



100 Oddities
For a Graveyard

By Clint Staples, William T. Thrasher,
and the Skirmisher Game Development Group

100 Oddities For a Graveyard



By Clint Staples, William T. Thrasher, and the Skirmisher Game Development Group

100 Oddities For a Graveyard

By Clint Staples, William T. Thrasher, and the Skirmisher Game Development Group



Skirmisher Publishing LLC
499 Mystic Parkway
Spring Branch, TX 78070

<http://skirmisher.com>
<http://d-Infinity.net>

Project Manager: Brendan Cass
Illustrator: William T. Thrasher
Editor and Designer: Michael O. Varhola

Contents of this publication Copyright 2015 by Skirmisher Publishing LLC, all rights reserved.
First Revised Publication: November 2015.



Welcome to the fourth in Skirmisher Publishing's ongoing series of 100 Oddities. If you are reading this then you are holding in your hot little electronic hands *100 Oddities of a Graveyard*. As roleplaying sites go, graveyards are classic, and can play a part in just about any type of game. As long as adventurers venture and people die, there will be graveyards. Fantasy, historical, urban, modern, horror, and even sci-fi or post-apocalyptic games can all benefit from the occasional introduction of a graveyard — and we have the Oddities to help you “flesh” them out.

So what is an oddity? Oddities make you ask questions. Why is that thing there? What is it for? Who would do that? Sometimes they are situational. A body might be an oddity, but not in a graveyard, where you probably will find more than one. Heck, in a graveyard, you probably won't even remember how many bodies you stumble across. But the body that has been jointed, set up in a sitting position, eyes sewn open and arms and legs stacked neatly in its lap like cordwood, will stand out.

Oddities should be remembered.

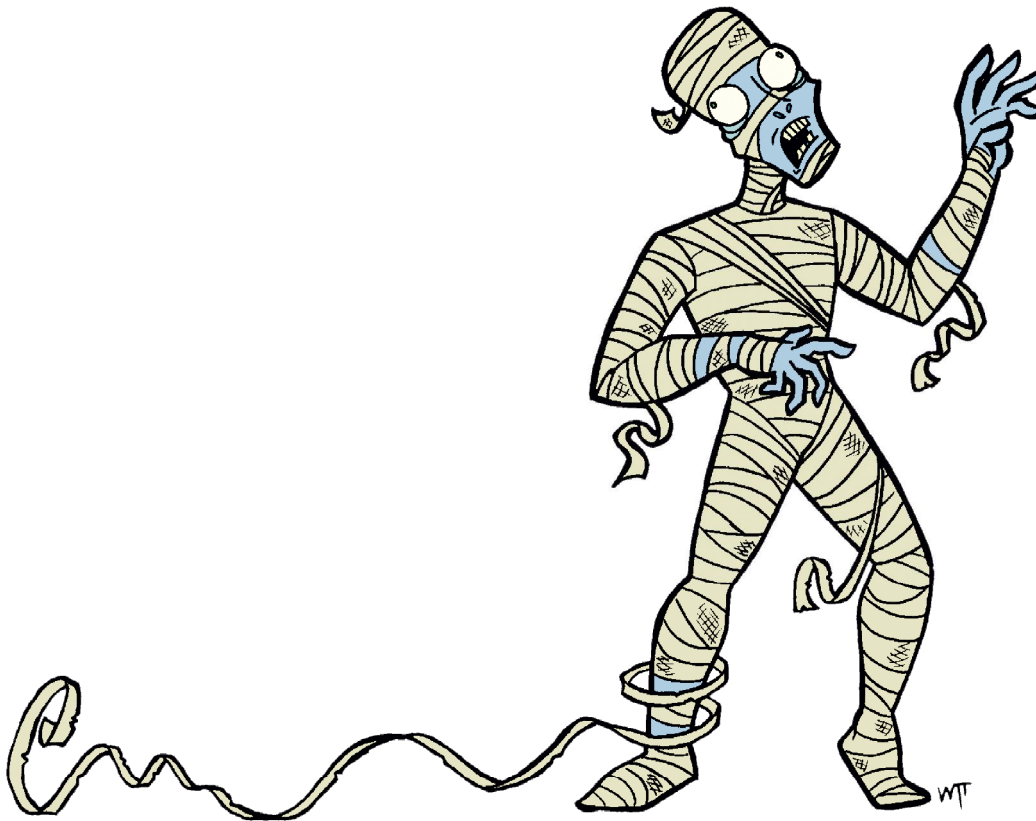
So what do you do with oddities? Oddities fill in the corners of a bookshelf, a room, a level, a scenario — with all the sorts of things that add interest but take loads of time to come up with. So we did all the brainscratching for you, and you can reap the benefit of our labors right here.

