

KEO4-01

Hope, Entwined

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK® Keoland Regional Adventure

Version 1.1

by Shawn Merwin

Recent events in the Viscounty of Nume Eor and the Hool Marsh Protectorate have drawn the attention of King Kimbertos Skotti himself. A venerable sage and a captured Brotherhood monk may hold the answers to a blossoming hope for Keoland, or serpentine plots may strangle Keoish interests in Nume Eor and beyond. A Keoland Regional adventure for APLs 2-12 and the fifth and final installment in the “Death in the Hool” series, which included **A Royal Rescue, Hunt in the Hool, Predators and Prey, and Old Secrets Never Die.**

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said; you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer*.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
	7	7	9	10	11

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Keoland. Characters native to Keoland pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are two things that you can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Important DM's Note

This module is written to accommodate APLs 2-12. In an effort to tailor the flow and tone of the module to characters' power levels and skills, the module is written in two separate tracks. **Track A** is written for APLs 2-6, and **Track B** is written for APLs 8-12. The **Introduction**, **Encounter One**, **Encounter Seven**, and **Conclusion** are roughly the same regardless of the track. **Encounter Four-A** and **Encounter Three-B** are encounters where the two tracks converge briefly. Because of this unique approach, the module can also be run as a "mini-interactive," allowing one higher-level (APL 8-12) and one lower-level (APL 2-6) party to interact and share information during the course of the module. This will take a small bit of planning on the part of the convention/game day coordinator, but it should not be difficult to accomplish if the tables are playing in the same location.

Adventure Background

The synopses of the modules **Royal Rescue**, **Hunt in the Hool**, **Predators and Prey**, and **Old Secrets Never Die** can be found in the appendices of this module. The first two modules are retired as of 1/1/04, and their synopses can therefore be shared freely with the players. The synopses of the latter two can be shared with players whose PCs have played the modules or with everyone when they retire as well (1/1/05). A synopsis for **Warts and All** (also retired) is included as well, as it has a bearing on the current political climate in the Hool, even though it is not specifically part of the "Death in the Hool" series. As **Hope, Entwined** ties up many of the loose threads from these previous modules, it is important the judge and the PCs have an idea what transpired previously.

Hundreds of years ago, the Dreadwood was the centre of a war between lizardfolk and a powerful faction of spider-creatures (which included aranea, ettercaps, monstrous spiders, and minions of Lolth) that inhabited the innermost portions of the Dreadwood. As the lizardfolk and spider-kin searched for ways to gain the upper hand in the war, both sides began to experiment with dark and dangerous magic.

A small sect of lizardfolk strongly opposed this new experimentation, recognizing the destruction it would cause. Their Oerth magic was not strong enough to battle the infernal and abyssal allies their kin had summoned, and they fled to the relative safety of the Hool, bringing their ancient knowledge and secrets with them.

Over the years, the evil lizardfolk gained the upper hand, and expanded their territory throughout the southern portions of the Dreadwood and into the Hool Marsh. These worshipers of Sess'Innek and descendants of the lizardfolk who used foul magic have since fallen into

disarray, however. Some of the lizardfolk saw the Hool Beacon at Baltron's former keep, as well as the black dragon himself, as signs from Sess'Innek to stay close to the beacon. (See Keoland Regional adventure **KEO3-07 Old Secrets Never Die**.) Other lizardfolk followed the priests of Sess'Innek into an assault on the village of Haven, which failed. (This occurred during an interactive adventure in 2003). The evil tribes, however, are now being drawn again to a truly ancient and evil power, the vampire king of the lizardfolk known as Sakatha. This dread figure in Keoland's history is instructing the evil clans to stop following the false idol of the Hool Beacon and forgo their alliance with a force of humans (known as the Brazen Blade) in their upcoming war with Keoland.

Adventure Summary

Introduction – The PCs are either presently in Jaedrae, the newly renamed capital of Nume Eor, or they are called there by Viscount Richart Jorgos. Fortifications of the capital are now complete, and King Kimbertos Skotti himself is there to inspect the defenses and meet with his cousin Richart about the happenings of the last two years. Characters have a chance to meet King Kimbertos himself, disguised as a gardener while he visits a memorial to his deceased queen.

Encounter One - Richart and Kimbertos need two groups of adventurers for important missions. The first group (APL 2-6) is to find out what connection the Brazen Blade and the Scarlet Brotherhood have with the evil lizardfolk tribes that are poised to attack Nume Eor. The second group (APL 8-12) must find a sage named Demetrios, who can give more information on the ferlow seed that acts as a prison dimension for the Black Flame that was unleashed from Baltron's Beacon – and how to destroy it.

TRACK A

Encounter Two-A – The PCs in this track are tasked to get information from Hutin Yo Bin, a captured Scarlet Brotherhood monk (last seen/captured in **KEO2-06 Hunt in the Hool**) that is finally agreeing to share his knowledge with the authorities. He reveals that the Scarlet Brotherhood has not been the ones assisting the evil lizardfolk in preparing to fight against Keoland. His information sends the PCs into the Hool to find out what the Brazen Blade has to do with the lizardfolk. On their way to a Brazen Blade hideout in the Hool Marsh, lizardfolk attack the PCs.

Encounter Three-A – At the Brazen Blade hideout, bodies of Brazen Blade members lay scattered about. It is obvious that the lizardfolk massacred the Brazen Blade operatives. Papers detail the plans for a lizardfolk war with Keoland, bolstered by assistance from the Brazen Blade. It seems those plans have changed now that Sakatha is in charge.

Encounter Four-A – PCs meet a member of the Marshgrove tribe who had been assaulted and left for dead by the evil lizardfolk. PCs must deal with the trap, recognize the good lizardfolk as such, and learn more of the new threat and the nearest location of the Lizard King's followers.

Encounter Five-A – Following the path described by the Marshgrove lizardfolk, the PCs search for the missing Marshgrove druid. They find her tossed aside to die on a pile of rotten meat. Unfortunately, there are also giant bombardier beetles in the pile as well. The PCs can rescue the druid and learn more.

Encounter Six-A – Pushing deeper into the land controlled by the Lizard King, the PCs find an old temple in the Hool. The acolytes of the Lizard King are performing a ritual to grant undeath to fanatic lizardfolk followers. The PCs are forced to flee the area while undead lizards attack.

TRACK B

Encounter Two-B – The PCs in this track are tasked to get information from Demetrios about the ferlow seed. He lives in a small hut on the edge of the Hool. Lizardfolk are also moving to assault Demetrios' home as the PCs approach, and the PCs must fight them before they can speak to Demetrios, who instructs them how to destroy the ferlow seed and end the threat of the vitrioli of the para-elemental plane of ooze.

Encounter Three-B – At the portal to the dungeon, the bodies of several lizardfolk and Scarlet Brotherhood mercenaries are scattered about. Signs show they fought each other. Then the Marshgrove tribe arrives. One of the Marshgrove leaders has gone into the dungeon to attempt to stop the Foulwater lizards from carrying out the ritual to release the ooze elemental lord of the vitrioli from the seed.

Encounter Four-B – The portal to the dungeon deposits the PCs in a room with no apparent exit. The PCs must find the pit trap that leads down into a forgotten part of the Cult of the Black Flame's former lair.

Encounter Five-B – The pit trap leads into a room containing specially bred leechwalkers, trained and fed by the lizardfolk as pets and guards.

Encounter Six-B – A Foulwater lizardfolk mystic theurge and his lizardfolk monk bodyguard have gone to open the ferlow seed, both destroying Baltron (the "false avatar" of Sess'Innek) and allowing the ooze lord to pass into the material plane. Defeating the lizardfolk, the PCs must use the dragon's tooth they carry to smash the seed and end the threat of the vitrioli.

Both Tracks

Encounter Seven – Both groups are invited back to a Marshgrove settlement, where several interesting plot twists are revealed. Also, a piece of the secret to closing

some of the Dreadwood gates is presented to the players for (hopefully) saving the future of the Marshgrove tribe. The lizardfolk also bring to the PCs a bloodied and battered Dreadwalker, Vayleran Moonchild, who reports that the Wastriggi of the Conclave have attacked a Keoish envoy.

Conclusion – The PCs can return to Jaedrae with new information on the lizardfolk tribes, Sakatha and the Conclave, and ancient magic that can be used to fight the threat in the Dreadwood.

Introduction

Only a few months have passed since the capital of the Viscounty of Nume Eor, formerly named Kimberton in honor of the King, was rededicated to the fallen Queen of Keoland: Jaedrae. The settlement has already giving birth to innumerable legends and rumors. The blind and lame travel to her resting place; rumors speak of such folk being healed there.

The growing threat of the lizardfolk tribes that mass on the borders of the Hool draws many mercenaries and adventurers to Nume Eor. The ruler of Nume Eor, Viscount Richart Jorgos, is notorious for employing swords-for-hire to quell the growing tide of evil that seems to be closing in on his lands. For those who have successfully served Jorgos, or even the Kingdom as a whole, in the past, he has made a habit of contacting them when dire circumstances arise. Now is such a time. For whatever reason, you and your fellows have traveled to the capital of this southern Viscounty.

Allow the PCs to introduce themselves if they are not traveling together or already acquainted. The next encounter assumes that the PCs arrive in Jaedrae late at night after either being summoned by Richart Jorgos (if the PC has his favor) or coming for their own reasons.

As the PCs near the walls of Jaedrae, guards at the newly completed north gate meet them. The fortifications are finally complete!

Arriving just after sunset, you notice the newly constructed walls around Jaedrae. The fortifications are finally completed.

A small contingent of guards, looking inexperienced and nervous, stands at the main gate. Two of them bristle at your approach, leveling longspears in your direction. "State your names and your business in Jaedrae."

As long as the PCs do not act or speak foolishly, they are allowed to enter the capital. If they act in a threatening or bizarre manner, they are denied entrance to the town. If they are denied entrance to the town, they cannot enter until the following morning, when the Viscount authorizes their entry. PCs who are not allowed in until

the morning miss the rest of the Introduction and must go directly to Encounter One.

When the gates are opened for the PCs, they are told the following by the guards:

- A curfew is currently in place in Jaedrae. Only people moving to their homes or to the inns are allowed to be out and about after nightfall and before dawn.
- Many pilgrims and curiosity-chasers have come to visit the monument to Jaedrae. The inns are all full, except for the Kimberton Arms, which is next to the recently finished Jorgos Keep.

On their way to the Kimberton Arms inn, the PCs pass the monument honoring Queen Jaedrae. A single person stands at the monument, head bowed as if deep in thought.

Near the center of the town, within a long bowshot of Jorgos Keep, a ten-foot tall statue of Queen Jaedrae dominates a small garden. Even in the darkness, the starlight reflects off the polished marble of the newly-erected monument. Two pools of water on either side of the statue also reflect the faint light. A lone figure, head covered in a thick hooded cloak fastened with a uniquely-shaped brooch, stands in front of the statue. He is tall and broad-shouldered, and stands with head bowed as if in deep thought.

This figure is King Kimbertos Skotti of Keoland, disguised as a commoner. He wears nothing that would identify him as nobility, and no one is with him. Kimbertos has been in Jaedrae for a week reviewing the fortifications of the town, at the behest of his cousin Richart Jorgos. Every night when he is in town, the king sneaks out of his quarters at the keep and comes to meditate at Jaedrae's monument. He thinks he has escaped his personal guard, but in reality he hasn't. They noticed his ploy on the third night in Jaedrae, and they have taken up hidden positions on rooftops around this central park. A dozen archers shooting four arrows each in the first round of combat kill anyone attacking Skotti.

Important DM Note: Only a clear and true violent attack on the King will bring this drastic response. One of the PCs looking like a pincushion in a single round should make the other PCs think twice before threatening the king. Please note that this only happens if a PC physically assaults the king with a weapon or spell, and this is not *carte blanche* for an unscrupulous GM to kill PCs at random. Only if the PC acts rashly and foolishly should this be his or her fate. If any PC is killed this way, their character should be taken away immediately and the Keoland Triad contacted at keoland_marf_poc@yahoo.com.

If the PCs do not approach or hail the king, he simply ignores them and continues his meditation. If they do approach or call to him, he speaks to them but keeps the

hood of his cloak pulled low to obscure his visage. He says the following:

"Hail, good travelers. The viscount himself has decreed a curfew, so you should not tarry on your way. I am a fool for being out this late... but then, I am an old fool about many things. Still, I could not help stopping by the resting place of our fair queen on my way back to the keep."

Do not offer a check unless the PCs ask if they recognize the voice! It takes a Knowledge (nobility & royalty) check (DC 30) or a Knowledge (local - Sheldomar Valley Metaregion) or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 35) for someone to recognize the voice as that of the king. Reduce this DC by 5 for PCs that have heard the voice of the king in proclamation, or by 10 for PCs that have had extended interaction with him (such as in the introductory scenario **KEO4-IS Hide and Seek**).

Members of Nature's Sentinels, the Dreadwalkers, and the Axewood KRS automatically recognize the symbol of Nature's Sentinels, the gardeners, crop-protectors, and horse-breeders of Keoland. Otherwise, it takes a Bardic Knowledge or Knowledge (local - Sheldomar Valley Metaregion) check (DC 20).

If asked, the king claims to be Lozeh Green, a gardener in the employ of Viscount Jorgos. This can be determined to be untrue by a PC with a Sense Motive check (DC 20). If he is recognized as the king, he will not deny it. He will then say that he must return to the keep, but he gives the PCs his regards and asks them to come to Jorgos Keep in the morning to meet with him and Richart Jorgos about an urgent matter.

The PCs can find rooms at the Kimbertos Arms Inn. Regardless of why or how the PCs came to be in Jaedrae—whether by invitation or curiosity—they are to be at Jorgos Keep in the morning.

