

The Crypt on Keeper Hill

(Interlude for level 3 characters)

Banshee x1 (MM pg. 23), Zombies x12–20 (MM pg. 315)

Synopsis

For 20 years the dark gloom that wreaths Keeper Hill has been creeping through the land and is now brushing against the lands of mortals. Grasses, trees, and living creatures have either shriveled up to die or twisted to match the unsettling energy emanating from the eldritch crypt. This energy is perpetuated by Gwinylfæ, a banshee bound to the crypts.

The good people of the small hamlet bordering Keeper Hill lock their livestock and themselves in their homes every night to wait out the wailing echoes and creeping undead. They are trapped. Too poor to move, too weak to fight, they try to hold their ground each night. All residents are painfully exhausted and hardened with the struggle that has become their pitiable life.

Most doors in the hamlet are rigged with spear holes or simple traps that can be reset in the morning. Exterminated undead are dragged to the fields to be burned during daylight hours, and those of the living who were lost are decapitated before being respectfully buried. There are no shrines, clerics, or religious leaders in the town to help battle the nightly tide of zombies.

If the PCs arrive during the day, they encounter haggard, worn people burning corpses and decapitating the body of a young boy in preparation for burial.

If the PCs arrive at night, they witness a hamlet besieged by zombies. Villagers hear them if they begin battling the undead. A man (Jovas) climbs to his roof to signal the PCs to his house for protection. A typical encounter is 2d4+1 zombies to get to Jovas' doorway.

Infected

10% of all zombies encountered are infectious. A bite or claw wound from an infectious zombie will inflict the victim with zombiism, unless a save vs. CON [DC 17] for each wound is made.

An afflicted victim will turn into a zombie within 2d4+2 hours. The completely transformed victim has a 30% chance of also being infected and will never return to the world of the living.

A *Cure Disease* spell will remove the condition if cast before the transformation is complete.

Jovas Speaks

Our hamlet forefathers laid our elven protector Gwinylfæ to rest in the old crypt many years ago.

It seems she had some unsettled business in our world, or something has disturbed her. Her curse has befallen us, and we don't know what can be done to appease her. Can you help? I fear we don't have many nights left in us before we are all consumed by her undead."

Should the PCs agree to help, Jovas gifts them the hamlet's most sacred artifact—a clerical scroll that casts the spell *Cure Disease*, readable by anyone.

Hamlet in the Day

Exploring the hamlet during the day is relatively safe. Some pockets of zombies may remain trapped in barns, sheds, or cellars if you wish to challenge the PCs while they explore their surroundings. The zombies avoid sunlight but do not suffer from it.

The surrounding forests are infected by the spreading doom of Keeper Hill. Flora and fauna are dark and tainted by the evil emanating from the crypt. Wolves, bobcats, and other creatures are tainted with evil and twisted in some way. Aggressive infected creatures are typically CR 1–2.

Approach to Keeper Hill

Zombie x8

The approach to Keeper Hill is laden with darkness and plagued by zombies whether approached at day or night. A permanent gloom hangs around the hill that radiates evil and sickness.

Enter the Crypt

The door to the crypt has been locked and sealed by a forgotten cleric. The lock can be released with a half-vial of holy water or picked with a DEX – Sleight of Hand check [DC 17].



Traps and Troubles

Various traps and hindrances exist in areas marked on the map with an **X**. Apply your own or choose from the table below:

1. Poison darts. Dex save to avoid [DC 12] 1d3 piercing damage. CON save [DC 15] to avoid becoming extremely sick for 10-40 minutes causing all actions to be at disadvantage.
2. Nauseating rot gas. CON save [DC 10] or begin wrenching uncontrollably for 1d4 rounds.
3. Fetid disease. Random PC contracts a flesh eating fungus of some sort. Flesh is inflamed, incredibly itchy, left untreated will take over entire body in 1d2 days. After full infection victim must make a WIS save [DC 15] or be driven completely insane as the fungus attacks the brain.
4. Spiked floor pit opens. DEX save [DC 15] to avoid falling for 2d6 points of damage.

1) Inside the Crypt

Once within the crypt a soft moan echoes from the walls. A whisper rings in a random PC's ear, "I know you are here to kill me, but you shall serve me."

2) Raining Death

The walls and floor of this hallway are unstable. A dwarf, gnome, or engineer may spot the hazard, WIS [DC 15] Perception. More than 300 pounds of weight on the floor shifts the ceiling supports enough to send it crashing down. Fifteen fungus and slime ridden corpses, entombed above the ceiling tiles, fall down with the collapse. A swarm of rot grubs infests the cache and is hungry for warm, living flesh (*See Volo's guide pg. 208 or the following brief*).

Any creature in contact with the swarm must make a DEX save [DC 10]. A failed save means a rot grub has burrowed into the flesh, dealing 3 (1d6) piercing damage. 1 point of fire damage kills the grub if applied before the end of the creatures next turn. After this, the grub is too deep.

Cure Disease kills all grubs infesting a victim.

Rot Grub: [AC 8, HP 22 (5d8), speed 5, CR ½]

3) Gwinylfae's Lament

Banshee x1, Zombie x2

A young maiden weeps while slumped over a sarcophagus in the utter blackness. Her raiment is aged and worn

but was once a fine gown. Two wooden coffins stand by the entry; a pair of rotting undead throw the doors open and charge as the maiden raises her head and begins a mournful wail.

Both zombies here are infected (*see infected section*).

The gown worn by Gwinylfae was once an elegant and fine masterwork gown. It retains a dozen jewels and gold thread that are worth a total of 250 GP. Removing the jewels and threads will utterly destroy the gown and is considered desecration by the superstitious folk of the hamlet if they discover the act.

Once the banshee is defeated or destroyed, the evil infecting Keeper Hill is settled and quieted for good. To continue the adventure, the surrounding woodlands may also require a cleansing.

A cleric that creates a holy place and trains a member of the hamlet in the way of their deity should gain an inspiration point.

A druid may gain an inspiration point by restoring the flora and fauna of the forests surrounding the hamlet.

Crypt Map