Using any of Skirmisher's Oddities products is easy and very free form. Basically, you roll d100, once or as often as you like for any particular locale. Then, ideally, give some thought about to how to present that oddity to the players.

If you are rolling up an oddity on the fly, you may be able to just read it right out of the list as-is, deciding where it is in relation to the PCs.

If you have a bit of prep time, roll one or more up entries and answer the questions that come to mind. In the oddity presented above, the question “why” is probably foremost.

Maybe the body was cut up to keep it from wandering. Maybe its eyes were sewn open to make it function better as a watch-zombie. Perhaps it is simply the point of view for the local necromancer's scrying spell. Or, possibly, there are body snatchers nearby and



they needed the body segmented to fit better into the wheelbarrow.

You can use any of the above answers to “why,” or another that you come up with, to answer who, what, when, and where, and how all of this matters or affects the player characters.

So let’s look at one of the oddities you find on this list and break it down. Rolling randomly, we get a 25 on our d100:

#25 — A common-looking grave inset with a large bronze plate bearing an inscription instead of an upright headstone or other marker. If examined, scratching noises can be heard from below.

Here the big question is probably what, or maybe who? What or who is scratching? Who is named on the plaque? Answer these questions and the rest falls into place. Possibilities might include:

- The scratching is coming from a zombie, ghoul, or vampire; a trapped living person wrongly buried; the victim of a botched murder; from the shovel of someone, or something, tunneling up from underneath; the evil witch pinned in place by the massive bronze spikes on the underside of the plate; or a trapped child that pulled the plaque down to cover its hiding place when the dead began to wander. Maybe the scratching is actually the movement of small stones on the underside of the plaque as an earth elemental or clay golem attempts to free itself from the magical plaque binding it.

- The name on the plate is that of a famous hero of old, a famous villain, or of no one in particular; there is no name, just directions for how to unlock the plate; the inscription is a joke name or it contains a code; the plaque is magical in some way; or it is bound in place by powerful warding spells that are either holding something down there or preventing something from getting down there.

How about we roll another oddity and put them together? Rolling again, I get 40:

#40 — The disembodied voice of a young girl, not quite loud enough for its words to be understood, but obviously coming from a single direction.

This can affect #25 in several ways, depending on what we decided above. Is it the girl who is scratching from below? Is she the one named on the plaque? Is she both? If so, is she a living girl, or some horrible undead

thing? Or is she the spirit warning you away from the horrible undead thing? Can the heroes make out what is being said when they are actively listening? If so, what language is she speaking? Can she hear the PCs? And, if so, can she answer their questions?

With these two rolls, and about 10 minutes of thought beforehand, several scenarios are ready to unfold before your players. And if the ones you rolled do not speak to your imagination, or don’t fit the mood or setting, roll again or just pick ones that you like. We won’t tell. Or present the oddity and riff on what the players do with it. If they are interested, let them run with it. Listen to their speculations and pick one you like — or one that they really don’t.

One final thing: *Oddities for a Graveyard* employs a dice rolling sub-system often referred to as “Exploding Dice.” In this sub-system, a die that rolls the maximum value possible [i.e. a 6 on a d6] is rolled again, and the new value is added to the previous total. This continues until a value other than the maximum is rolled. So, you might roll a d8 and get 8, then roll again, get another 8, and then, on a third roll, get a 3. You would then stop and total the results, in this case a 19 [8+8+3].

