

# Whispering Cairns

Whispering Cairns rise from the windswept moor like ancient, slumbering giants. Weathered stone, draped in moss and lichen, bears silent witness to centuries of storms and solitude. A perpetual hush hangs in the air, broken only by the mournful sigh of the wind as it weaves through the stones, carrying tales of forgotten rituals and long-lost lives. The landscape is a tapestry of muted greens and browns, a place where time seems to slow and the veil between worlds feels thin.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS & RUMORS

- Locals whisper of strange lights seen near the Whispering Cairns on moonless nights. Some say they are echoes of the forgotten rituals, and that disturbing the stones could awaken something ancient.
- A scholar seeks someone with knowledge of old languages to translate markings recently discovered on a cairn. The symbols appear to depict a ritual sacrifice and a warning about a looming darkness.
- Travelers have reported hearing mournful singing carried on the wind near the Cairns. Those who listen too closely claim to glimpse fleeting visions of spectral figures dancing amongst the stones.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. The Outer Circle

A wide, windswept area surrounding the cairns, marked by weathered standing stones and patches of gnarled, ancient trees.

### 2. The Ritual Chamber

A circular chamber within the largest cairn, containing a stone altar stained with what appears to be dried blood and intricate carvings.

### 3. The Echoing Gallery

A narrow, winding passage within the cairn, where whispers and faint melodies seem to linger in the air.

### 4. The Sunken Crypt

A damp, subterranean chamber beneath the cairns, partially flooded with brackish water and containing crumbling stone sarcophagi.

### 5. The Observatory Stone

A tall, isolated stone outside the main cairn complex, offering a panoramic view of the moor and often shrouded in mist.

## ENCOUNTERS

Name	Details
The Wind Weaver	A spectral figure composed of swirling mist and wind, guarding the entrance to the Ritual Chamber. It attacks with gusts of wind and disorienting whispers.
The Scholar's Ghost	A translucent scholar frantically searching through crumbling texts in the Echoing Gallery, desperately seeking a specific phrase to decipher. He is harmless but agitated.
The Mourning Dancers	A group of spectral figures performing a mournful dance around the altar in the Ritual Chamber. They are drawn to strong emotions and attempt to ensnare living individuals in their spectral embrace.
The Crypt Guardian	A hulking, stone skinned creature animated by ancient magic, protecting the Sunken Crypt from intruders. It attacks with powerful slams and earth shattering roars.
The Whispering Hound	A large, spectral hound that appears and disappears in the Outer Circle, its mournful howls carrying unsettling prophecies. It stalks those who linger too long.
The Lost Traveler	A desperate, disoriented traveler who claims to have heard the mournful singing and glimpsed the spectral figures. They are terrified and offer cryptic warnings about the looming darkness.

## TREASURE

- The Sunstone Amulet: A golden amulet radiating warmth. While it provides protection from the cold, prolonged use induces vivid, unsettling dreams.
- The Scholar's Codex: A leather-bound book filled with arcane symbols and forgotten lore. Deciphering it requires immense mental fortitude, and failure can lead to temporary madness.
- The Crypt Key: A heavy iron key etched with unsettling sigils. It unlocks hidden chambers within the Sunken Crypt, but its presence attracts unwanted attention from the Crypt Guardian.

## NPCS

- Elara, the Lost Traveler:** A woman haunted by visions of impending doom. She speaks in riddles and warns of a darkness rising from the moor, urging caution.
- Silas, the Scholar:** A translucent man eternally searching for a lost phrase. He is easily startled and will babble incoherently if disturbed.
- Morwen, the Wind Weaver:** A spectral entity bound to the Ritual Chamber. She observes intruders with chilling patience, her whispers promising oblivion.

## PLOT RESOLUTIONS

- The adventurers could successfully decipher the markings on the cairn, revealing a ritual meant to bind a powerful, ancient entity to the land. To prevent a looming darkness, they must choose whether to complete the ritual, potentially unleashing unpredictable consequences, or find another way to contain the entity, requiring a perilous quest for a lost artifact.
- The PCs might discover the source of the mournful singing and spectral visions: the "Mourning Dancers," spirits trapped between worlds, desperately seeking release. They could choose to help the spirits find peace by completing a forgotten ritual, potentially opening a gateway to the afterlife or inadvertently unleashing a wave of spectral energy.
- The adventurers could confront the Crypt Guardian, a being tasked with protecting a hidden chamber beneath the cairns containing a powerful relic. They must decide whether to claim the relic for themselves, potentially disrupting the balance of power in the region, or leave it undisturbed, honoring the ancient protectors and accepting the consequences of the looming darkness foretold in the scholar's research.