Encounter One: Two Missions

It is just past dawn on a beautiful morning in Jaedrae. Farmers bring their crops to market in the center of the town, newly trained troops march into and out of the keep, and ne'er-do-wells stagger home after a night of carousing. In front of you, the imposing Jorgos Keep sits at the south side of the newly walled town. You are escorted into a large audience chamber with nearly a dozen other adventurers.

If played as a mini-interactive by two tables of PCs, they can (but don't have to be) be together for this encounter. Remember, one table should be lower level (APL 2-6) and the other higher level (APL 8-12). Give these two tables the opportunity to talk with each other and share stories of their past exploits on behalf of Richart Jorgos and Keoland.

If only one party is playing the module, the attitude of the other NPC party is based on the APL. If the PCs are

playing APL 2-6, the other NPC party is a group of higher-level adventurers who treat the PCs with a mix of good-natured condescension and worry. These NPCs have worked for Richart Jorgos before, and they know that when he sends adventurers into the Hool on a mission, very frequently one or more don't come back.

If the PCs are playing APL 8-12, the NPC party is a group of six inexperienced but eager adventurers who have come from the farmlands north of Gradsul seeking their fame and fortune. They are obviously in awe of the PCs, but they try to hide it behind fear-induced bravado.

As DM, use this opportunity to foster role-playing. Feel free to make up the personalities of the NPC party to induce banter, camaraderie, trash talking, or any other form of communication between the PC and/or the NPCs that you deem appropriate.

If the PCs are playing as part of a single table, allow the PCs the usual chance for introductions. If you are pressed for time, use this option.

After the adventurers (whether PC or NPC) have had the chance to interact for a few minutes, Richart Jorgos enters the chamber, followed by two men. The first is a Suel/Flan named Nolan Yarbrough. He is the Viscount's court mage and advisor. The second is a tall, thin half-elf named Cyrikkan Lomack, the Sheriff of Nume Eor. Neither of these other men speaks nor introduces themselves unless they are spoken to directly and then given leave to speak by the Viscount. Richart speaks as soon as all the people in the room are seated:

"I am pleased to see so many brave adventurers answering my call. Some of you I recognize. Others of you may be new to the plight of Nume Eor and Keoland."

Before the Viscount can say anything else, the door to the garden opens up and a man in his late fifties steps into the room. He is broad-shouldered, and his face looks weathered. His countenance is grim, and he is good-looking, with rugged features and a lantern jaw. His brown eyes match the hair on the top of his head, but the color drifts to that of silver closer to his temples. He is dressed a simple tunic and breeches. On his head is a regal crown. The assembled nobles drop to one knee almost at once. A heretofore-unnoticed herald in the chamber announces, "His Peerless Majesty, King Kimbertos Skotti of House Lizhal, protector of the Lion Throne."

Make a show of writing down the names of any PC who does not take a knee in his presence, but the king doesn't care at this point. The king motions for anyone kneeling to rise, and then he speaks:

"Please, no more of this courtly foolishness. We are people of action here. Nume Eor and Keoland are both honored by your willingness to partake in their defense. Viscount, if I may..." Jorgos nods and steps

away; it seems you are to receive your instructions from the Lord of the Lion Throne himself.

Read both paragraphs if both a low- and a high-APL group are present. Otherwise, choose the first (Low, APLs 2-6) or second (High, APLs 8-12) as appropriate.

LOW APL 2-6 BRIEFING

"A Scarlet Brotherhood prisoner has agreed to talk to us about his reason for being in the Hool, in the vicinity of the evil lizardfolk tribes. We need one group to speak to him and then act on any information he provides. His name is Hutin Yo Bin. Two years ago, he caused us no end of grief when he escaped our jail, causing great harm to those that stood in his way. He led a group of pursuing adventurers deep into the Hool, where he was finally captured with the aid of the elves within the heretofore-unknown village of Ob Noqui. We believe that he is involved with organizing the lizardfolk to rise up against the Kingdom, but so far he has been unwilling to talk."

"I have recently discovered new evidence that points towards Scarlet Brotherhood complicity in the death of my beloved wife." With that, Jorgos' eyebrow arches in surprise. The King takes no notice and continues. "I intend to make an example of this man and have sentenced him to the fate he richly deserves – death by hanging."

"It would seem that the promise of his final reward has loosened his tongue, and he now says that he wishes to tell his tale. He only wishes to speak with a group of adventurers, and not the Viscount or his servants. Your task is to speak with him and find out what is going on. Once you have assessed the situation, follow it up and see where any leads Yo Bin provides you might lead."

HIGH APL 8-12 BRIEFING

"The source of the illumination of the Hool Beacon, also known as Baltron's Beacon, is an enchanted ferlow seed. It glows with a light that causes even elves to age rapidly. The seed emits this radiance because of the powerful magic contained within. Inside of this seed exists a tiny world... a 'pocket dimension,' as my court archmage describes it. Within this place, a very dangerous substance known as Blackflame is contained."

"Also within it is Baltron himself, now greatly changed from his former self. He stands guard over a gate to another world, one that seeks to tear the gate asunder and use the seed as a stepping stone into our own world. Their goals seem to be only destruction and conquest."

"While we have benefited from Baltron's vigilance, we are gambling on time. Baltron himself indicated

that his defenses might soon be overwhelmed. Before this happens, we must locate a sage named Demetrios somewhere in the Hool. He is rumored to know more than anyone alive about the magic of the Cult of the Black Flame that was instrumental in the creation of the pocket dimension. It is my hope he will also know how to destroy that seed. After speaking to Demetrios, you must travel back to Baltron's Beacon and deal with the problem once and for all."

Again, the **Track A** mission to speak with Hutin Yo Bin and then hunt down the Brazen Blade is for APLs 2-6, and the **Track B** mission to Demetrios and the ferlow seed is for APLs 8-12. Using the module summaries at the end of this module, you can answer any questions the PCs may have, as everything known by the leaders was learned through the successes of previous adventuring parties. The king does not offer any monetary reward. If any PC party is foolish enough to demand monetary payment, the King tries to talk them out of it just once. If they insist, he offers them 100 gp each. Any Keoish PC who asks for money **DOES NOT** receive the *Favor of Viscount Richart Jorgos* at the end of the scenario (see the **Treasure Summary**).

To summarize:

Track A: PCs should question Hutin Yo Bin, then act on his information to find out what connection the Scarlet Brotherhood and Brazen Blade have with the lizardfolk tribes, and then use that information to see what the status of the lizardfolk tribes are currently.

Track B: PCs should find Demetrios, get information on the ferlow seed, and then find the ferlow seed to make sure what it holds is never released.

Read the following when the PCs accept:

The King and Viscount are pleased by your acceptance of your mission. This done, the King motions to the Viscount, who steps forward with a rune-encrusted ivory spike, thirteen inches long. He hands it to the adventurers who are to seek out Demetrios, "A tooth from a black dragon. This key may be of importance in your mission. It is used to operate the teleporter pads that allow access into Baltron's Beacon. Keep it safe, as we have no other means to penetrate the tower's interior."

With this last bit of business concluded, you are sent on your way.

Track A – APLs 2-6

Encounter Two-A: Traitor in Scarlet

Hutin Yo Bin is an Olman/Suel mixed-blood Scarlet Brotherhood monk. He was caught by Keoish troops in the vicinity of the evil lizardfolk forces, and the assumption was made that Yo Bin was working as a

liaison between the evil lizardfolk and the Scarlet Brotherhood. On the contrary, he was in the Hool trying to figure out why the Fraternity of the Brazen Blade was consorting with and supplying weapons to these lizardfolk. His escape and subsequent re-capture were documented in the module **Hunt in the Hool**. He is now willing to speak, since escape is impossible and execution is his pending fate. He hopes that revealing what he knows can thwart the plans of the Brazen Blade, whatever those plans are.

Hutin Yo Bin is being kept in a cell deep within the dungeon below Jorgos Keep. Two guards stand at attention outside the five-foot by five-foot cell, a stout wooden door with iron supports keeping in the prisoner. Yo Bin's first escape has become somewhat legendary in Keoland, and multiple contingencies have been put into place to make sure it doesn't happen again.

The guards instruct the PCs to remain five feet away from the door at all times during their interview with the monk. Yo Bin's appearance is strange: his skin and features are definitely Olman, while his hair and eyes are the pale blonde and blue of a Suel. His face still bears signs of brutal beatings in the past. He is eerily sedate, especially for someone condemned to death. He speaks slowly and deliberately. He actually looks forward to his execution, as he believes his ki spirit will be released from its mortal prison and that he will live again. Yo Bin speaks the truth to any questions he wishes to answer. If he is asked a question that he doesn't wish to answer, he simply refuses to do so. For dramatic and story purposes, he automatically makes his saving throw against any magical enchantment spells, and cannot be compelled to speak against his will.

The judge can base Yo Bin's conversation with the PCs on the following boxed text and bullet points. If any of these PCs were involved in his capture, he recognizes them and, oddly, greets them warmly, like old friends.

"As my time in this mortal form is about to end, I wish to speak of the events in the Great Marsh—events of both the past and future."

He casts his eyes to the floor. "My mission for the Brotherhood has been a failure. You see, we have not been inciting or assisting the lizardfolk against Keoland or Keoish interests; it has been our enemies in the land you call Monmourg that have been secretly meeting with those reptilian creatures. We feared that the Sea Prince rebels were enjoining the help of the lizards against our rule of their land, but my investigations, though abbreviated by my untimely capture, showed that the rebels were instead planning and assisting in an invasion of Keoland. A group known to us as the Fraternity of the Brazen Blade, cultists of a paltry deity known as Kelanen, represents the Sea Prince rebels in these dealings."

“With my own passing imminent, I am willing to provide you with the location of the base of operations of this group in the Hool. I found this base almost two years ago, just before I was captured, so I have no idea whether it remains occupied. For once, it seems, the goals of the Scarlet Brotherhood and the Lion Throne intersect – albeit briefly.”

“Do with this information what you will.”

Unless the PCs have any more questions, Yo Bin gives them a rough estimate of the location of the Brazen Blade base, then wishes them well and sends them on their way. The bulleted points below are some additional bits of information that might be imparted based on PC questions to Yo Bin.

- *“Why are you telling us this now?”* “Because it fits my needs. I was tasked to get a clear picture of the motives of both the lizards and the Brazen Blade. Perhaps you can succeed where I have failed.”
- *“Why are you speaking to us when you wouldn’t speak to anyone else?”* “It was a group of adventurers that were the first to defeat me by prematurely ending my mission. In a manner of speaking, I owe them a debt of honor. It is difficult for you to understand.”
- *“Where can we find the Fraternity of the Brazen Blade?”* “Their base of operations is simply a large one-room shack on a piece of dry land amidst swamp water. Other than a lookout post atop the shack, no other defenses were present. When I was able to infiltrate the base, there were only four warriors there, and two of them were asleep. No lizards were there.”
- *“What do you know about Baltron’s Beacon?”* “The mage sought the forbidden lore of House Malhel of the Suel – lore that rightfully belongs to the Brotherhood, the heirs of the Suloise legacy. I was pleased to hear he died when the tower exploded years ago. Had I succeeded in my task, I would have combed the ruins for whatever might have been recovered for my masters.”
- *“Is the Scarlet Brotherhood responsible for the Queen’s assassination?”* “I have been incarcerated for two years; there were no plans for such when last I reported to my superiors. In truth, I am doubtful. If we were to go through that amount of aggravation, we would simply strike at the King himself. I cannot think of the benefit the Brotherhood would gain by such an act of war. I have told him as much, but he will not heed my words. It is his loss.”

Encounter Three-A: Broken Fraternity

Once the PCs have spoken to Yo Bin, the Viscount (if the PCs ask him and just don’t rush out on their own) will urge them to follow up on what he has relayed, per the King’s request. He supplies them with all the standard equipment they need to successfully survive in the marsh, including rations and skiffs for navigating the waterways.

The DM should use his discretion as to whether or not PCs animals can accompany them. Any PC who has traveled in the Hool before knows that wearing medium or heavy armor will make them *fatigued*, per the DMG. A Survival check (DC 10) will provide the same information.

Travel through the Hool is brutal for those without magical means of traversing the muck and mire. The few overland paths are thick with mud, and the watery sections often end with the skiff sticking in mud as the water becomes suddenly shallow. After hours of hard and filthy travel, you come to the area where Yo Bin claimed the Brazen Blade hideout was located.

You find the shack, located on an island of dry land in the midst of swampy water. The island is roughly circular, ninety feet in diameter. The shack itself, located in the center of the island, has no windows, although it looks as though shutters are closed on holes in the eastern and western walls that would allow light to enter. A door on the north wall is closed. A small lookout post atop the shack offers concealment to anyone sitting in it and peering out at the surrounding marshland.

The PCs may be inclined to attempt to sneak to the shack and peer inside. They can do this easily, since everyone inside is dead. Anyone looking into the shack sees the following scene.

The interior of the thirty-foot square shack is in shambles. Human bodies, torn apart by claws, lay on the floor. Tables and chairs are overturned, papers and books lay scattered about, and smashed crockery litters the floor.

The seven bodies are of Brazen Blade members. They were attacked and killed by the same lizardfolk they were planning to help attack Keoland. All of their gear and goods have been taken, so the PCs won’t know that these humans are Brazen Blade members without piecing together clues strewn about the room.

