Spires of Winedihul

THE DOOMQUILL TALES · BOOK IV

Spires of Winedihul

Kidaneland: Litta and the Winedihul Crypt, Ortonzania, year 834



PENNED BY KIDANELAND PROJECT

THE DOOMQUILL TALES PRESS · ORCOS · YEAR 834

Spires of Winedihul

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Set in Kidaneland, Bretbury Era 834.

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Rules of Play

Your Hero's Scores

Roll one six-sided die and add 6 for your **SKILL**. Roll two dice and add 12 for your **STAMINA**. Roll one die and add 6 for your **LUCK**. Record these scores on your Adventure Sheet.

Combat Sequence

In battle, roll two dice and add your current SKILL for your Attack Strength. Roll two dice and add the opponent's SKILL for their Attack Strength. The higher blows strikes the lower for weapon damage (default 2 points). If you wear armour, roll one die: if equal to or under your armour tier, reduce the wound by 1.

Testing Your Luck

When instructed to Test your Luck, roll two dice: if the roll is equal to or under your current LUCK score, you are Lucky. If higher, you are Unlucky. *Deduct 1 point from your LUCK score every time you test it.*

Provisions & Healing

Each meal of provisions restores 4 STAMINA points up to your initial score. You may only eat when resting or permitted by the text.

ADVENTURE SHEET

Hero Name: ..... **People / Origin:** .....

SKILL	STAMINA	LUCK

Purse & Provisions:

Crowns & Shillings: ..... Provisions (Meals): .....

Equipment & Weapons:

.....

.....

.....

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Prologue

Children have been vanishing from the village of Litta, under the skeletal spires of the Winedihul Crypt. The Prince of Ortonzania has forbidden anyone to enter the necropolis, and his soldiers stand at the chapel door to see that nobody does. The village has sent for a sword, and a purse of two crowns, which is all it has.

This is a short sample of a Kidaneland gamebook, written to show the voice and the rules: SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK, a purse in crowns and shillings, Honour and Shadow, and tests to persuade and intimidate. It plays in ten minutes. Roll your scores, pick up your lantern, and begin at 1.

Turn to Section 1 to begin your quest.

1

Rain has followed you all the way from Orcos. The road to Litta is a ribbon of red mud between dripping trees, and somewhere ahead, above the canopy, the skeletal spires of the Winedihul Crypt catch the last grey light. A wooden sign has been nailed to an oak at the fork in the road. Someone has scratched the Ortonzanian seal off it and written underneath, in charcoal: *GO BACK*.

- → Take the left fork toward the village of Litta **TURN TO 14**
- → Leave the road and approach the spires through the forest **TURN TO 212**

14

Litta is silent. Doors hang open. In the square, an old woman sits on the edge of the well, staring at you with milk-white eyes. "You have come for the children," she says. "They went to the spires on their own feet, singing. The Prince's men stood and watched." She holds out a hand. "Silent coin, stranger, and I will tell you the way in that the soldiers do not know."

- Give her 5 shillings TURN TO 301
- Try to frighten her into talking

77

The path ends at a hollow oak the size of a tower. Inside, someone has made a cache: a stack of oilcloth bundles, a coil of rope, a cask of lamp oil and a tin box with a Gatemule's two-knock mark scratched on the lid. Smugglers, running the Prince's ban on the crypt road. There is bread and hard cheese in one bundle, and in the tin box, when you prise it, twelve silver shillings.

From the far side of the oak a trodden path runs straight toward the lights of Litta and the chapel at the top of its square.

- Take the lamp oil and the food
- Take the Gatemules' silver
- Go on to the chapel TURN TO 120

88

She flinches, and for a moment the milk clears from her eyes and an ordinary frightened old woman looks out of them. "Under the chapel," she whispers. "The drowned stair. Third flag from the altar." She fumbles something out of her apron and presses it on you: a child's tin whistle, dented, with a name scratched on it. "My grandson's. They follow the tune. They always followed the tune."

You leave her weeping at the well. The chapel stands at the top of the square, and two lanterns burn at its door.

- → Walk up to the chapel **TURN TO 120**

120

Two of the Prince's soldiers stand under the chapel lanterns, wet, young and miserable. Their halberds lean against the wall. The nearer one straightens when he sees you. "Chapel's closed. Prince's order. Nobody goes in, nobody goes up the hill." The other one does not look at you at all. He is looking at the spires.