When we are referring to an exploding die roll, you will see a lower case “x” after the die notation, as in “d10x.”

We hope you enjoy *Oddities for a Graveyard!* We have loads more in the pipeline, and more that we have not even come up with. We are also thinking about how to tie different oddities sets together, so you might find an oddity that takes your players from the *Graveyard* into the lower levels of the nearby *Wizard’s Tower*, or leading into the *Ancient Ruins* beyond.

Grab your dice and stay tuned.

Clint Staples
Will Thrasher
& Michael Varhola



d100

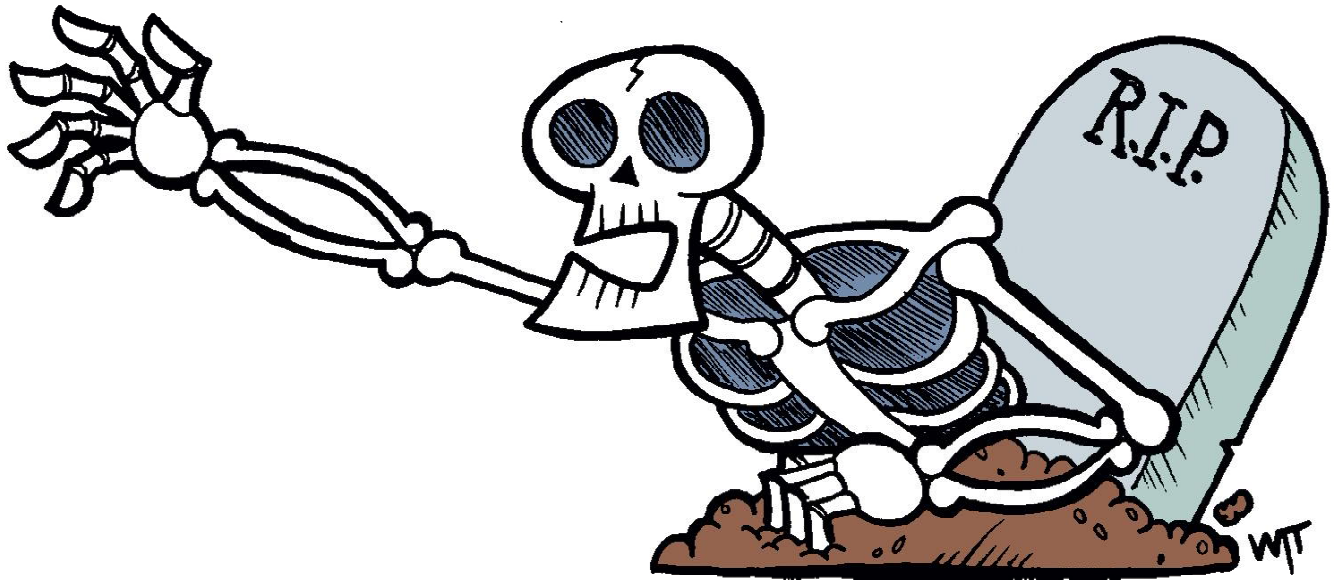
Oddity

- 01 A shovel driven into the earth surrounded by the discarded clothes of a gravedigger.
- 02 A monument topped by the statue of an angel, valkyrie, or other Good-aligned spirit being appropriate to the setting. No matter where the adventurers stand, the statue always appears to be facing away from them if they are of Evil alignment or facing toward them if they are of Good alignment.
- 03 A deliriously happy dog running past with a humanoid femur in its mouth.
- 04 The grave of a prominent spellcaster (equal chance of a bard, cleric, sorcerer, or wizard). The monument over the grave is a statue in the likeness of the deceased. If anyone talks about the deceased the head of the statue animates. The statue can answer any question about the deceased, and will often *correct* adventurers who speak ill of the dead or make slanderous statements.
- 05 A crumbling stone birdbath. 1d8 eerily silent whippoorwills make use of the birdbath. If any intelligent creature dies within the bounds of the graveyard after the birdbath is discovered, the whippoorwills appear on the scene, giving their distinctive call as they attempt to chase down the fleeing soul of the departed.
- 06 A cluster of 1d6x black mushrooms growing from the soil of a fresh grave. Tiny red fungal hairs grow from the top of each mushroom cap. If the mushrooms are observed for more than a moment, they can be seen to slowly pulse.
- 07 A metal snorkel protruding from a grave.
- 08 A family mausoleum. The structure appears perfectly normal at first, but examination reveals that there are no doors to allow entry . . . or exit.
- 09 A defaced tombstone. The symbol of an evil, chaotic, or outlawed god is roughly carved into its surface.
- 10 A freshly dug grave pit, the bottom of which has opened onto a cramped, twisting tunnel leading further into the earth.