If the PCs say they want to search the hideout, ask them if they want to search individually, assist one character, take 20, take 20 with assistance, etc. Get the highest Search check and consult the following. The PCs find everything up to and including the highest Search check DC made:

- **DC 5** – Anything of value has been taken.
- **DC 10** – Most of the papers are rough maps of locations around the Hool, but none of them are very detailed or particularly helpful. Most show the area of the Hool directly south of Nume Eor.
- **DC 15** – Some of the pottery that is smashed on the floor contains a mark of the potter who crafted it. An Appraise, Knowledge (local - Sheldomar Valley Metaregion), Craft (pottery), or Profession (merchant) check (DC 10) or a similar skill reveals that the pottery was created in the Sea Princes.
- **DC 25** – Hidden beneath one of the floorboards is a holy symbol—nine swords with the blades pointing outward in a star configuration. A Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) reveals this is a symbol of Kelanen. A Knowledge (local - Sheldomar Valley Metaregion) or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 20) reveals that the Fraternity of the Brazen Blade is a cult of Kelanen, as well as a revenge society bent on returning the Sea Princes to its former state.
- **DC 30** – Despite the mangled bodies, there is very little blood on the floor. Several of the bodies had puncture marks, inconsistent with the rending of claws and tearing of bites, but possibly consistent with two fangs being sank carefully into the bodies near major arteries or veins (Heal check DC 5).

An active Heal or Survival check (DC 10) reveals claws and teeth (from lizardfolk) killed the humans, and the bodies have been there for about 10 days. Succeeding at DC 20 reveals that the bodies all are heavily scarred with old and healed shallow blade wounds, as one might get from sparring a bit too enthusiastically with unblunted swords.

Speaking with the corpses of the Brazen Blade members reveals very little. (A display of necromantic magic like *Speak with Dead* should horrify the average Keoish citizen and disturb a Keoish adventurer. The Kingdom takes a dim view on such things; memories of Vecna and the Ur-Flan die hard in Keoland!) They were planning the invasion of the Keoland with the lizards, when the lizardfolk turned on them and slew them all. They know nothing else of the further plans of the Brazen Blade or of the lizardfolk.

While the search is happening inside the hut, a contingent of Fleshroast tribe lizardfolk is hidden and keeping an eye on the area, waiting to ambush a group of Brazen Blade members they expect to arrive carrying weapons and coin. The plan is for these lizardfolk to attack and kill the Brazen Blade members, steal the goods, and take the loot to add to Sakatha's coffers. They are hidden in rushes at various locations around the

shack. When the PCs first come upon the island, they can make a Spot check (DC 20) to see the lizardfolk peeking out of the water and watching. If the PCs do not see them the first time, the lizardfolk wait until the PCs enter the hut, then they try to pick off stragglers who either are last to enter the hut or who wait outside the hut to keep guard. A Spot check (DC 15) allows a PC standing guard to see the lizards sneaking up on him and preparing to throw javelins before attacking with their natural weapons.

APL 2 (EL 4)

🦎 **Fleshroast Tribe Lizardfolk (4):** hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

🦎 **Fleshroast Tribe Lizardfolk (7):** hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🦎 **Fleshroast Tribe Lizardfolk (10):** hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The lizards throw their javelins in a surprise round, if there is one. If there is no surprise round, the lizards throw javelins and close, attacking with claws and bite in subsequent rounds. They try to isolate PCs who wander off alone or seem to be inattentive.

Development: The lizardfolk are decorated with the scarring and fetishes that denote them as belonging to the Fleshroast tribe—PCs know this with a DC 25 Knowledge (local - Sheldomar Valley Metaregion) or Bardic Knowledge check, or if they have played the module **Royal Rescue**. The lizardfolk fight to the death, and while they are fighting they chant in a strange battle hymn in corrupted Draconic. Even those PCs who speak Draconic can only pick out a few words: “glory,” “destiny,” “life,” and “Lizard King.” If any are captured and questioned, they gladly reveal that their new master, the Lizard King, has shown them that Sess’Innek favors him over all others, and that the Fleshroast and Deathcroak tribes now follow the will of the Lizard King. The Lizard King does not allow cooperation with other species, especially human, and ordered the tribes to destroy and pillage their tribes’ former allies: the humans who worship the swords. They also reveal that the Foulwater tribe has been banished for worshipping the false god that is the Beacon of the Marsh.

From here, the PCs should be interested in investigating this “Lizard King” and his territory. They can learn the general vicinity of the area in the following ways:

- Any of the captured lizardfolk will cheerfully send the PCs to their doom in the lands held by their new master.

- A Survival check (DC 12 + APL) by someone with the Track feat shows the way from which these lizardfolk approached (west).
- A Knowledge (nature) check (DC 17 + APL) or Survival check (DC 22 + APL) reveals that the lizardfolk have the residue of a certain giant hogweed encrusted in their skin, and this hogweed only grows in the western border of the Hool near the Yeomanry border.

DM NOTE: For story purposes, the PCs will not recognize a reference to the “Lizard King.” Recognition and confirmation of who their enemy is will come at a later date.

If the party fails (or cannot attempt) the above checks and doesn't ask (or trust) the words of the lizardfolk, they can wander about for a while until they find the next encounter. If, however, the PCs don't know the general path based on the above, there are more undead (3 more at APL 2 and 6, 5 more at APL 4) in the final encounter (**Encounter Six-A**), as the evil clerics have longer to create them.

Treasure: The lizardfolk were carrying a cache of weapons, armor, and minor magic taken from the Brazen Blade members that can be easily located after the creatures are dispatched (Search DC 10). This cache includes 600 gp worth of assorted Keoish currency, 10 longswords, 5 greatswords, and 5 darkwood bucklers. The cache also contained 3 *potions of cure light wounds*. At APL 4, a +1 *darkwood buckler* is also present. At APL 6, a +1 *vicious longsword* is present as well. The PCs can also recover the lizardfolk's shields.

Encounter Four-A: Marshgrove Interlude

The PCs can either move directly west toward the lands now controlled by the new Lizard King and his followers, or they can move in a different direction. Either way they meet up with this encounter, although if they choose to move any direction other than due west, there are more undead (as mentioned in **Encounter Two-A**, 3 more at APL 2 and 6, 5 more at APL 4) in the final encounter (**Encounter Six-A**), as the evil clerics have longer to create them.

After traveling a bit into marshland that gets wetter and denser, the PCs see in the distance a lizardfolk wearing all the fetishes and scarring of a Fleshroast lizardfolk. He stares off to the west and does not notice the PCs.

The terrain gets wetter and wetter, forcing a march through deepening muck. The mire sucks at boots and conceals whatever could be lurking beneath. Suddenly, ahead of you, a lizardfolk sporting the fetishes and scarring of the lizardfolk you encountered previously stands peering west, his

back to you. It is impossible to see what he is looking at.

Although this lizardfolk is disguised as a member of the Fleshroast tribe, he is really a spy who belongs to the neutral-aligned Marshgrove tribe.

🐉 **Schussesie (SHUS-sess-see):** Male Lizardfolk Ftr3; hp 40 (currently 32).

When the Lizardfolk tribes moved locations, Schussesie notified the Marshgrove lizardfolk and planned a meeting with Szississ (si-ZISS-iss), the daughter of the druid leader of the Marshgrove tribe, Sselyuuna (se-sel-YOON-uh). He informed her of the change in the beliefs of the Fleshroast and Deathcroak tribes based on the rumor that Sakatha the Lizard King has rose again.

Together, they decided to investigate if this rumor is true. They were spotted by the evil lizardfolk: Szississ was captured and Schussesie left to die in an acid sand pit. He was able to escape just as the party approaches, and now he looks west and considers his options for rescuing her.

If Schussesie hears any PCs approach he turns, he drops his weapon, and tells the PCs in sibilant Common that he is no threat to them. He also warns, if the PCs don't attack him immediately, approaching PCs of the 25 foot diameter circular acid sand pit directly between them and him.

All APLs 2 (EL 2)

🦋 **Acid Sand Trap:** CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; DC 15 Reflex save avoids; 1d4 acid per round and possible drowning; multiple targets (25 foot square); Search DC 20. Disable Device n/a.

If a PC (or several PCs) falls into the pit, have them immediately make a Survival check (DC 12 + APL). A successful check alerts them to the fact that they are in a variety of quicksand, and thrashing around only makes matters worse. See the DMG, page 88 for details on quicksand.

It is possible that the PCs might kill Schussesie before he has a chance to surrender. If that happens, they do not get the chance to speak with him, but they are still contacted by Rassshsk (RASS-shisk) and the PCs from **Track B**, as described below.

The lizardfolk before you has dropped his weapon and shield, raising his hands. He may look like a Fleshroast tribe lizardfolk, but he speaks Common. “Peace. I am one of peace. I spy on Fleshroast and Deathcroak for Sselyuuna.”

Sselyuuna is the leader of the Marshgrove tribe and was met in the modules **Warts and All** and **Old Secrets Never Die**.

From this point on, he can recount the following:

- Using an ivory key, the shamans of Sess'Innek entered the Hool Beacon and communed with a mighty black dragon that they believed to be the avatar of their deity. That key has been lost, and the shamans have been unable to communicate with the avatar. (DM Note: Baltron, in his black dragon form, was believed to be an avatar of Sess'Innek, as detailed in **KEO3-07 Old Secrets Never Die**.)
- The shamans, having been held back from attacking by the avatar's orders, took matters into their own hands. A massive attack was being planned on Haven, Kimberton, and all of Nume Eor, but the attack was called off at the behest of the Lizard King. A few dissenting shamans were found with their throats cut and drained of blood; the rest of the shamans fell in line and are now loyal to the Lizard King.
- He has not seen this so-called Lizard King, but the leaders of the Deathcroak and Fleshroast tribes certainly believe he exists. He is rumored to command the services of a black dragon of huge size. (DM NOTE: The PCs may believe that this dragon is Baltron; it is not. It is the dragon Aulicus, who was spotted early in 594 CY landing in Nirole Dra to deliver a cryptic prophecy to the King)
- The Foulwater tribe has broken away and gone east to worship Sess'Innek at the Beacon. They are the least primitive of the three evil tribes.
- Sselyuuna's daughter Szississ met him to take his report, but they were spotted and she was captured. They headed west, deeper into the area supposedly controlled by the Lizard King.
- All the evil tribes have been growing, especially now since these reports of the return of the Lizard King. Together, the Fleshroast and Deathcroak tribes number over two thousand strong, and that is just in this area. Hundreds or thousands more may inhabit the swamp at other locations.

After the PCs have spoken with Schussesie and learned everything they can, a voice from nowhere whispers in Draconic.

"Schussesie, what news? Where is Szississ?"

This is the beginning of a *scrying* and *message* cast by Rassshssk in **Encounter Four-B (Track B)**. Through this conversation, the PCs of both tracks (or the NPC party) can communicate with each other. The DM can omit the conversation with the NPC party, or other PC party, if the groups are not well synchronized or the DM feels that it will interrupt the flow of the module.

Schussesie reports that Szississ has been captured by the lizardfolk of the Fleshroast tribe, but that a party of trustworthy humans is here to help him retrieve her.

Rassshssk informs Schussesie that Sselyuuna is rapidly approaching his final rest, and all tribe members are being called back for the ceremony of passing.

At this point the PCs can ask questions or speak to one another. The **Track A** PCs can inform the other PCs how the Foulwater tribe is breeding creatures with many eyes and mouths. The **Track B** PCs can report that the Deathcroak tribe lizardfolk have been taking an unhealthy interest in undeath. Again, omit this cross-party exchange if it isn't convenient or practical.

Hearing that Sselyuuna is approaching his final rest, Schusselie is anxious to get back to the tribe's main village. He implores the PCs to find Szississ. She must get back to the lizardfolk village before her father passes, as the future of the tribe relies on Sselyuuna's daughter and her mate Kussshoss being on hand to view the passing of Sselyuuna and receive the last of his wisdom if the Marshgrove tribe hopes to continue to thrive.

Encounter Five-A: Of Dung Beetles and Druids

Following the directions given to them by Schusselie and using the instructions possibly offered by the NPC party or other PC party, the PCs can move deeper into the dangerous environs of the new forces of the Lizard King.

In the distance is only more ankle deep, putrid-smelling swamp water. However, peering closer, you note something out of the ordinary: a huge mound. It's hard to say what the mound is composed of, but atop it is the crumpled form of a lizardfolk.

The Marshgrove tribe lizardfolk lying atop this fifteen-foot square pile of rotting carcasses and refuse is Szississ. She is currently stable but at -1 hit points. In order to speak with her, the PCs have to give her some sort of magical healing. If the PCs have no magical healing available, a Heal check (DC 20) brings her back to consciousness, and 0 hp.

Creatures: Buried in their nest amidst the rotting meat are giant bombardier beetles. These beetles are bred and raised by the Fleshroast tribe and used as guardians of their tribal land. To spot the beetles within the pile of rotting flesh and refuse, a PC must be within ten feet of the pile and make a DC 13 Spot check. PCs who come within that distance and fail the Spot check are surprised when the beetles burst forth from the pile in a shower of dung and attack. Moving through the pile of rotting flesh and refuse is not possible.

APL 2 (EL 4)

 **Giant Bombardier Beetles (2):** hp 15 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

🦟 **Giant Bombardier Beetles** (4): hp 15 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🦟 **Advanced Giant Bombardier Beetles** (3): hp 54 each; see **Appendix One**.

Treasure: Buried within the pile of rotting meat is a *small masterwork cold iron heavy mace* that was the weapon of a gnomish cleric of Segojan Earthcaller, the gnomish god of earth and nature. The head of the mace is shaped like a large gemstone.

Development: If the PCs can defeat the beetles and heal Szississ, she speaks with them. She was able to get close enough to the evil lizardfolk to hear what they were saying before they spotted and attacked her. They were talking about “The Changing,” and how they hoped they would be one of the first warriors to undergo “The Changing” in the name of the Lizard King.

