



THE VILLAGE GREEN

AN INTRODUCTION

THE DAY DAWNS WITH A CHILL IN THE AIR, THE ODD patch of frost can still be seen in the more sheltered corners of this quaint little village. The bread ovens in the centre of the green are lit, creating a comforting aroma of fresh bread and wood smoke. A young woman dressed in simple peasant garb walks past your hiding place with arms full of laundry, a glint of steel hidden between the cloths. She gives you a quick wink and a tentative smile before moving on. These people may lack training in martial combat, but they each have a warrior's spirit and, as your Bard found out last night, can easily drink the best of you under a table.

From the north you hear a loud banging on wood and an aggressive shout. The skinny lad manning the gate jumps at the sound before slowly opening it to reveal a group of rough and dirty looking men and women clad in leather armour and sporting worn but serviceable weapons. Their leader, a bruiser standing well over six feet, makes a quick movement towards the 'gate guard', making him flinch. The bandits roar with laughter and push past into the village. You frown, there are more than you were led to believe.

They slowly walk to the centre of the green where an old stone monument stands. The bandit leader steps onto it and with open arms calls to the village elders. "Come my friends, the taxman is here to collect his dues! Be good little people and present your meagre offerings" he sneers while watching the town hall, a patronising smile on his face. His face slowly darkens. "Do not make me wait, peasants!" He rests his hand on the pommel of his sword glancing around the village with growing irritation.

You look to your companions' hiding places, hoping everyone remembers the plan. With a quick hand movement you give the signal to begin. An arrow whistles across the green and lodges in the bandit leader's shoulder, with a grunt he steps back bellowing with rage and pain. From around the village people step out of doorways and from behind trees, each one holding an improvised weapon. No one will be paying taxes this day!

NOTES AND TIPS

- 30x30 Grid map
- This map would be great for a more substantial travel encounter, villages like this exist all over the wilderness of fantasy realms, your players will often pass through them while travelling.
- The gate is really there to prevent wild animals and random strangers from entering the village at night, a concerted attack should take it down quite easily unless it is reinforced.
- The hedge at the north side could be very thorny, making it harder to pass through.
- Rooftops can be used for elevation, log piles and other items can make it possible to climb up without too much trouble, but remember to roll for dex or stealth.
- Thatch burns quite well, unfortunately. A stray fire spell could

have some unintended consequences.

- This map would work well for a classic bandit encounter. Villagers hire the party to defend against bandits extorting them. Getting your players invested in this encounter really depends on making them like the villagers, even before they know about the threat.
- Have the party meet some hunters/trappers from the village before they actually encounter the village itself.
- A nice friendly tavern with good local ale always helps to ingratiate a party to a village.
- The village could have some dark secret, they could all worship an evil god, or sacrifice travellers at the monument in the centre of the green. Checks could reveal bloodstains, explained away by animals being slaughtered here for some harvest festival.
- Marauding woodland monsters could be coming into the village at night and taking livestock or even people.
- I like the idea of a fun/unusual history behind a village like this. Maybe its founders were soldiers from a long vanished kingdom, or the monument in the centre has some weird and magical properties.

VARIANTS

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