

# HIERARCH'S SEPULCHER

No! Don't you dare explore the graveyard tonight. You are bound to find your untimely demise if you explore the sepulcher. The Hierarch is awake until dawn.

Silas, the Grave-keeper

## LORE

**THERE WAS ONCE** a mighty warrior who lived by the sword. Lord Heldast, wielding a magical blade, single-handedly defended his realm from evil and outside threats. He was a fair lord but he would not suffer fools or disrespect. While he governed with an iron fist, people were thankful for his efforts and respected his judgment. Lord Heldast was colloquially known as '*The Hierarch*'.

The Hierarch sustained grave wounds in a battle that saved his realm from invasion. The Hierarch's funerary rites were of legendary scale. So much so that a nightly dance festival is thrown to honor him, even to this day. Decades after his death, the townsfolk noticed that during the *Hierarch's Festival*, the graveyard where Lord Heldast rests in peace awakens. The incorporeal dead roam the grounds dressed in their finest clothes.

Alas, the living are not allowed into the Hierarch's sepulcher, nor has the Hierarch ever shown himself outside the tomb. Foolhardy folks have attempted to barge into the undead party with deathly results. The undead within are aggressive and do not allow living creatures in.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

**THE CHARACTERS LEARN** of *Avacinna*, the legendary sword that Lord Heldast wielded in life. It is said that this blade can vanquish the forces of darkness. However, the hierarch's sepulcher is only accessible one night a year. The characters must delve into the sepulcher then to have a chance to retrieve the fabled blade.

## FEATURES OF THE SEPULCHER

### Tier 2 Adventure

**Light.** Braziers and sconces feature *continual flame* spells. The magic fades after 1 minute if tampered with.

**Secret Areas.** Pushing hidden bricks causes walls to move and reveal narrow passages (Search check).

**Chamber Ceilings.** The church has 20-foot-tall, arched ceilings decorated with carved geometrical patterns.

**Enhanced Necromancy.** All necromancy spells within 100 feet of the sepulcher deal double damage during the night the hierarch awakens for the dance gathering.

## RANDOM EVENTS

Once per Dungeon Turn (10 minutes) while in the sepulcher and the graveyard grounds, roll in this table.

### 1d6 Random Encounters

- 1 Silas, the grave-keeper, has been possessed by a lady's **specter**. They attempt to stop the characters' intrusion.
- 2 2d4 foolish teenagers have come this far trying to see what the fuzz is all about in the graveyard dance party.
- 3 A group of well-dressed, noblemen shadows chatters as they float toward the sepulcher's nave (**Reaction** roll).
- 4 A man's **specter** talks to himself about chores. The man ignores his current undead state (**Reaction** roll).
- 5 Barlo, a **veteran**, has come to steal the Hierarch's legendary blade. He is willing to split other treasures.
- 6 1d4 bodyguard **ghosts** approach. They are tasked with removing uninvited guests and living beings.

### 1. GRAVEYARD GROUNDS

During the hierarch's death anniversary, ethereal apparitions of friends, relatives, and nobles materialize and float toward area 2. The spirits glow faintly in the night.