🦟 **Szississ:** Female Lizardfolk Drd5; hp 35 (currently – 1).

If the PCs rescue and heal Szississ, she thanks them and explains to them that she was questioned by the Fleshroast lizardfolk and then left on the refuse pile as food for the beetles. She tells them she plans to move forward and try to learn what the evil tribes are planning. Even if fully healed, she desires to return to her village and report her findings to her father, Sselyuuna. If the PCs mention her father’s condition, she is visibly shaken. She admits that she must return to the village immediately. She asks the PCs if they will continue on in her place, then bring the news to the village. She offers them a reward more valuable than gold if they will do this, but she doesn’t have time to elaborate. She gives directions to the main Marshgrove village, changes form into a marsh tern and flies away.

Encounter Six-A: “There Are No Undead In Keoland!”

The PCs may wish to continue on, at Szississ’ request, to see if they can confirm or deny the existence of the Lizard King. Continuing west leads to thickening swamp flora—so thick that it is difficult to see more than ten feet ahead.

As you travel westward and deeper into increasingly thickening foliage of the Hool, the signs of lizardfolk habitation become more frequent: lizardfolk tracks, fires, discarded remains, broken tools, and more.

If there is time, take this opportunity to scare the PCs with some potential encounters. Have them spot or hear huge lizardfolk patrols in the distance, many more lizardfolk than they could hope to attack. Pretend to roll

to see if the PCs are seen or heard, but do not allow the lizards to notice them. Let the PCs continue forward, but give the impression that they are going very deep into enemy territory. After filling them with fear and the sense that they are getting in over their heads, read the following:

To the west, a distant sound can be heard over the normal marsh noises. A series of low booms is followed by a long, slow, but incredibly loud hissing. This pattern repeats itself several times. You find yourselves three hundred feet from a clearing.

Assuming the PCs move forward, read the following:

The clearing in front of you is many yards in diameter. The outer ring of the clearing is water too deep to walk in. In the center of the clearing is an enormous muddy mound. Into it is built a huge stone platform, which seems to travel back into the mound.

While the structure itself may be intimidating, it pales in comparison to what you see on and around the stone platform. Hundreds of chanting, hissing lizardfolk stand in front of the platform. On the platform itself, dozens of lizardfolk bang drums while others, wearing colorful feathers and mummified crocodile claws, stand and chant to the crowd. Lizardfolk stand in lines leading up to the chanters.

Then you see what is really happening: the lines move forward; a chanter takes a dagger and slits the throat of the lizardfolk in front of him; the lizardfolk falls to the ground; the chanter bends down and touches the newly dead lizardfolk; that lizardfolk stands up and shuffles away. On another part of the platform, it looks like some lizardfolk are being bitten on the neck by other lizardfolk.

Near that group, a trio of humans have been hung upside-down by vines, and are bleeding freely into a cauldron. You briefly spy a muscled and regal-looking lizard-man stepping out of the cauldron. A pair of females drapes him with a white robe, which immediately soaks through with crimson. He takes three steps and both his form and the robe dissolve into an evil-looking mist before disappearing.

Both Fleshroast and Deathcroak tribes are present, although only Deathcroak lizardfolk are up on the stage. This is no illusion - evil lizardfolk clerics are creating undead lizardfolk.

Let the PCs see a bit more of the ritual, so that they get the idea of what is happening. Then they are spotted, smelled, sensed, or heard by someone, who runs to the platform and informs a cleric. Read the following:

Suddenly the chanting and drumming stops, someone on the platform speaks, and suddenly every pair of lizardfolk eyes turns and looks directly at you. There is a moment where deathly silence fills

the swamp, and then the several hundred lizardfolk all start running in your direction.

Hopefully the PCs will take the hint that it is now time to leave. As long as the PCs waste no time in running away, they will only encounter one undead patrol, detailed below. Give the PCs every opportunity to flee, but if they linger too long, they are captured by the immense force of undead and all are slain.

Creatures: The lizardfolk priests have sent out some zombie patrols, and this one is in the proximity of the PCs after they flee the scene of the rituals.

APL 2 (EL 4)

☛ **Deathcroak Clan Zombies (6):** hp 21 each; see **Appendix One**.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **Deathcroak Clan Zombies (11):** hp 21 each; see **Appendix One**.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **Giant Crocodile Zombies (6):** hp 66 each; see **Appendix One**.

Tactics: As the PCs flee, remember that the marsh is thick and visibility is only ten feet. Hence, the PCs will run headlong into the encounter. If the PCs simply run away, they can probably do so without having to fight, so give them full xp for this encounter, although they will miss out on some of the treasure.

Treasure: Each of the creatures is decorated with gold, silver, and gems stuck and pierced into their bodies.

Developments: The PCs can take the time to fight this encounter, but after that they should flee. Describe the lizardfolk as being right behind them at varying times during their flight. If the PCs don't flee in a reasonable amount of time, they will continue to encounter zombie patrols as above, adding two creatures to the patrols each time they encounter one. They should not try to hide, wait around, or delay their retreat in any significant way. If the PCs are captured, they are killed and left to rot (recoverable death, should anyone be brave enough to return...)

After the PCs flee the area, they are free to meet the Marshgrove tribe at their village. Go to **Encounter Seven**.

Track B – APLs 8-12

Encounter Two-B: Demetrios' Hut

The last known residence of Demetrios was a hut in the Hool Marsh southeast of Haven. This area of the Hool is a little less dangerous and traversable than others, but it is

still impossible to bring mounts and other beasts that need dry land to walk. As the Viscount and King were able to give a general location of Demetrios' abode, finding it is only slightly difficult.

The dense foliage and thick mud of the Hool finally give way to clear, solid ground. You are on edge of a clearing, in the middle of which is a hut. The hut is roughly thirty feet square, with a five-foot wide porch. On it sits an incredibly old human man in a rocking chair. Also on the porch are two lizardfolk. They are moving slowly, as if trying to be stealthy. One creeps toward the door of the hut, and the other moves toward the human. The human is not moving, and his eyes are closed.

The clearing is roughly ninety feet in diameter, with the hut in the center. The two lizardfolk on the porch are stained different colors, marking them as members of the Foulwater tribe. They are normal lizardfolk, as per the *Monster Manual*. The lizardfolk rogues are waiting in hiding at the edge of the clearing, waiting for their two brethren to scout out the area and look for information on the ferlow seed.

APL 8 (EL 9)

☛ **Foulwater Lizardfolk Rogues (3):** Male Lizardfolk Rog5; hp 51 each; see **Appendix One**.

☛ **Foulwater Lizardfolk (2):** Male Lizardfolk; hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 11)

☛ **Foulwater Lizardfolk Rogues (6):** Male Lizardfolk Rog5; hp 51 each; see **Appendix One**.

☛ **Foulwater Lizardfolk (2):** Male Lizardfolk; hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 13)

☛ **Foulwater Lizardfolk Rogues (6):** Male Lizardfolk Rog7; hp 64 each; see **Appendix One**.

☛ **Foulwater Lizardfolk (2):** Male Lizardfolk; hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The PCs can get the jump on the two lizardfolk on the porch, but the rogue lizardfolk hiding on the edge of the clearing most likely see them and have time to prepare before the PCs are aware of them (give the PCs a Spot check only if they actively look for additional lizardfolk hiding nearby rather than race to save the human). If the hiding rogue lizardfolk do see the PCs enter the clearing, they drink their *potions of invisibility* (or use *scrolls of greater invisibility*) and *potions of greater magic fang* +3 and then attempt to sneak attack with claw and bite as much as possible, using flanking as needed. Also, the rogues may have some magic items that they can attempt to use with the Use Magic Device skill. The

lizardfolk fight to the death. If questioned, they only admit to looking for information on the ferlow seed.

Treasure: Each of the lizards is decorated with small trinkets of precious metal and stone. They also each have potions plus one or two other unique magic items. Remember to cross off any items or charges used by the rogues.

Development: Throughout the battle, no matter what happens, Demetrios remains asleep. *Fireballs*, *earthquakes*, and *sound bursts* may go off around him, but he just sleeps. (On the off chance he actually gets clipped by something, assume he's shielded in some fashion, or gets blasted out of the way – etc.)

After the PCs have dispatched the lizardfolk, they may check on him. If anyone touches him or whispers to him at a close distance, he bolts out of his rocking chair and delivers a swift kick to the PCs shins (no damage, just for comic effect).

Once he is awake, Demetrios peers around and says loudly:

“Eh. What’re you doing in my swamp? You must be here to answer my call for slopboys to feed my pigs. I’ll show you where the buckets are.”

♣ **Demetrios the Sage:** Human Male Wiz5/Exp10; hp 40.

Demetrios is venerable, and his final days are at hand. He mostly just wants to be left alone, but he still gets a bit excited with the prospect of talking about the Hool Marsh. He is going deaf, so PCs have to talk very loudly. He is NOT senile, NOT cantankerous, and NOT feisty. He is physically ancient but mentally acute.

Demetrios can tell the PCs the following if they ask him the right questions:

- Demetrios has lived in the swamp most of his life, having moved from Nirole Dra as a young man.
- He was here when the Cult of the Black Flame inhabited the Keoish keep, when Baltron occupied the keep, and after the Beacon was lit.
- He knows that the Cult of the Black Flame was trying to unleash some extra-planar being through the use of black fire. Baltron was hoping to use their work to harness the spirit of the swamp instead.
- The ferlow seed only grows in the swamp, and it has properties that make it among the only things, beside stone, that resists the black flame. The black flame burns cold, and is incredibly dangerous; more so than regular fire, as it burns virtually anything.

- These lizardfolk have been skulking about lately, but he has never known them to come this close.

If the PCs tell him that a ferlow seed is both the cause of the Beacon’s light and the prison that is holding in Baltron and a powerful gateway, he gets very enthusiastic:

“Yes, I KNEW the ferlow seed had incredible powers. It only makes sense that all that power in one tiny seed could create that light. And it is the perfect receptacle to hold the black flame. And making it a pocket dimension - brilliant! Sheer brilliance!”

“But how to destroy it, my friends. Aye, there’s the rub, as the saying goes. It would take something of great hardness, touched by the planar magic of House Malhel as well as the spirit of the swamp. I’m afraid your trip here might be for naught, my friends... I can’t think of anything that fits the bill.”

The sage can supply other information as you see fit, based on the contents of the descriptions of past “Death in the Hool” scenarios.

The key here is mentioning the dragon’s tooth used in the teleportation. Allow the PCs a few minutes to think it over, and if it doesn’t look like they will suggest it on their own, allow them to make various checks – Int, Knowledge (the Planes) or Knowledge (arcana) are all viable. PCs that played in **KEO3-07 Old Secrets Never Die** would certainly know, as would a Dreadwalker.

Assuming someone gets a reasonably good result on their check (DM’s discretion), they will recall that the dragon’s tooth (the ivory key presented to the PCs by Kimbertos) is quite strong and was created (as was Baltron’s new form) as a byproduct of the same Malhel magic that destroyed the Beacon.

“OUTSTANDING, my friends! This tooth is just what you need! That beast’s tooth can survive nearly any blow, and its use as a key to the teleporter means it holds no small amount of Malhel plane-magic! All you need do is use it to smash that little seed, and voila! No more Beacon!”

After gaining the information, the PCs need to get the ferlow seed – presently suspended in the Beacon’s signal tower. As detailed in **KEO3-07 Old Secrets Never Die**, the seed emits a wall of force that, along with the encamped army of swamp creatures around it, makes using the teleporter pads the only safe way in or out of the beacon.

Demetrios tells them that he believes one of the teleporting stones into the Beacon is located a day’s travel southeast of his shack. (This is the one that was the SWAMP teleporter site in the previous module – located in a small domed structure ringed by a lizardfolk camp.)

Encounter Three-B: Tooth and Nail

Assuming the PCs head for the teleporter that Demetrios mentions to them (or they go to another encountered in previous scenarios), they can travel deeper into the swamp. When they get to the teleporter, they will see the Beacon light, a constant source of direction in the marsh, go out. (This is the Foulwater lizardfolk retrieving the ferlow seed from the Tower.) Soon after the PCs will arrive at the teleporter to see a gruesome sight.

Using the eldritch emerald light of the Hool Beacon as a compass, you proceed southeast towards the swamp teleporter – the only accessible way to enter the warded and guarded Hool Beacon. The evil radiance of the ferlow seed fills you with a sense of dread.

You arrive a day later at the teleporter. It is a round platform raised six inches off the ground and fifteen feet in diameter, rests on a patch of dry ground in the marsh. A series of pillars rings the circle, holding a cap-shaped dome of stone over the teleporter. The camp is deserted, and there are signs of a pitched battle. Scattered around the teleporter are the broken bodies of several Foulwater lizardfolk and barefoot humans dressed in red robes.

As you take in the scene, something far more ominous occurs. The emerald light cast from the beacon wavers and shimmers. Silhouetted in the distance, you can make out the single form of a lizardfolk who has apparently taken the source of the beacon's light. You can barely make out the humanoid handing it to someone before his body shrivels and tumbles to earth. Screams and catcalls, presumably from the gathered host of marsh-creatures worshipping the beacon's light, can be seen heard at this distance. A moment later, for the first time in decades, the mighty beacon lies dark.

DM NOTE: Ssessiness (a mystic theurge of the Foulwater tribe: see **Encounter Six-B**) has discovered a way to safely circumvent the aging properties of the light shed by the ferlow seed. Using a *darkness* spell to quell the seed's radiance, he stays in total darkness and moves the object into a *bag of holding*, sealing it inside. The lizardfolk who handed him the seed was not so lucky.