- 11 A tombstone carved in the shape of a cruciform sword. It is weathered with great age and there is no inscription on it.
- 12 A grave mound with a small depression in it, within which is a pool of fresh blood.
- 13 A rather grotesque grave, delineated by a series of femurs around its perimeter, with other bones laid in designs that seem to pick out runes or sigils. There is an equal chance the bones are cunningly carved stone decorations or authentic remains.
- 14 A fresh grave, otherwise unmarked, but with a large boulder resting atop it.
- 15 An adventurer's mausoleum, assembled to look like a cave mouth, with a banded, iron door closing the mouth. There is a 50% chance the door is unlocked.
- 16 The crawling upper body of an animated corpse. There are equal chances the animated remains are part of a flesh golem, skeleton, or zombie.
- 17 An ornate bronze monument in the form of a lifelike tent, with one flap opening to a camp cot. Outside the tent, before the flap is a campfire, with magical eternal flames.
- 18 A Human skull resting on an ornate tombstone. If examined, the skull appears to have a set of fangs in a retracted position behind the normal incisors.
- 19 A fenced-in grave. The fence is composed of spears and lances, welded, bound, and bolted together in a handsome martial-looking barrier.
- 20 A broken spear, pinning a struggling zombie in place.
- 21 A thief's final resting place. In addition to the inscription, the headstone bears the rotating dial of an ornamental bronze combination lock. The face of the dial, however, is missing.
- 22 A set of fresh tracks. They are bare human footprints and that the big toe is missing on the left foot.
- 23 The sepulcher of a Wizard, which includes a large dais of ornamental bronze, inscribed and embossed with sigils, runes, and magical circles. A stone gargoyle perches on the raised plaque and headstone. There is a 50% chance that the gargoyle is real and the grieving pet and companion of the deceased.
- 24 A woman dressed in the garb of a professional mourner keening over a grave. If approached, the woman vanishes. A single dry rose rests on the spot where she once stood.
- 25 A common-looking grave inset with a large bronze plate bearing an inscription instead of an upright headstone or other marker. If examined, scratching noises can be heard from below.
- 26 A withered old tree, barren of leaves. Despite this, white blossoms sprout from the desiccated branches and scatter fragile petals to the earth below.
- 27 A recently-disturbed grave.
- 28 A fine tea set laid out on a tomb, as if for a macabre tea party. There is a 50% chance the teapot is filled with embalming fluid.
- 29 An empty grave, in the shadowy bottom of which writhes a thousand pallid worms.
- 30 A long, thin strip of burial shroud extending across the ground further than the eye can see. If the strip is followed, roll a die. On an even result, the adventurers follow the strip to the oldest mausoleum in cemetery. On an odd result, the strip leads to a rapidly unraveling mummy shambling through the graveyard on some unknown errand.
- 31 An open grave. The fresh corpse of a gravedigger lies face-down in it, with signs of blunt force trauma to the back of his head. The gravedigger's shovel is nowhere to be found.
- 32 An empty phial. A few drops of holy water are all that remain of its contents.
- 33 A short metal pipe with a bell hanging from the top it juts from a fresh grave. A cord runs from the bell into the pipe, allowing the occupant of the coffin to ring the bell in the event of premature burial. There is a 50% chance the bell is ringing.
- 34 Some 2d6 poets, eccentrics, and decadent artists enjoying, in a macabre fashion, a picnic among the gravestones. The food is half-eaten, but there is wine aplenty for all.
- 35 The skull of a jester.





