

Village Graveyard

An Introduction

As you enter the graveyard a low almost luminous mist hangs between the gravestones. The air is thick with moisture dampening your clothing and leaching the heat from your bodies. The boundaries of the graveyard are marked by thick overground hedges, tumbledown stone walls and to one side a thick pine forest that looms ominously over the graves. To the rear of the graveyard is an old rusty iron gate and a path leading up a hill to a dark mausoleum, you can pick out the scantest details by the pale silver light of the full moon.

Stepping onto the gravel paths that crisscross the interior of the graveyard you cringe at the crunch your boots make in the deathly silence. Amongst the trees you hear a crow call, as if reacting to your presence. Up on the hill you see movement, maybe a flicker of a candle and then a long drawn out cry, a howl so unearthly, so unnatural it sends chills down your spine and freezes you in place. It hangs in the air, ending in a gutteral wetness and for a moment silence fills the night once more, but only for a moment. You begin to hear quiet scraping around you, scrabbling sounds, dirt and pebbles moving. You know what this sound must be, although your mind balks at the idea that this place of rest is no longer restful for its inhabitants.

From the hill above, you hear mocking laughter and see candle light flicker once more, illuminating a tall dark figure. It watches you for a moment before turning and making its way down the mausoleums steps. Around you the dead begin to claw their way out of the dirt, their moans fill the night as you draw your weapons and make your way through the graveyard towards the mausoleum on the hill.

Notes and Tips

- **30x30** Grid map
- This could be a graveyard at the edge of a village (I have a village map that could work for this). Or it could be next to a church or temple.
- Running between gravestones can slow movement, maybe add a penalty of a few feet, not quite difficult terrain but not open ground.
- The mausoleums can burst open, to reveal zombies and skeletons. Remember that often a warrior will be buried in their best armour and with weapons.
- The undead can claw their way out of the dirt. Start off with a few roamers and then add more as the fight continues. Make sure to describe scrabbling sounds as more undead break free!
- Ghouls are surprisingly deadly low level monsters. Anything with a paralyzing attack can cause a party real problems if the rolls go badly for them. Throw a couple in to spice up an undead encounter.
- Remember to describe the stench of the dead and the noises they make (cracks, clicks of joints, 'wet noises') for some extra atmosphere!
- Have a greater undead live in the mausoleum at the top of the hill. At night it hunts the local villagers and your party is hired to dispatch it.
- Something is coming out of the woods and digging up the dead, find out what it is. This could be just about anything, from some kind of undead to a beast of the forest or even a group of cultists doing something 'unnatural'.
- Grave Robbers! Catch them in the act or maybe… How much does a fresh corpse go for on the black market? Asking for a friend.

Variants

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