Both the Foulwater tribe and the Scarlet Brotherhood have an interest in recovering the ferlow seed that contains Baltron and the black flame brazier. They battled here, and all but three members of the Foulwater tribe were killed (one died retrieving the seed, the others are in **Encounter Six-B**), as were all the Scarlet Brotherhood monks.

Searching the area reveals that the lizardfolk and monks killed one another. A PC with the Track feat may make a Survival check (DC 10+ APL) to observe three sets of

lizardfolk footprints recently (within two hours) stood on the teleporter. Nothing of value has been left at the site.

After the PCs have searched the area, read the following:

A pelican slowly circles above you, and then it squawks and descends toward you. As it lands on the ground near you, the form shimmers until it becomes that of a lizardfolk. He bears no markings of the evil lizardfolk tribes. "Yessss," he hisses. "They were here. Reveal yourselves." As he says that, eight other lizardfolk come into view: some changing from animal form, others coming out of their concealed hiding places. All keep their hands well away from the crude weapons at their sides.

This lizardfolk is Rassshssk, whom the PCs may have met previously in **Royal Rescue**. He was a spy for the Marshgrove tribe living with the evil tribes.

This is what Rassshssk can tell the PCs:

- The Foulwater tribe has left its allegiance with the other two tribes. Those two tribes have followed rumors that the mysterious Lizard King has rose again. The Foulwater tribe, on the other hand, believes it is Sess'Innek's will to harness and use the power that can be found at the Beacon against the humans of Keoland.
- The Foulwater tribe has learned of the great power held in the ferlow seed creating the Beacon's light. They now actively pursue that seed and ways to use it. Since the beacon light has gone out, they must have succeeded in taking it.
- The Deathcroak tribe has been making inquiries into the powers bestowed upon the undead. This is very unsettling, even for worshippers of Sess'Innek.
- Sad news from the Marshgrove village - Sselyuuna, the leader of the Marshgrove tribe, has fallen ill and is being prepared for his final passing. It is imperative that all members of the tribe return to the village immediately to take part in the Ritual of Passing. Kusshoss is mate to Sselyuuna's only daughter, Szississ. Thus, Szississ and Kusshoss must be at the ritual if the Blessings of Semuanya are to be transferred from the old leader to the new.

Rassshssk then asks the PCs to wait while he attempts to contact Szississ with this information via scrying. He moves to a pool of water in the marshy ground and casts the spell, which takes an hour. While he does this, the rest of the lizardfolk offer to tend to the wounds of the PCs and give them nourishment. (The lizardfolk have enough healing between them to completely heal all the PCs.)

After the spell is completed, another lizardfolk comes forward and casts a *message* spell through the scrying. This allows Rassshsk to communicate with Schussesie, as detailed in **Encounter Four-A**. The PCs can thus trade information: **Track A** PCs can learn about the possibility that undeath will be involved in the final encounter, and **Track B** PCs can learn that the Foulwater tribe has been breeding abominations with many eyes and mouths. The DM can omit the conversation with the NPC party, or other PC party, if the groups are not well synchronized or the DM feels that it will interrupt the flow of the scenario.

After the scrying is complete, Rassshsk asks the PCs to enter the Beacon via the teleporter and try to stop the Foulwater lizardfolk.

Two runes in ancient Suel appear on the teleporter (“noudeng” – an anagram of the Suloise word for “dungeon”, and “wrote”, an anagram for “tower”). The “tower” rune has been defaced and ruined, and the teleporter key (the dragon’s tooth) is no longer functional. On the other hand, the “dungeon” rune has been restored. There is only one place the PCs can go using the teleporter and the dragon tooth key (as per **Old Secrets Never Die**): the dungeon.

The teleporters are operated as follows: The dragon’s tooth (the ivory spike given to the PCs by the Viscount) is inserted, base-first, into a socket in the center of the teleporter. The tooth may be twisted in the socket to angle the curve of the tooth towards a set of runes. An arrow of light appears as the tooth is twisted. When the arrow of light points to a rune, the entire rune glows and begins to flash. Three rounds (18 seconds) later, anyone on or touching the teleporter pad is transported to the destination chosen.

NOTE: PCs who have played **Old Secrets Never Die** will recollect that the dungeon teleporter did not function. Ssessiness has disabled the tower teleporter, to prevent the “heathen” lizardfolk from visiting the false avatar of Sess’Innek, Baltron.

Encounter Four-B: Baltron’s Dungeon

See **DM Aids: Map #1**.

Time has not been good to the dungeons below the Beacon’s keep. Most of it is in rubble, but at least one of the chambers is still intact. Read the following when the PCs teleport into the dungeon:

Spots flash before your eyes, then you are standing on a similar teleporting platform within a stone room. There is light in the room, which is thirty feet square. The platform is ten feet in diameter and occupies the center of the room. The only legible runes on the platform spell “WROTE” and “PAWMS” in ancient Suel.

(The Tower [“Wrote”] is no longer accessible, as the lizardfolk went there and then disabled the teleporter at that location after grabbing the ferlow seed. “Pawms” takes the PCs back to the swamp where they just were.)

Any PCs that have played **Old Secrets Never Die** will doubtless have deduced the function of, and the solutions to, these anagrams. The DM should certainly remind the player of the solution if they do not recollect it, but their *character* would know.

Ssessiness has placed an *alarm* spell (mental ping) on the teleporter itself, so he will be aware when someone has entered the dungeon. He can then place some long-term buff spells on himself and his bodyguard.

DM’s Note: Begin to track the amount of game-time PCs spend in the dungeon; this will be critical in determining the events of **Encounter Six-B**. Also, it is important that the judge find out who is carrying light sources and who isn’t, for while this room is lit, the room at the bottom of the pit/slide trap is not. A PC sliding into the room with the leechwalkers is going to be engulfed in natural darkness while having to deal with the aberrations.

As the PCs adjust to being teleported, you can read them the room description:

Now that your eyes have adjusted, you can see this room is crumbling. Four doorways that once led out of the room are blocked with rubble. Statues in each corner of the room have been chipped and crumbled with time and wear. Only the statue in the northeast corner, one depicting a xorn, is still standing relatively intact. Carvings and other decorations that may have once adorned the walls are doors are worn away, smashed, or crumbled. A series of ominous holes in the floor twist, snake-like, into the earth.

The holes (20 foot deep pits that end in slides) are located on the blocks marked on the map. The slides twist and turn downwards for 50 feet. All of the slides funnel into the same vertical shaft that drops the PCs into the center of the forty foot square room on **DM Aids: Map #2 (Encounter Five-B)**. There is not enough leverage within the slide/shaft to break a fall, and PCs can’t stand at the top of the pit and look into the room below (because of the twists and turns of the slide). The shaft’s height varies based on the APL (20 feet at APL 8, 40 feet at APL 10, and 60 feet at APL 12), but the distance from the end of the shaft to the floor of the room beneath it is always 20 feet. PCs who descend in an uncontrolled manner (sliding down and then falling from the shaft, falling from the bottom of the shaft, etc.) will be subject to falling damage from the fall from the shaft to the ground (damage varies based on the height fallen in the shaft).

A person who slides into the room below will be dumped unceremoniously into the center of the leechwalker room. Combat will start two rounds later for that character (since the leechwalkers will essentially be

surprised by the first character). PCs can go down the pits three at a time using the three pit openings. Once ropes are secured, it takes a full-round action to quickly scramble down the rope to the chamber below—simply jumping down is a move action, but falling damage is then a likelihood.

DM Note: If a character falls and/or climbs down the pit alone, immediately remove that player from the table. Deal with the damage the player may take from the fall separately so the other PCs don't know how long the fall is. If any combat takes place, attempt to keep the group still up above from knowing what is going on below unless someone is yelling up. This yelling will alert Ssessiness that enemies are approaching. Remember the room below is completely dark.

Encounter Five-B: Sucker!

See **DM Aids: Map #2**.

Entering this room via the pit above probably means combat starts before the PCs have an opportunity to fully examine the room. After the battle has concluded, read the following description:

This forty foot square room contains no light sources whatsoever. Your light sources reveal stone walls smeared with a blackish substance. As you stare longer, you begin to realize that the smears are really patterns, and the patterns form a larger picture: gigantic flame-like ebon hands closing upon the room's inhabitants. Plain stone benches that once furnished this room are now smashed around the outer walls. A large double door sits slightly ajar on the north wall.

Creatures: These leechwalkers are pets of the lizardfolk, having become quasi-trained by a regimen of regular meals. They are particularly large, cunning, and icky. Note, though, that they are not intelligent and don't rationally employ the concepts of flanking or attacking lightly armored creatures first and foremost, unless it is accidentally.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **Leechwalker:** hp 108; see **Appendix One**.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Leechwalkers (2):** hp 108 each; see **Appendix One**.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **Leechwalkers (4):** hp 108 each; see **Appendix One**.

Tactics: These creatures are particularly fond of the blood of warm-blooded creatures, having been raised on a steady diet of it. Their main goal is to grapple and then spit out the husks of creatures they have completely drained of blood with a “puhtuie.”

The lock on the doors of this chamber has been smashed, but the doors are spiked closed. PCs must make a Strength check (DC 18) or break one of the doors (1.5 inches thick, Hardness 5, 15 hp) to get past.

Encounter Six-B: Splitting Seeds

See **DM Aids: Map #2**.

DM's Note: You must keep track of the rounds that the PCs spend once they enter the dungeon area (**Encounter Four-B**). Once an hour passes, Ssessiness completes the procedure to release the creature from the ferlow seed. If this happens, proceed to **Oops! Too Late!** below. You must also estimate the minutes and rounds, as Ssessiness casts longer enhancement spells on his bodyguard Erazzmuzz when the *alarm* spell goes off as the PCs enter the dungeon, shorter term enhancement spells when they hear the battle between the PCs and the leechwalkers, and short-term ones as they break down the door and come up the hallway. The order and length of those spells is detailed in the Tactics section of this encounter.

Read the following as soon as the PCs have burst or bypassed the doors leading out of the leechwalker room.

Ahead of you is a thirty-five-foot long hallway, faintly lit by torchlight from a large chamber at the end. Within that chamber you can see two lizardfolk. One is a physically imposing specimen who stands protectively in front of his charge, who seems to be a spellcaster of some kind. He is adorned in fetishes of all kinds – feathers, beads, and what looks like a severed human hand.

As the PCs break through the door, Ssessiness uses a *scroll of wall of force* (9th level caster) to place a wall between himself and the PCs. The wall is placed at an angle (as shown by the diagonal line on the map) to allow passage, if necessary, and it keeps PCs in position to be attacked by the enlarged Erazzmuzz. PCs who charge at Ssessiness (by the stone slab) run headlong into the invisible *wall of force* and take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

Creatures: Ssessiness (SESS-ih-ness) is the offspring of the Foulwater tribe chieftain. He is ruthless and completely bent on using Kuss'hoss's blood to split the ferlow seed and release what he believes is the avatar of Sess'Innek. Erazzmuzz (ih-RAZZ-muzz), on the other hand, is a member of a small but elite group of lizardfolk whose sole responsibility is to ensure the safety of their tribal leaders. Erazzmuzz has spent most of his life, and all of Ssessiness's life, guarding the son of the Foulwater tribe chief. They know how to work together to defeat their enemies, as they have many times in the past.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Erazzmuzz:** Male Lizardfolk Mnk9; hp 99; see **Appendix One**.

☛ **Ssessiness:** Male Lizardfolk Clr3/Wiz3/
MysticTheurge1; hp 49; see **Appendix One**.

APL 10 (EL 13)

☛ **Erazzmuzz:** Male Lizardfolk Mnk11; hp 117; see **Appendix One**.

☛ **Ssessiness:** Male Lizardfolk Clr3/Wiz3/
MysticTheurge3; hp 57; see **Appendix One**.

APL 12 (EL 15)

☛ **Erazzmuzz:** Male Lizardfolk Mnk13; hp 135; see **Appendix One**.

☛ **Ssessiness:** Male Lizardfolk Clr3/Wiz3/
MysticTheurge5; hp 64; see **Appendix One**.

Tactics: Ssessiness understands that his best chance of survival is to make Erazzmuzz as powerful as possible. He will enhance him with as many spells as possible. He will also cast *imbue with spell ability* on Erazzmuzz at higher APLs, thus allowing the monk to cast some personal spells on himself at the appropriate time. He can also counterspell to keep the monk safe, especially from *dispel magic*. Below are some tactical suggestions for different APLs.

APL 8: Ssessiness casts *mage armor* on Erazzmuzz before they enter the dungeon, as this lasts several hours. This spell is included in the stat block. When the alarm sounds, Ssessiness casts *bull's strength*, *owl's wisdom*, *cat's grace*, *enlarge person*, and *invisibility* on the monk. These last 4 minutes. After the battle with the leechwalkers ends, he uses the scroll to put up the *wall of force*. The *wall of force* lasts 8 rounds. Ssessiness can also cast *silence* on his familiar (bat), who flies close to spellcasters to ruin their verbal spells. When the spellcaster moves, the familiar follows that spellcaster. *Shield* should be the first spell Ssessiness casts on himself.

APL 10: Ssessiness casts *mage armor* on Erazzmuzz before they enter the dungeon, as this last several hours. These spells are included in the stat block. When the alarm sound alerts Ssessiness, he casts *bull's strength*, *owl's wisdom*, *cat's grace*, *enlarge person*, *invisibility*, and *silence* on the monk. These last 6 minutes. Finally, after the sounds of battle in the far room die down, Ssessiness casts *haste* on the monk, then uses the scroll to put up the *wall of force*. The *wall of force* lasts 8 rounds. Ssessiness can also cast *silence* on his familiar (bat), who flies close to spellcasters to ruin their verbal spells. When the spellcaster moves, the familiar follows that spellcaster. *Shield* should be the first spell Ssessiness casts on himself.