- → Talk your way past them
- → Offer them 5 shillings to look at the spires a while longer **TURN TO 125**
- → Threaten them

125

The chapel is small and cold and smells of wet stone. The altar is bare. The flags of the floor have been swept, all but a patch behind the altar where the dust lies thick, and under the dust one flag has a ring set into it. Somebody has been through here with an iron bar and failed: the edge of the stone is chipped white.

From somewhere beneath your feet, very faint, comes the sound of children singing.

- → Pull the third flag from the altar, as the old woman told you **TURN TO 180**
- → Try the bone key in the ring **TURN TO 180**
- → Heave at the ringed flag

128

The nearer soldier swings his halberd down from the wall. "That's it. That's enough." The other takes his a moment later, slowly, like a man in a dream. They come at you together.

> COMBAT ENCOUNTER:
> **FIRST SOLDIER** · SKILL 6 · STAMINA 7
> **SECOND SOLDIER** · SKILL 6 · STAMINA 6

133

You come out of the marsh black to the chest and shaking with cold, and sit for a while on a fallen alder, listening to your heart. When you can stand, you find the path again twenty yards to your right, where it was all along.

- → Follow the path **TURN TO 77**

150

The tune is very easy to remember. You find that you are singing it. You find that you have put down the lantern, because you do not need it, and that your hands are at your sides, and that there is a place for you at the end of the file. It is a comfortable place. The children do not turn round, and after a while neither do you.

Your adventure ends here, under the hill, among the singing.

† YOUR ADVENTURE ENDS IN DEATH †

156

The old woman laughs, and her laugh does not stop. Her jaw opens wider than any jaw should. She is not an old woman at all.

COMBAT ENCOUNTER:
CRYPT-WIGHT · SKILL 9 · STAMINA 12

180

The stair is dry, and old, and goes down a long way. At the bottom a gallery runs off under the hill, and its roof is held up by pillars carved into the shapes of people who are trying very hard not to scream.

The children are here. Eleven of them, in a file, walking slowly away from you into the dark with their hands at their sides, singing a tune with no words in it. None of them turns round. The lantern-light catches a dented tin whistle on a cord round the smallest one's neck.

The tune is very easy to remember. You find that you are humming it.

- → Play the tin whistle **TURN TO 260**
- → Follow the file down into the dark **TURN TO 205**
- → Stand and listen to the song a moment longer

205

The gallery turns, and the singing goes on ahead, and something stands up between you and it. A skeleton in Elder armour, bronze gone green, with a sword as long as you are tall. Its eye-sockets are full of a slow white light. It does not hurry. It does not need to.

> COMBAT ENCOUNTER:
> **CRYPT-WARDEN** · SKILL 9 · STAMINA 12

212

The forest closes over the road within fifty paces. Wet bracken soaks you to the thigh, and the spires show only in glimpses, white as teeth through the leaves. There is a path of sorts, if you can keep it. Somewhere to your left the ground has a wrong, black shine.

Test your Luck.

> **TEST OF LUCK:**
> Test your LUCK to keep the path in the dark.

240

The wight comes apart like a wet bundle of sticks and lies still in the mud. Among its rags is a key of yellow bone, warm as a living hand. You pocket it and wipe your sword on the grass. Nobody in Litta comes to see what the noise was.

The chapel stands at the top of the square, and two lanterns burn at its door.

→ Walk up to the chapel **TURN TO 120**

260

The tune breaks. Eleven children stop walking at once, and the smallest one begins to cry, and then all of them are crying and turning and clutching at your coat, and you are hurrying them back up the drowned stair with the lantern swinging and the song falling away behind you like water going down a drain.

The rain has stopped. The Prince's soldiers are gone from the chapel door. In the square the old woman is sitting on the well with her white eyes shut, and she does not open them as the children run past her to the open doors.

You have brought eleven children out of the Winedihul Crypt. Gain 2 HONOUR.

But as you climbed the stair, something far below the gallery spoke your name, once, quite clearly, and it will not have forgotten it. The necromancer of Winedihul will keep. For tonight, there is bread and a fire.

★ VICTORY ACHIEVED ★

301

The coin vanishes into her sleeve. "Under the chapel," she says. "There was a stair before there was a chapel, and the monks built over it and called it drowned. It is not drowned. Pull the third flag from the altar and go down. Do not sing with them, whatever they sing." She turns her white eyes back to the well and will not say another word.

→ Walk up to the chapel TURN TO 120

The Doomquill Tales

"Your fate is written in ink."

❖

Kidaneland is a vast fantasy realm spanning two continents, twenty-two grand cities, and eight hundred years of war and steam. Discover more interactive adventure books, mapped zones, and lore gazetteers at the official portal.