- 36 What was once the statue of a young girl holding up two bowls, reduced to a vaguely humanoid shape from years of visitors chipping away fragments of it for some unknown purpose.
- 37 A leather satchel, filled with assorted corpse parts, as well as pliers, scalpels, saws, and other instruments with which to harvest them.
- 38 A low-lying, boggy area with black, standing water. Crooked headstones and monuments break the surface of the murky water. Occasionally, the surface of the water moves, as if something large is shifting below.
- 39 An excavated grave, the earth in piles around it. At the bottom of the pit, a corpse lays face-down, pinned in place by a large stone. The hands and feet of the corpse have been removed and their places switched.
- 40 The disembodied voice of a young girl, not quite loud enough for its words to be understood, but obviously coming from a single direction.
- 41 A human foot, freshly severed, but with no blood flowing. Some 3d6 feet away rests a hand in similar condition, then after another 3d6 feet another body part, and, eventually, roll 1d6 to reveal: 1-3, A ghoul carrying the remainder of the gruesome bits to its lair; 4-5, A ghoul-hunter lying in wait for its quarry; 6, A ghoul-eater lying in wait for its dinner.
- 42 The opulent grave of a prominent thief. The inscription upon tomb reads, "I took it with me." The tomb is bristling with traps and several lesser graves in the area contain the remains of grave robbers and thieves who failed to break into it.
- 43 A bouquet of flowers left on a grave. One of the flowers is a cutting from a carnivorous plant.
- 44 The discarded remains of a flesh golem that was never successfully animated.
- 45 An alarm clock ticking away atop a grave. The alarm is set to go off shortly after sundown.
- 46 A small, thorny shrub bearing poisonous berries dripping a thick, intoxicatingly sweet juice.
- 47 A partially-melted gravestone, suggesting the stone was exposed to a surge of heat so great that it became temporarily molten.
- 48 A heated negotiation between a gravedigger and a necromancer.
- 49 An unfinished holy symbol half-carved into a monument. The mason's tools are carefully laid out next to the monument, but the craftsman is nowhere to be seen.
- 50 A patch of desiccated soil, barren of all plant life, with an outline suggestive of the human form.



- 51 An artist or antiquarian (equal chance of either), taking rubbings from the tombstones.
- 52 A half-burned black candle left atop a tombstone. Wax has dribbled down to obscure the epitaph.
- 53 A small gray kitten, too young to be separated from its mother, curled up for warmth in the roots of a tree.
- 54 Some 1d6x shallow graves, wooden planks jutting from them in place of proper monuments. Painted on each plank is the crime for which the occupant of the grave was executed.
- 55 An elegant, peaceful rock garden ideal for contemplation, meditation, and prayer on the subject of death and mourning. Every rock in the garden, from the immaculately raked gravel to the largest, asymmetrical boulder, is material left over from the carving of tombstones elsewhere in the cemetery or the remains of monuments destroyed by age or vandalism.
- 56 A cone of incense burning in a small chinaware bowl as an offering at a grave or shrine to a god of death (equal chance each). Every now and then the trail of scented smoke curls into the semblance of a humanoid face.
- 57 A young man, dressed in funereal clothes sits atop a headstone, contemplatively regarding the nearby grave of a dear friend. If this oddity is rolled after sundown, his skin is exceptionally pale in the moonlight and his eyes reflect red in torch or lantern light. Despite being a vampire, he means no one any harm — unless some is offered to him.
- 58 Two silent gravediggers working tirelessly, if clumsily, digging a grave. If approached, it becomes apparent that the workers are enslaved zombies. They ignore anything unrelated to their task but will defend themselves if attacked.
- 59 A dark man in a black suit stands, arms crossed and legs planted, regarding the adventurers. Strangely, his archaic clothing rustles as if something writhes within it. He smiles and speaks, his words like honey in the air, asking the adventurers if they would like to make a bargain.
- 60 A pair of ghouls quarrel and snarl over tidbits.
- 61 A woman in a black cloak, cowl pulled up over a gleaming, bald pate. As she nears, the cowl is pulled back to reveal a pale, haggard countenance smeared with grave earth. Hands equally filthy gesture with a dirty sack bulging strangely in places, as she whispers, “What have you got for me so far?”
- 62 An old grave with an equally old headstone that is completely blank. If someone’s name and date of birth are carved into the headstone, along with a future date, that individual will be teleported into the coffin six feet below the grave at nightfall on the specified date, at which point the inscription on the tombstone will fade away. If a past date is carved as the date of death then the one altering the tombstone is teleported into the coffin.
- 63 An urn in a shrine. If the ashes within the urn are sprinkled upon an object it is animated by the spirit of the cremated individual. The animation lasts until the next sunrise, and the disposition of the animated spirit will be appropriate to its disposition in life (determine the alignment of the animating spirit randomly).
- 64 A jar of used nails. There is a 50% chance the nails are either pried from coffin lids or collected from sundry sources by a groundskeeper too cheap to buy new nails.
- 65 A grave adorned with a statue of a divinity or saint of good, mercy, or healing. The dew that clings to the statue each morning, if collected and consumed, acts as a healing potion.
- 66 An empty wine bottle, a few drops of merlot lingering in the bottom. However, the cork is still in the bottle and by all appearances has never been removed.
- 67 An obelisk of strange green stone. During the day, if one places their hand upon the stone and asks a question while the shadow of the obelisk is cast upon a grave, the spirit of the one interred within the grave will answer. If this is attempted at night, every spirit within the graveyard responds at once.
- 68 An old broadsheet account of the execution of a renowned criminal interred somewhere in the cemetery.