APL 12: Ssessiness casts *mage armor* and *imbue with spell ability* on Erazzmuzz before they enter the dungeon, as these last several hours. These spells are included in the stat block. If and when the *alarm* spell goes off, Ssessiness casts *freedom of movement*, *heroism*, and *spell immunity* (blocking *scorching ray* and *enervation*) on the

monk, who drinks his *barkskin* potion and casts *resist elements* [sonic] via *imbue with spell ability*. These last 80 minutes or more—longer than the hour it takes to split the seed. Then he casts *bull's strength*, *owl's wisdom*, *cat's grace*, and *enlarge person* on the monk, as Erazzmuzz casts *shield of faith* on himself via *imbue with spell ability*. These last 8 minutes. Finally, after the sounds of battle in the far room die down, Ssessiness casts *haste* and *greater invisibility* on the monk, then uses the scroll to put up the *wall of force*. At the same time, Erazzmuzz casts *sanctuary* on himself via *imbue with spell ability*. These spells last 8 rounds. Ssessiness begins the encounter with a *mage armor* spell up included in stat block, and he buffs himself as time and opportunity permits, but he certainly concentrates on empowering his bodyguard first. He also casts *invisibility* and *silence* on his familiar (bat), who flies close to spellcasters to ruin their verbal spells. When the spellcaster moves, the familiar follows that spellcaster. *Shield* should be the first spell Ssessiness casts on himself, and he will use confusion if he can target enough people.

The stat blocks take into account only the *mage armor*s and the *barkskin* potion.

Further Tactical Notes: Please remember that casting an enhancement spell has multiple effects on a character, especially a monk. Casting an *owl's wisdom*, for example, not only increases Will saves, but it also increases a monk armor class, the DC on the stunning fist, spot and listen checks, etc. Similarly, casting *enlarge person* on a monk gives that monk reach, increases the amount of damage done by an unarmed strike, increases strength, decreases dexterity, etc. A fully buffed monk, especially a lizardfolk monk, is an incredibly dangerous foe. Be sure to calculate stats once the buff spells are finalized. Without the buff spells this encounter is not very dangerous. With the buff spells properly judged, this encounter is worthy of being the final encounter in the “Death in the Hool” series. Ssessiness knows that a *dispel magic* can undo his buffs, so he will stay readied to counterspell any *dispel magic* castings.

Treasure: The possessions of the lizardfolk here are the only treasure.

Developments: Assuming the PCs can defeat Erazzmuzz and Ssessiness before the hour is up after they enter the dungeon, they still have to deal with the ferlow seed. The seed has already started to split, so the only way to keep the slime lord from escaping the ferlow seed is to smash it with the dragon's tooth.

The seed is currently safely hidden inside the *bag of holding* that Ssessiness carries. If the seed's radiance is allowed to spill out of the bag, PCs will find themselves aging one month for every round of exposure. This can be alleviated if the light is countered with *darkness* or the like. Protective force effects (like *Otiluke's resilient sphere* or *wall of force*, but not *mage armor*) also shield PCs from the aging effects.

IMPORTANT DM NOTE: The *bag of holding* will be trembling as the seed begins to split. IT WILL BE VERY

OBVIOUS WHERE THE SEED IS LOCATED, AND THAT IT IS READY TO RUPTURE IN SOME FASHION!

If the PCs fail to get to the seed in time, or fail to destroy the seed using the dragon's tooth key (for whatever reason), go to the **Oops! Too Late!** below.

If the PCs smash the seed with the dragon's tooth:

Your feel a pang of remorse as you remember Baltron, guarding the portal within the tiny seed before you. But what must be done is clear. You bring the blunt end of the tooth down with a crack on the seed. There is an explosion of light and a sound like that of wood cracking. You smell ozone, and your fingers grow numb. The tooth drops from your deadened fingers, and you watch as a kaleidoscope of energy washes into the tooth, which glows with energy. The seed disintegrates. The pocket dimension, and the threat to the Kingdom of Keoland, is over.

Notes on the lizardfolk theurge's body explains how he used a *darkness* spell to quell the aging light of the seed long enough to deposit it safely into his bag of holding.

A secret door in the center of the wall behind the slab can take the PCs back to the surface. The beacon has been extinguished, and the energy shield around the keep (as detailed in **Predators and Prey**) is gone. Proceed to **Encounter Seven**.

Oops! Too Late!

The exact contents of this conclusion will depend on where the characters are when the seed splits and the slime lord emerges.

If the PCs are in the dungeon, but NOT in the final chamber, read the following:

Suddenly, a great rumbling shakes the room. In the distance, you hear the shrieking of a hundred high-pitched wails. As quickly as the shrieking began, it ends. The rumbling, however, becomes more intense. You are thrown to the ground as the room is blown completely off the room, exposing you to the sky above. A colossal foot made of a mud-like substance crashes to the ground next to you. A creature, taller than any giant you have ever seen, taller almost than a mountain, lumbers away into the swamp. You are left with only the resounding echo of a slurping, gurgling sound that might have been laughter.

Go on to **Encounter Seven**.

If the PCs are in the dungeon, and ARE in the final chamber, read the following:

Suddenly, a great rumbling shakes the room. From the seed you hear the shrieking of a hundred high-pitched wails. As quickly as the shrieking began, it ends. The seed explodes open and the room fills

with a mud that smashes you back against the wall and chokes you. The mud then moves away from you as the roof explodes upward, the ceiling and all the earth above it swept away like dust. A creature, taller than any giant you have ever seen, taller almost than a mountain, lumbers away into the swamp. You are left with only the resounding echo of a slurping, gurgling sound that might have been laughter.

Go on to **Encounter Seven**.

Encounter Seven: Hope, Entwined

If this game is being run as a mini-interactive, the PCs from both tracks can be brought back together now, as they are meeting at the Marshgrove village. If not, the NPC party that undertook the other track's mission has succeeded.

The Marshgrove village is extremely well hidden deep in the densest and most inhospitable part of the Hool. The journey has been unpleasant and dangerous, but waiting lizardfolk guides helped you along the way as needed.

Although the village is neither large nor particularly civilized, it does contain a few shelters, pieces of mechanical equipment, and structures recognizable as medical facilities, storage areas, workshops, and meeting places. Even more striking are the huge number of lizardfolk here—many more than would normally fit in the village. It seems that travelers from far abroad have come to witness the final passing of Sselyuuna.

If the PCs are returning with Szississ, lizardfolk will rush forward and tell him or her in Draconic that Sselyuuna has been prepared for his final passing, and that the ceremony will have to take place shortly. The PCs will be escorted to a shelter, given food and drink, healed by some of the Marshgrove druids, and asked to wait. In the shelter, however, is a potentially familiar face:

Within the mud shelter lays an elven man showing signs of recent battle. Although his scars and bruises are fresh, he sits up with great difficulty. Greetings, friends. I am Vayleran Moonchild."

PCs might have met him in the modules **Evil in the Woods**, **Stuck in a Moment**, **Predators and Prey**, or **Old Secrets Never Die**. If this is the case, Vayleran will embrace them and address them by name. Either way, Vayleran will tell them the following:

- A contingent of Dreadwalkers were escorting a Keoish herald through the swamp to visit first the Wastrian conclave, and then Ob Noqui, the newly discovered home of some elves living in the Hool.
- When the Dreadwalkers arrived at the Conclave, they realized that the Wastriggi had

captured a group of Ob Noqui elves that wandered too close to the Conclave.

- When the Dreadwalkers insisted that the Wastriggi release the elves, the humans of the Conclave (along with their amphibian pets) attacked and killed the herald and most of the Dreadwalkers.
- Vayleran was able to escape with the life, but it is now obvious that the Wastriggi and their leader are insane. Not only is their help unlikely in opening a supply line to Westkeep, but they also present a hindrance to Keoish efforts in the Hool.
- As soon as Vayleran is healed completely, he needs to report back to his Dreadwalker superiors about this terrible turn of events.

When the final passing of Sselyuuna is about to begin, the PCs are led into the marsh.

Lying in the mud, wrapped in vines and broad leaves, is Sselyuuna. He is alive, but he is not well. He calls you over to him. "Greetings, mammal-folk. You and your people have again helped me and mine, and again I owe you thanks. My time here has ended, and I go now to visit Semuanya in the land of bounty. But my daughter and her mate will not forget your bravery and kindness in assisting us. After my passing is complete, they will speak to you about how they might begin to repay you."

The PCs are led back to the shelter while the ritual of final passing takes place. It is essentially a funeral service where Sselyuuna's body is weighed down and sunk in the marsh. His daughter Szississ' chosen mate, Kussboss, takes on the role of leader of the Marshgrove tribe. When the ceremony concludes, Kussboss comes to see the PCs.

Kussboss enters the shelter, trailed by Szississ. He now wears the garb that was previously worn by Sselyuuna. "Our great leader has gone to be with Semuanya. This is a time for much celebration. However, we have other issues to discuss before that happens." The two lizardfolk sit down on the floor of the shelter.

This time it is Szississ who speaks. "Our people once lived in the great forest to the north – the one you call the Dreadwood. This was when man first entered there. We warred with the web-spinners who threatened our way of life. As the fighting grew more intense, both sides turned to the dark magic of the infernal to seek aid and strength. In doing so, our people become no better than the spider-kin. Some of us recognized that, and we urged our brethren to stop their use of gate-magic to bring into our home denizens of the darkness. We were ignored."

"The forest grew darker and darker as more gates were opened, allowing more terrain to be lost to the things that were called through the gates to fight on our behalf. A group of humans then came to us, claiming to act on our behalf in the war. They studied with us, learned the ways that we used to open these gates, and shared their own magic with us. You know those humans as..." She stumbles over the unfamiliar word, "... Malhel. Finally, we who saw what this terrible magic was doing to our home took a stand. We first tried to close the gates using methods we had been studying, then, when that failed, we fled south and east. Some of us settled here, while others found habitable areas on the coast of the great sea – Saltmarsh, I believe you call it."

She pauses, looks at Kussboss, and then continues. "Our brethren who stayed and fought continued to employ fiendish forces. Not only did they lose the war with the spider-kin, but they also became corrupted by the allies—both human and demonic—who assisted them in the war. The tribes you see today are descendants of those who failed to see how the evil planar alliances they formed would destroy them in the end. We of the Marshgrove are descendants of the lizardfolk who fled after trying to stop them."

Kussboss nods as Szississ finishes. "Since that awful time, our people have used all our resources to simply survive. We knew we could not turn to the ways of those other tribes, but neither could we trust those humans who assisted those tribes in their descent into depravity. Now, however, it has become clear that the humans, or at least some of them, have learned what we already knew. And because of that, and because of heroes like you, we can now offer our gift."

At this point, if the low-APL group is present, Kussboss will hand the dragon's tooth to the heroes, having taken it from the high-APL group (and having "read" the upcoming text to that group already).

Szississ speaks. "Long ago we learned the secret of closing the legion of nether portals in the Dreadwood. What was required was an object enchanted with planar magic. Yes, my friends... the tooth of Baltron. The dragon-wizard created it to operate the teleporters, following ancient instructions written ages ago by those of House Malhel. He was not aware of their dual purpose – in opening these portals to other places, it also has the power to close them."

"My father had to be certain, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that you could be trusted, for the power in the dragon's tooth you now hold could be perverted to evil once more. It is too late for us to call the great forest our home, but it may not be too late for you. Use this magic to close the gates and stop the spread

of the evil. Turn the great forest back into a place of peace and beauty."

Neither Szississ nor Kussshoss can tell the PCs exactly how to use the dragon's tooth to close portals, but Kussshoss suggests that the "Lady of the Valley" – who he explains is Reynard Yargrove, the Grand Druidess of the Sheldomar – may possess such knowledge. Vayleran Moonchild offers to take the tooth to Reynard – high-ranking Dreadwalkers have a means by which to communicate with her.

Any PC Dreadwalkers, Havenites, or Silent Ones who wish to accompany Vayleran may do so; he will firmly but politely decline the assistance of any other PCs.

With this done, Kussshoss and Szississ excuse themselves, claiming that it is time to celebrate the passing of Sselyuuna. The PCs are welcome to stay here until they are ready to leave.

Treasure: If any PC holds the Favor of the Lizardfolk of the Hool Marsh from the module **Warts and All**, they can trade it in here for a very valuable sack of marsh herbs. This was bequeathed to them from Sselyuuna for rescuing him on that occasion. See *Marsh Herbs* on the AR (see the **Treasure Summary** for details).

Conclusion

The trip back to Jaedrae is as uneventful as any trek through the Hool can be. King Kimbertos and Viscount Richart Jorgos are relieved to see that the PCs made it back. They listen intently to the summation of Sakatha's return from **Track A**, and they are keen to hear of a clue to finally end the threat in the Dreadwood from **Track B**.

Finally, after all reports have been made, the king speaks:

"Dark days may be ahead for our Empire, but brave and hearty souls such as yours offer some light. The light of the beacon has been extinguished, but I fear that the subsequent darkness that now lays over the Hool may be the greater threat. We must discover who or what this "Lizard King" is, and end his machinations. But that, my tired friends, is a task for another time. The Lion Throne thanks you for what you have done. Too often, we take for granted the heroism, dedication and sacrifice of those such as you – that is unfortunate. You have saved the Viscounty, and have given us the means by which to confront an even greater threat."

And with that, the regal lord of the Lion Throne bows – to you.

Successful PCs receive, that did not ask for payment for the mission, receive the Favor of Viscount Richart Jorgos here (see the **Treasure Summary**). When you have finished resolving the adventure for the PCs (handing out ARs, etc.), proceed to the **Epilogue** below.