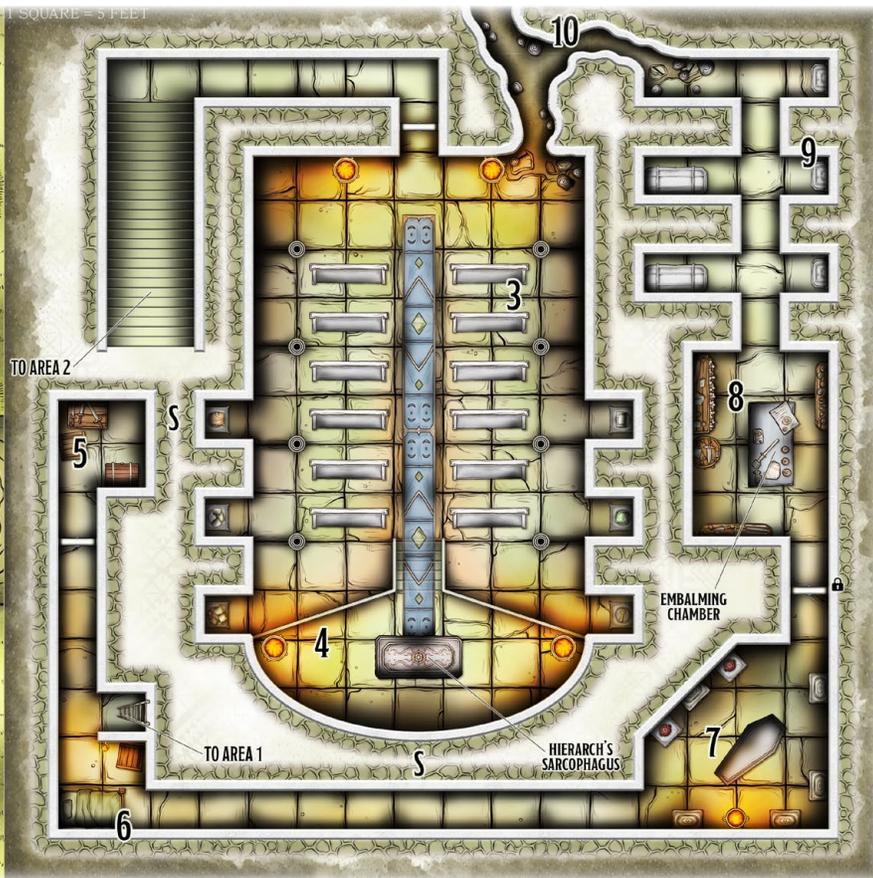
### 2. SEPULCHER'S ENTRANCE

The mausoleum edifice contains two stone coffins, four clay urns on plinths, and two ever-burning braziers. The faint sound of chamber music comes from the stairs.

### 3. SEPULCHER'S NAVE

*Two rows of stone pews mark the way toward a raised dais. An ornate sarcophagus lies at the end. The ghost of an armor-clad knight stands beside it while other ghosts chatter, dance, and have fun.*

The characters' trespassing into the Hierarch's death-anniversary ruins the mood and the music stops. The Hierarch orders four of his bodyguard **ghosts** to remove the intruders. If the characters defeat them, the Hierarch is inclined to grant them an audience. After all, Lord Heldast enjoys the company of valiant warriors such as himself, even if he repudiates the living. Alas, the Hierarch is unwilling to part with *Avacinna*, his sword. He refuses their request to appropriate it. If pressed, the Hierarch (**wraith**) and four **specters** draw ephemeral blades and fight until they are destroyed (see **Development**).



#### 4. THE HIERARCH'S SARCOPHAGUS

The enclosure's lid is engraved with fine silver and mithral inlays; truly a work of art. Within lie the withered, bodily remains of the Hierarch. There is a hidden compartment under a false bottom (**Search** check).

**Treasure.** A leather pouch with 20 gp, 400 sp, and Lord Heldast's legendary, sentient weapon, *Avacinna*.

#### 5. SECRET CHAMBER

The room contains a table with several blades, a crate of ash, and a reinforced wooden chest, recently opened.

**Treasure.** The chest contains 5 sp, 100 cp, a *potion of healing*, and a rusty set of breastplate armor.

#### 6. SILAS'S ROOM

This chamber appears lived in and recently used. Silas, the grave-keeper, lives here but no one is aware of this. He moved in here after finding the secret passage to area 1. His journal is tucked under the straw pillow. It reveals that he plundered the vault in area 5 and that he soon plans to move away with the ill-gotten treasure.

**Treasure.** The crate contains 250 sp, 900 cp, traveling clothes, new leather boots, and a bottle of wine (5 sp).

#### 7. THE FAMILY CRYPT

The chamber contains five columbarium columns, clay urns, and an empty sarcophagus. Closer inspection reveals that the Hierarch's close relatives are interred here (**History Lore** check). It is a place of great honor.

#### 8. EMBALMING CHAMBER

An experienced locksmith can bypass the locked door with fine tools (**Burglary** check). The chamber contains literature, tools, and substances for embalming corpses. These items are only useful to undertakers.

#### 9. TOMB OF KNIGHTS

Knights in service to the Hierarch were later buried here. There were six of them but a cave-in destroyed one of the enclosures, revealing a path to the caves in area 10.

**Treasure.** The stone coffins contain 140 sp, 700 cp, a *potion of heroism*, and a silver bracelet (25 sp).

#### 10. UNCHARTED CAVERNS

These are natural caves, created by seismic activity (**Architecture** check). The caves beyond are perilous; **giant centipede** droppings litter the soil (**Nature** check).

## ADVENTURE CONCLUSION

**IF THE HIERARCH** is defeated in deadly combat, all other spirits flee in a panic, and the undead celebration ends once and for all. Strangely enough, the blade *Avacinna*, telepathically declares it was bored of being kept away; it yearned for adventures and battles. The characters now have a powerful tool for the adventures to come. If confronted, Silas denies it all and pretends to be innocent. Alas, the town's bailiff won't prosecute Silas because he is well-loved and no one dares enter the sepulcher to verify the characters' slandering accusations.