- 69 A simple birdbath. Although the water is cool and inviting, no bird uses it except a solitary raven. After sunset, the water allows anyone looking into the birdbath to see through the eyes of the raven.
- 70 A star-shaped stone as big as a human fist sealing the entrance to a crypt. The star appears to be of soapstone but resembles something that was grown rather than carved. Convolutions on its surface resemble runes but cannot be deciphered. What the stone is doing and what might happen if it is removed is anyone's guess.
- 71 A bent, old tree covered in funeral shrouds that wave gently in the breeze like thin, beckoning arms.
- 72 Globules of faintly luminous gray-green slime cling to gravestones, plants, and unattended objects in the area. There is a 50% chance the goo is either ectoplasm or an ooze that feeds on necromantic energy.
- 73 The tomb of a great adventurer. The headstone is carved into the form of a chest overflowing with treasure. Representations of relics of power the hero once possessed are also rendered among the treasure.
- 74 The remains of a hastily-abandoned necromantic ritual.
- 75 An ancient, toothless ghoul left to die by its fellows.
- 76 University students attempting to exhume the body of a famous alumnus as part of a prank/initiation into a fraternity.
- 77 An animated shovel digging a grave. The shovel is a magic item and digs a perfect grave when the command word is spoken.
- 78 A frothy mug of ale left as an offering over a grave. There is an equal chance this is the grave of a brewer, drunk, Dwarf, or some combination of the three.
- 79 A rosebush growing around a headstone. Its thorns obscure the epitaph. Determine the colors of the roses randomly or just be creepy and say they are all black.
- 80 A sundial with a 13th hour
- 81 A satchel containing spell components gathered from the graveyard (e.g., grave soil, grave mold, coffin nails, tomb fragments).
- 82 A raised sepulcher of granite on a dais of marble, inscribed with a bas-relief of funereal scenes and sigils that appear magical. At the foot of the sepulcher, a flat area of stone is overflowing with offerings of food, trinkets, and possibly even weapons and magic items. Successive layers of dust cover the offerings, as though they have gone undisturbed for centuries.
- 83 A gnarled, ancient tree overshadowing several graves. Several of its limbs are leafless, bent, or broken, but the tree still has scattered bits of foliage. Suspended from nearly every branch are tiny nooses. Some are so old as to be little more than tatters of threat trailing from their branches, while others are more recent and still have rabbits, squirrels, or small neighborhood pets hanging from them.
- 84 An arch of stone creating a portal over the head of a grave. Directly over the top of the arch, the stones frame a circular hole. Local legend recounts varying tales of what happens when someone stands on the grave and gazes upon the moon or sun through the hole over the arch; stories of mystical portals, visitors from other realms, glimpses of the future or the past, or a departed love one are but a few.
- 85 A hollow, many-chambered headstone. In the breeze, it hums and whistles softly, like a set of deep, distant pipes. That, however, does not explain the soft voice that can occasionally be heard singing in an unknown tongue.
- 86 A fine sword, bare-bladed, seemingly untouched by time or exposure to the elements, lying lengthwise on the top of an otherwise unmarked ancient grave. A line of runes along the blade might be the name of the weapon, its wielder, or the curse that befalls whoever takes up the weapon.