Epilogue

The wild-haired man stumbled through the muck of the Hool. Panting and crying, his body was encrusted with filth from his numerous stumbles and falls through the swamp. He moaned and cried, a wild animal being chased by a predator – one of the most proficient predators of man.

A gnarled root sent him sprawling; the hermit tried to rise, but couldn't. He heard a sibilant chuckle, and the man gave a half-mad moan of fright. "You come back, you attack, as I lie on my back..."

There was a sibilant chuckle. "As mad as ever, you wretch." A scaled hand of tremendous strength lifted the man off his back and onto his feet; his legs failed him, and he fell again, onto his rump. Before him stood a lizard-man. The creature's eyes glittered with genius. They were deep, dead eyes, though, and the smell of the charnel-house followed him. From around them, impossibly, wolves – unknown in the Hool – stalked into the area and formed a perimeter. They watched the unfolding scene with hateful, burning eyes.

"The years have been kind, my old friend." The creature smirked, revealing impossibly sharp incisors.

The hermit wailed, scratching at his own face in fear. "Madness, death, I take my last breath..."

"I'm not here to kill you, my friend." It took a moment for his words to reach the human's mind. In time, he pulled his hands away from his face, peering at the lizardfolk from behind a caking of filth. The creature made a gesture, and the wolves – seemingly disappointed – skulked back into the darkness.

"Not here... to kill... come to drink, then, your fill?"

The creature grimaced. "Hardly. Your blood is beneath me, creature. No, I want you to do what you did all those years ago. You are my herald. Bring word of my return to the ears of the humans. They will know. They will all know that I have returned... soon enough." The creature crouched, twisting into impossible shapes. Scales became fur, and a moment later the creature was a coal-black wolf.

"Remember my words. And above all, be afraid."

Stephen DeManis could only shake his head in agreement. That, at least, would be easy enough.

The End

Experience Point Summary

The player characters receive the following experience point awards, by APL and encounter:

Track A

Encounter Three-A

Defeat the lizardfolk

- APL 2 – 120 xp;
- APL 4 – 180 xp;
- APL 6 – 240 xp.

Encounter Four-A

Don't attack Schussesie

- APL 2 – 45 xp;
- APL 4 – 60 xp;
- APL 6 – 75 xp.

Encounter Five-A

Defeat the beetles

- APL 2 – 120 xp;
- APL 4 – 180 xp;
- APL 6 – 240 xp.

Save Szississ

- APL 2 – 45 xp;
- APL 4 – 75 xp;
- APL 6 – 105 xp.

Encounter Six-A

Escape or defeat the undead

- APL 2 – 120 xp;
- APL 4 – 180 xp;
- APL 6 – 240 xp.

Track B

Encounter Two-B

Defeat the Foulwater rogues

- APL 8 – 270 xp;
- APL 10 – 330 xp;
- APL 12 – 390 xp.

Encounter Five-B

Defeat or escape the leechwalkers

- APL 8 – 300 xp;
- APL 10 – 360 xp;
- APL 12 – 420 xp.

Encounter Five-B

Defeat Ssessiness and Erazzmuzz

- APL 8 – 330 xp;
- APL 10 – 390 xp;
- APL 12 – 450 xp.

Destroy the ferlow seed before it splits

- APL 8 – 225 xp;
- APL 10 – 270 xp;
- APL 12 – 315 xp.

Total Possible Experience

- APL 2 – 450 xp.
- APL 4 – 675 xp.
- APL 6 – 900 xp.
- APL 8 – 1,125 xp.
- APL 10 – 1,350 xp.
- APL 12 – 1,575 xp.

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter Three-A

APL 2: L: 35 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 3 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), 5 darkwood bucklers (18 gp each).

APL 4: L: 37 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 3 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), 5 darkwood bucklers (18 gp each), +1 darkwood buckler (101 gp).

APL 6: L: 39 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 3 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), 5 darkwood bucklers (18 gp each), +1 darkwood buckler (101 gp), +1 vicious longsword (693 gp).

Encounter Five-A

All APLs: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: small masterwork cold iron heavy mace (27 gp).

Encounter Six-A

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 250 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 350 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 450 gp; M: 0 gp.

Encounter Two-B

APL 8: L: 6 gp; C: 30 gp; M: 6 potions of invisibility (25 gp each), 6 potions of greater magic fang +3 (150 gp each), 3 wands of scorching ray – 10 charges, 3rd level caster (75 gp each), 3 wands of touch of idiocy – 10 charges, 3rd level caster (75 gp each).

APL 10: L: 13 gp; C: 30 gp; M: 12 potions of invisibility (25 gp each), 12 potions of greater magic fang +3 (150 gp each), 6 wands of scorching ray – 10 charges, 3rd level caster (75 gp each), 6 wands of touch of idiocy – 10 charges, 3rd level caster (75 gp each), 6 arcane scrolls of fly – 5th level caster (31 gp each), 6 arcane scrolls of dispel magic – 5th level caster (31 gp each).

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 30 gp; M: 12 arcane scrolls of greater invisibility – 7th level caster (58 gp each), 12 potions of greater magic fang +5 (250 gp each), 6 +1 studded leather armors (98 gp each), 6 wands of scorching ray – 10 charges, 7th level caster (175 gp each), 6 wands of touch of idiocy – 10 charges, 3rd level caster (75 gp each), 12 arcane scrolls of fly – 5th level caster (31 gp each), 12 arcane scrolls of dispel magic – 5th level caster (31 gp each), 12 arcane scrolls of fireball – 5th level caster (31 gp each), 6 divine scrolls of entangle – 1st level caster (2 gp each).

Encounter Six-B

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 bane (human) kama (692 gp), gloves of mighty fists +1 (750 gp), amulet of health +2 (333 gp), potion of barkskin +2 (25 gp), headband of intellect +2 (333 gp), 2 arcane scrolls of wall of force – 9th level caster (94 gp each), ring of protection +1 (167 gp), bag of holding – type I (208 gp), Ssessiness' spellbook (150 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 bane (human) kama (692 gp), gloves of mighty fists +1 (750 gp), amulet of health +2 (333 gp), potion of barkskin +2 (25 gp), headband of intellect +2 (333 gp), 2 arcane scrolls of wall of force – 9th level caster (94 gp each), ring of protection +2 (667 gp), bag of holding – type I (208 gp), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp), Ssessiness' spellbook (150 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 bane (human) kama (692 gp), gloves of mighty fists +2 (3,000 gp), amulet of health

+2 (333 gp), potion of barkskin +4 (75 gp), headband of intellect +2 (333 gp), 2 arcane scrolls of wall of force – 9th level caster (94 gp each), ring of protection +2 (667 gp), bag of holding – type I (208 gp), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp), Ssessiness' spellbook (150 gp).

Conclusion

All APLs: L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 2: L: 35 gp; C: 450 gp; M: 102 gp – Total: 587 gp (450 gp).

APL 4: L: 37 gp; C: 550 gp; M: 203 gp – Total: 1,060 gp (650 gp).

APL 6: L: 39 gp; C: 650 gp; M: 896 gp – Total: 1,585 gp (900 gp).

APL 8: L: 6 gp; C: 130 gp; M: 4,346 gp – Total: 4,482 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 13 gp; C: 130 gp; M: 6,218 gp – Total: 6,361 gp (2,300 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 130 gp; M: 12,891 gp – Total: 13,021 gp (3,300 gp).

Special

☛ Gloves of Mighty Fists

These gloves function identically to an amulet of mighty fists, but take a glove slot instead.

Faint Evocation; CL: 5th; Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, greater magic fang, creator's caster level must be at least three times the gloves' bonus; Market Price: 9,000 gp (+1), 36,000 gp (+2); Weight: - lbs.

☛ Ssessiness' Spellbook

1st – mage armor, shield, enlarge person, alarm; 2nd – cat's grace, owl's wisdom, invisibility, glitterdust; 3rd – haste, fireball, dispel magic, heroism; 4th – greater invisibility, ice storm, polymorph.

Market Price: 1,800 gp; Weight: 3 lbs.

☛ Marsh Herbs

This PC has traded in her Favor of the Lizardfolk of the Hool (from **Warts and All**) for a valuable bag of Marsh Herbs. The PC can sell these herbs for 200 gp immediately (which allows a PC who has already gained gp near the treasure cap on this adventure to gain up to 200 gp beyond it). Alternatively, the PC can trade this bag to a local alchemist/apothecary in Keoland to gain access (Frequency: Regional) to purchase any one potion/oil of the PC's choice on the list in the DMG. Write the potion/oil chosen here:

☛ Favor of Viscount Richart Jorgos

For your continued efforts against the evil forces menacing the Hool, you have received the favor of Richart Jorgos. Power Rank: Noble, Political: Royal. See the Keoland Meta-Organization Book o for details, or contact the Keoland Triad at keoland_marf_poc@yahoo.com for further information.

With your valiant penetration of the Hool Beacon, the time has come for you to be rewarded for your efforts. Tally the amount of influence you have earned with Richart Jorgos (from this scenario as well as the Keoland regional scenarios **Royal Rescue**, **Hunt in the Hool**, **Predators and Prey**, and/or **Old Secrets Never Die**), and consult the following lists. You may expend some or all of this influence at the end of any adventure set in Keoland or the Sheldomar Valley Metaregion to gain one-time access (Frequency: Adventure) to your choice of ONE item in the appropriate list. You may choose to expend less than the full number of points you have earned, and you may choose to gain access to several lesser items this way. When expended, mark an X through the influence point/favors on the AR(s) in question. If you spend five points at once, you gain access to a list of benefits rather than a list of items. The lists are:

Expend One Point: 10 adamantine arrows/bolts/bullets, dragonhide full plate, *thundering or bane* (aberration, dragon, or reptilian only) weapon special ability upgrade, *ring of swimming*, *caster's shield*, *wand of magic missile* (5th level caster), or *druid's vestment*.

Expend Two Points: *spell resistance* (13) armor/shield special ability upgrade, *wounding* weapon special ability upgrade, *immovable rod*, *wand of magic missile* (7th level caster), or *folding boat*.

Expend Three Points: *lion's shield*, *banded mail of luck*, *trident of warning*, *ring of force shield*, *cloak of the manta ray*, *shocking burst* weapon special ability upgrade, or *amulet of mighty fists +2*.

Expend Four Points: *wild* or *acid resistance* armor/shield special ability upgrade, *trident of fish command*, *ring of minor acid resistance*, *python rod*, *figurine of wondrous power – golden lions*, or *goggles of night*.

Expend Five Points: At this level, any PC who appears on Keoland's "Wanted and Hunted" list is immediately and permanently stripped of any of the benefits listed below. Choose one of the following benefits:

1. You are made a Foreign Minister of the Court of Nume Eor. You are expected to carry the greetings of the Viscount to all other nobles you may meet. To aid you in your duties, the Viscount provides you with a sterling letter of introduction, granting you a +4 circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based skill checks, except Intimidate, when dealing with any noble in the Sheldomar Valley Metaregion who is not hostile to you, the Lion Throne or to the Viscount himself.
2. The Viscount knights you. You are entitled to bear the title of "Sir" or "Lady" (or "Demoiselle" if you prefer) before your name. Also, the Viscount commissions his bards to compose songs of your exploits, which spread far and wide. Hereafter, you gain the benefit of the Great Renown modifier to your Leadership

score. If you already possess this modifier from another source, it does not stack.

3. You may establish a fortified tower on the border of the Hool, serving in the Viscount's name and in the defense of Jaedrae. This tower costs 10,000 gp to construct, thanks to assistance from the Viscount. You must pay 1,000 gp per year to adequately maintain the forces under your command in the tower (payable on the AR of the first scenario you play during each of the following years).

If you received the *Favor of the Hool Marsh Lizardfolk* from the Keoland Regional **Warts and All**, regardless of whether it was spent, you may, at your option, ask for aid from the Marshgrove lizardfolk tribe in garrisoning your tower. If you do so, the annual 1000 gp cost for maintaining the tower is halved.

If you choose this AR item and expend the 10,000 gp to build the tower, you gain one Permanent Influence Point with Viscount Richart Jorgos, in gratitude for your personal contribution to the safety of Nume Eor. Should you fail to pay the yearly upkeep costs, you immediately lose both the tower and any non-item benefits you may have received as well as removal of the permanent influence. You will also no longer be able to gain any future influence from Viscount Richart Jorgos or anyone else in the Royal political faction. If this item is chosen, contact the Keoland Triad (keoland_marf_poc@yahoo.com) and inform them of same.

4. You are granted the title of Royal Loremaster of Keoland, and the libraries of the National Academy of Wizardry are opened to you at the decree of the Lion Throne. You may choose up to five arcane spells of any level you are able to cast at the time this favor is expended; these spells are scribed into your spellbook, free of charge. These must come from the PH or from the list of Core or Limited spells in the LGCS. List the spells taken here: _____, _____, _____.
5. The Viscount has granted you the title of one of his Master (or Mistress) of Hounds. You gain permanent access (Frequency: Regional; Market Price 150 gp) to a Keoish Hool Moorhound (a riding dog with the *warbeast* template from MM 2). If you hold the requisite feats, class abilities, etc., you may choose the dog as an animal companion (as if from the 4th level or higher list), but **not** as a familiar or paladin's bonded mount. Also, you gain a permanent +2 insight bonus to Handle Animal and Ride checks when dealing with such dogs. You may have only one of these animals in your possession at any one

time. These large animals are akin to the Newfoundland breed from our own world.

