The Dead Patrol

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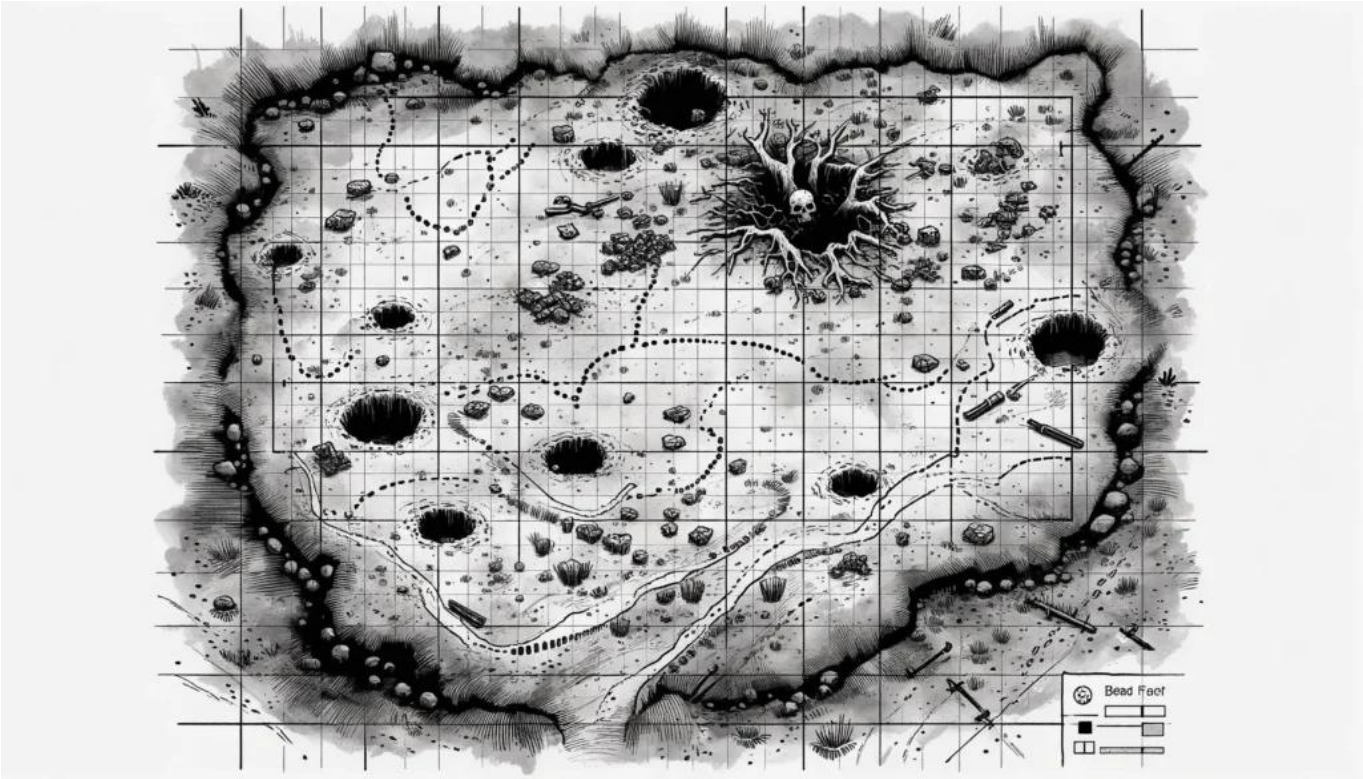
> Under the ghostly glow of the moon, the ancient battlefield stirs. From the scorched earth, a group of animated skeletons rises, clanking in rusted armor. These mindless guardians, remnants of a long-forgotten war, form a grim formation, ready to attack any intruder. The air is thick with the magic that binds them to this world.



Setting: A desolate battlefield, scattered with broken weapons and bones, under a moonlit sky.

Player Configuration: Designed for a party of four adventurers at level 2.

Main Challenge: Confronting a squad of 8 animated skeletons, adhering to their last orders to guard the battlefield. Two of the skeletons are archers.



NPC Characters: None. The skeletons lack consciousness and individuality, acting only on their creator’s last commands.

Tactics:

- The skeletons, while lacking intelligence, fight as a unit, mechanically following combat strategies ingrained in them.
- They may form a defensive perimeter or charge mindlessly at the adventurers.
- The skeleton archers will move away from combat to a medium range of the party and attack at range.

Possible Player Actions:

- Engage the skeletons in combat with strategy, exploiting their lack of adaptability.
- Investigate the area to find and possibly disrupt the source of animation.
- Employ stealth to navigate through or around the patrol.

Potential Outcomes:

- Defeating the skeletons and discovering relics of the battlefield.
- Learning about the ancient battle and the source of the skeletal animation.
- Uncovering a hidden threat or curse tied to the battlefield’s history.

Further Ideas:

- Exploration may reveal the identity of the necromancer who animated the skeletons.
- The players could find a way to put the skeletons to rest, possibly requiring a ritual or finding a specific artifact on the battlefield.

Treasure:

- Small trinkets or coins from the era of the skeletons.
- A minor magical item, perhaps a magic item of the necromancer.

Experience Points (XP):

- 400 XP for overcoming the challenge, with additional bonuses for creative thinking and exploring the history of the battlefield.