- 87 A series of nine black stones laid out as obvious stepping stones along a winding gravel path. If one walks the path precisely as the last edge of the sun sinks below the horizon the path will lead the walker to the plane of the dead.
- 88 A small mausoleum, laid about with glammers of obfuscation and misdirection, and traps mundane and magical. The door, heavy iron and brand new under a coat of paint to make it appear weathered and ancient, is locked. Within is a cache of weapons suited to the setting, some arranged in orderly rows or stacks, others still boxed, and altogether enough for a small army.
- 89 The statue of a man in archaic armor, headless, and with the sword arm snapped off at the elbow, on a plinth atop a low hill. When approached, the statue turns to face the adventurers, obviously expectant.
- 90 Wire, wrought iron, wooden pickets old and new, and even fragments of broken headstones have been arranged as a barrier that reaches about chest high. Spears, sharpened staves and stakes, and other nasty-looking implements project from the makeshift wall. There is a 50% chance that the projections emerge from just one side of the wall or the other.
- 91 An oddly-shaped headstone resembling steps used to mount a warhorse while wearing bulky tournament armor. If the steps are ascended at night, a massive, demonic horse composed of grave earth, corpse mold, and shadows appears. The nightmare horse bears a saddle but no bridle or reins. Only the one who climbed the stairs can perceive or interact with the horse in any way.
- 92 A partially-decomposed hand nailed to a tree with a heavy, cold-iron nail.
- 93 A priestess of a divinity of death in a deep, meditative sleep atop a sepulcher. So deep is her slumber that she appears to be dead.
- 94 A rotting hand crawling along the ground.
- 95 An old wrought-iron cauldron, overturned as if abandoned in frustration, a recently-exhumed corpse lolling over its rim.
- 96 A vagabond's campfire. A pot of stew bubbles over the fire. There is a 50% chance the stew contains corpse bits gathered from the recently deceased. The vagabond is elsewhere gathering more ingredients for the stew but will return soon.
- 97 A grave robber. There is an equal chance the grave robber is an anatomist, medical student, necromancer, or treasure hunter.
- 98 A pair of young lovers from feuding houses meeting for a clandestine dalliance beneath the shroud-like canopy of a willow tree.
- 99 A funeral procession composed of mourners and celebrants in equal measure trailed by musicians playing upbeat music. If the procession is followed, it never reaches an end.
- 00 A tombstone with the name of one of the adventurers engraved upon it. There is an equal chance the day of death is the current date, a date 100 years before the present time, or that it has been left ominously blank.



Swords of Kos Fantasy Campaign Setting Sourcebooks, Fiction, and Companion Publications

Explore the world of Kos through the five detailed campaign sourcebooks dedicated to it, *Kos City*, *Kos Island*, *Lands Beyond Kos*, *Lives of Kos*, and *Encounters*! There is also a growing body of Kos fiction, including the novel *Swords of Kos: Necropolis* and the *Swords of Kos: Hekaton* anthology and custom miniatures that you can use in your games. Skirmisher Publishing's Kos setting is also fully supported by the **d-Infinity** multi-platform game supplement, online magazine, and weekly webcast. Among other things, its website contains Swords of Kos fiction and a section dedicated to free bonus material tying in with the campaign setting.

