ancient and ruined, show this place was once inhabited, although you have no idea who or what lived here. Reaching the top you are greeted with a spectacular vista of the surrounding landscape and on the hills peak you find a small ruin of some long abandoned stone structure. You decide to make camp on the sheltered lee side of a crumbling wall.

As the sun begins to dip below the horizon your Ranger, a sharp eyed elf, beckons to you silently and points down towards the base of the hill. Something dark moves there, slinking from shadow to shadow. She points out another and another, the hill seems to be surrounded by them. As the dusk light fades the slinking shapes begin to climb the hillside, slowly at first but as the light ebbs they pick up pace. Calling to your companions you rush to start a fire and prepare for an assault. Within minutes a roaring fire cracks and splutters behind you. Each of your companions, backs to the fire, stand ready. As the final light of the day fades, shadows rise up around the hilltop's edge. You glance at your companions and as one rush your assailants.

Notes and Tips

- 30x30 Grid map
- There are a number of routes to the top of the hill, the path leads around the base, through a small stone arch at the northern end and wines around the hill to the peak.
- The cliffs can be climbed, some routes are easier than others. Use skill checks to decide how successful your party or NPCs are at climbing them.
- Roll some rocks down the sides, it will make the slog up the hill much more exciting for your players!
- I've obviously used inspiration from the Weathertop assault sequence in LotR for my intro text, however the assailants don't need to be supernatural, the creatures could be simple Orcs, or bandits.
- Ghouls, a spectre or even a ghost or two would work well in this location. Each of these creatures have devastating abilities, remember you can modify creatures to make them less deadly, so for example making a 'lesser' ghost without some of its super tough abilities would work for lower level parties.
- Have the party camp here and during the night the ruins begin to glow, misty figures start to move around the camp, at first they don't seem to notice the party but some triggering event makes them aware of the group and reminds them how much they hate the living!
- An elevated location such as this would make a great location for a Dragon or other flying creature fight.

Variants

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