Hool Moorhound: Medium animal; CR 2; HD 3d8+9; hp 23, Init +2; Spd 50' (10 squares); AC 16 (flat-footed 14, touch 12); Base Atk/Grp +3/+5; Atk Bite +5 melee (1d6+5); Full Atk Bite +5 melee (1d6+5); SA Improved Trip; SQ Combative mount (rider gets +2 circumstance bonus to Ride checks and the hound is proficient with light, medium, and heavy armor), low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +3. Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +9, Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +8, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent). Alertness, Endurance, Track.

6. You are granted the title of Archprelate of the Viscounty. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with residents of the Viscounty not hostile to yourself or to the Viscount. This bonus increases to +4 when dealing with fellow worshippers of your god. However, as a figurehead of your church in the Viscounty, you suffer a -4 circumstance penalty when dealing with those inimical to your faith. Also, you have been given permission by the Viscount to build a church, a rare privilege in Keoland enjoyed by few clerics. The PC that takes this benefit must have at least nine levels in cleric, druid or paladin. This is available only to clerics who worship one of the deities served by the Churches of Keoland metaorganization, or of a few select exceptions; contact the Keoland Triad at keoland_marf_poc@yahoo.com for approval.

- ❖ *Arcane Scroll of Wall of Force* (Adventure, 9th level caster, DMG)
- ❖ *Bag of Holding – Type I* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Gloves of Mighty Fists +1* (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ *Headband of Intellect +2* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Potion of Greater Magic Fang +3* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Ssessiness' Spellbook* (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ *Wand of Scorching Ray* (Adventure, 3rd level caster, DMG)

APL 10 (APL 8 Items plus):

- ❖ *Cloak of Resistance +2* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Ring of Protection +2* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 12 (APL 8, 10 Items plus):

- ❖ *Arcane Scroll of Greater Invisibility* (Adventure, 7th level caster, DMG)
- ❖ *Gloves of Mighty Fists +2* (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ *Potion of Barkskin +4* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Potion of Greater Magic Fang +5* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Wand of Scorching Ray* (Adventure, 7th level caster, DMG)

Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 2:

- ❖ *Darkwood Buckler* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 4 (APL 2 Items plus):

- ❖ +1 *Darkwood Buckler* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 6 (APL 2, 4 Items plus):

- ❖ +1 *Vicious Longsword* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 8:

- ❖ +1 *Bane (Human) Kama* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Amulet of Health +2* (Adventure, DMG)

Appendix One - NPCs

APLs 2 & 4

Encounter Six-A

Lizardfolk Zombie: Medium Undead; CR 1/2; HD 2d12+3; hp 21; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 9, ff 16 (-1 Dex, +7 natural); Base Attack/Grapple +1/+3; Attack Slam +3 melee (1d6+3); Full Attack Slam +3 melee (1d6+2); SQ Single action only, DR 5/slashing, darkvision 60', undead traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.
Feats: Toughness.

APL 6

Encounter Five-A

Advanced Giant Bombardier Beetle: Large Vermin; CR 5; HD 6d8+24; hp 54; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, ff 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex +8 natural); Base Attack/Grapple +4/+13; Attack Bite +8 melee (1d6+5); Full Attack Bite +8 melee (1d6+5); Face/Reach: 10/5; SA Acid Spray (20' cone of acid for 1d6+4 damage, DC 15 avoids); SQ Darkvision 60', vermin traits; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 18, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Encounter Six-A

Giant Crocodile Zombie: Huge Undead; CR 2; HD 7d12+3; hp 66; Init 0; Spd 20 ft., 30 ft. swim; AC 17, touch 8, ff 17 (-2 size, +9 natural); Base Attack/Grapple +3/+20; Attack Bite +3 melee (2d8+9) or Tail slap (1d12+9); Full Attack Bite +3 melee (2d8+9) or Tail slap (1d12+9); Space/Reach: 15/10; SQ Single action only, DR 5/slashing, darkvision 60', undead traits; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 29, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

APL 8

Encounter Two-B

Lizardfolk Rogue: Male Lizardfolk Rog5; CR 6; Medium Reptilian Humanoid, HD 2d8+5d6+21; hp 51; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 14, ff 18 (+5 natural, +4 Dex, +3 studded leather armor); Base Attack/Grapple +4/+6; Attack: claw +8 melee (1d4+2); Full Attack: 2 claws +8 melee (1d4+2) and bite +6 (1d4+1); SA Sneak attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +15, Hide +9, Jump +12, Move Silently +14, Spot +10, Swim +10, Tumble +16, Use Magic Device +11; Multiattack, Weapon Finesse, Combat Reflexes.

Equipment: studded leather armor, 2 potions of invisibility, 2 potions of greater magic fang +3, 1 wand of

scorching ray 10 charges (3rd level), 1 wand of touch of idiocy 10 charges (3rd level).

Encounter Five-B

LEECHWALKER (as presented in *MM II*)

Medium-Size Vermin

Hit Dice: 13d8+39 (97 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 12 (+2 natural) (touch 10, flat-footed 12)

Base Attack / Grapple: +12 / +13

Attacks: 2 tentacle rakes +13 melee

Damage: tentacle rake 1d8+4 plus wounding

Face/Reach: 5 ft. / 5 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood-drink, improved grab, wounding

Special Qualities: All-around vision, DR 10/piercing or slashing, immunities, vermin traits

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +5

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int -, Wis 13, Cha 7

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Search +4, Spot +8, Swim +12

Climate/Terrain: Any marsh or underground

Organization: Solitary, pair or gang (3-5)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always Neutral

Advancement: 14-26 HD (Medium-size); 27-39 HD (Large)

The leechwalker is a thirsty vermin that can drain a creature of all its blood in a matter of moments. It usually lurks in swamps or damp underground areas. A leechwalker appears to be a massive, six-foot tall humanoid covered with thousands of dark, writhing leeches.

Combat: Leechwalkers are incapable of sizing up prey, so they fearlessly go straight for the kill, regardless of their opponents capabilities. They usually try to grab their foes, hoping to drain blood through the thousands of mouths that make up their hides.

Blood Drink (Ex): A leechwalker can drink the blood from a grabbed victim with a successful grapple check. This attack deals 2d4 Constitution drain.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a leechwalker hits an opponent that is its own size or smaller with a tentacle rake attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +13). If it gets a hold it can use its blood drink ability in the same round. Thereafter, the leechwalker has the option to conduct the grapple normally or simply to use its tentacle to hold its opponent (-20 penalty on the grapple check, but the leechwalker is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals tentacle rake damage and blood drink damage.

Wounding (Ex): A wound resulting from a leechwalker's tentacle rake attack bleeds for an additional 3 points of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds from such attacks result in cumulative bleeding loss (two wound for 6 points of damage per round, and so on). The bleeding can only be stopped by a successful Heal check (DC 10), or the application of a magical healing spell. Creatures that are not subject to critical hits are immune to the wounding effect of the tentacle rake attack.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A leechwalker can see in all directions at once. It gains a +4 racial bonus to Search and Spot checks, and it cannot be flanked.

Immunities: A leechwalker is not subject to nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or death from massive damage.

Encounter Six-B

Erazzmuzz: Male Lizardfolk Mnk9; CR 10; Large Reptilian Humanoid, HD 2d8+9d8+44; hp 99; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 60 ft.; AC 26, touch 15, ff 24 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 Wis, +1 monk, +5 natural, +4 *mage armor*, +2 *barkskin*); Base Attack/Grapple +7/+13; Attack Unarmed +11 melee (1d10+4) or +1 *human bane kama* +11 melee (1d6+4); Full Attack Unarmed +11/+11/+6 melee (1d10+4); Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft. (if enlarged); SA Unarmed strike, ki strike (magic), stunning fist (DC 17); SQ Improved evasion, still mind, purity of body, slow fall (40 ft.), wholeness of body (heal 18 hit points); AL LN; SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +10 (+12 vs. enchantments); Str 16 (22), Dex 16 (18), Con 16 (18), Int 10, Wis 15 (19), Cha 6. (Stats in parentheses include enhancement spells.)

Skills and Feats: Concentration +16 (+20), Listen +15 (+17), Spot +9 (+11), Tumble +17 (+19); Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Great Fortitude, Improved Grapple, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Stunning Fist. (Skills in parentheses add in stat bonuses without enhancement spells.)

Possessions: +1 *bane (human) kama*, +1 *gloves of mighty fists*, *amulet of health* +2, *potion of barkskin* +2.

Ssessiness: Male Lizardfolk Clr3/Wiz3/MysticTheurge1; CR 8; Medium Reptilian Humanoid, HD 5d8+4d4+9; hp 49; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 10, ff 20 (+5 natural, +4 *shield*, +1 *ring*); Base Attack/Grapple +4/+4; Attack claw +4 melee (1d4); Full Attack 2 claws +4 melee (1d4) and bite +2 (1d4); SA Spells; SQ Hold Breath; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16 (18), Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11 (+12), Knowledge (Arcana) +6 (+10), Knowledge (Religion) +8 (+12), Spellcraft +11 (+17), Multiattack, Eschew Materials, Combat Casting. (Skills in parentheses add in stat bonuses without enhancement spells.)

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—[*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic*]; 1st—[*shield of faith*, *divine favor*, *bleed*, *cure light wounds*, **protection from good*]; 2nd—[*bull's strength*, *silence*, *death knell*, **desecrate*].

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—[*acid splash*, *ray of frost*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*]; 1st—[~~*mage armor*~~, *shield*, *enlarge person*, ~~*alarm*~~]; 2nd—[*cat's grace*, *owl's wisdom*, *invisibility*, *glitterdust*].

Possessions: *headband of intellect* +2, 2 *arcane scrolls of wall of force* -9th level *caster*, *ring of protection* +1, *bag of holding* - type I, *holy symbol of Sess'Innek*, *Ssessiness' spellbook*.

APL 10

Encounter Two-B

Lizardfolk Rogue: Male Lizardfolk Rog5; CR 6; Medium Reptilian Humanoid, HD 2d8+5d6+21; hp 51; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 14, ff 18 (+5 natural, +4 Dex, +3 studded leather armor); Base Attack/Grapple +4/+6; Attack: claw +8 melee (1d4+2); Full Attack: 2 claws +8 melee (1d4+2) and bite +6 (1d4+1); SA Sneak attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +15, Hide +9, Jump +12, Move Silently +14, Spot +10, Swim +10, Tumble +16, Use Magic Device +11; Multiattack, Weapon Finesse, Combat Reflexes.

Equipment: studded leather armor, 2 *potions of invisibility*, 2 *potions of greater magic fang* +3, 1 *wand of scorching ray* 10 charges (3rd level), 1 *wand of touch of idiocy* 10 charges (3rd level), 1 *arcane scroll of fly* (5th level), 1 *arcane scroll of dispel magic* (5th level).

Encounter Five-B

LEECHWALKER (as presented in MM II)

Medium-Size Vermin

Hit Dice: 13d8+39 (97 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 12 (+2 natural) (touch 10, flat-footed 12)

Base Attack / Grapple: +12 / +13

Attacks: 2 tentacle rakes +13 melee

Damage: tentacle rake 1d8+4 plus wounding

Face/Reach: 5 ft. / 5 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood-drink, improved grab, wounding

Special Qualities: All-around vision, DR 10/piercing or slashing, immunities, vermin traits

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +5

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int -, Wis 13, Cha 7

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Search +4, Spot +8, Swim +12

Climate/Terrain: Any marsh or underground

Organization: Solitary, pair or gang (3-5)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always Neutral

Advancement: 14-26 HD (Medium-size); 27-39 HD (Large)

The leechwalker is a thirsty vermin that can drain a creature of all its blood in a matter of moments. It usually lurks in swamps or damp underground areas. A

leechwalker appears to be a massive, six-foot tall humanoid covered with thousands of dark, writhing leeches.

Combat: Leechwalkers are incapable of sizing up prey, so they fearlessly go straight for the kill, regardless of their opponents capabilities. They usually try to grab their foes, hoping to drain blood through the thousands of mouths that make up their hides.

Blood Drink (Ex): A leechwalker can drink the blood from a grabbed victim with a successful grapple check. This attack deals 2d4 Constitution drain.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a leechwalker hits an opponent that is its own size or smaller with a tentacle rake attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +13). If it gets a hold it can use its blood drink ability in the same round. Thereafter, the leechwalker has the option to conduct the grapple normally or simply to use its tentacle to hold its opponent (-20 penalty on the grapple check, but the leechwalker is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals tentacle rake damage and blood drink damage.

Wounding (Ex): A wound resulting from a leechwalker's tentacle rake attack bleeds for an additional 3 points of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds from such attacks result in cumulative bleeding loss (two wound for 6 points of damage per round, and so on). The bleeding can only be stopped by a successful Heal check (DC 10), or the application of a magical healing spell. Creatures that are not subject to critical hits are immune to the wounding effect of the tentacle rake attack.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A leechwalker can see in all directions at once. It gains a +4 racial bonus to Search and Spot checks, and it cannot be flanked.

Immunities: A leechwalker is not subject to nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or death from massive damage.

Encounter Six-B

Erazzmuzz: Male Lizardfolk Mnk11; CR 12; Large Reptilian Humanoid, HD 2d8+1d8+52; hp 117; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 60 ft.; AC 31, touch 18, ff 28 (-1 size, +1 haste, +3 Dex, +3 Wis, +2 monk, +5 natural, +2 magic vestment, +4 mage armor, +2 barkskin; Base Attack/Grapple +9/+16; Attack Unarmed +12 melee (1d10+4, 19-20/x2) or +1 human bane kama +12 melee (1d6+4); Full Attack Unarmed +12/+12/+12/+12/+7 melee (1d10+4, 19-20/x2); Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft. (if enlarged); SA Greater flurry of blows, unarmed strike, ki strike (magic and lawful), stunning fist (DC 18); SQ Improved evasion, still mind, purity of body, slow fall (50 ft.), wholeness of body (heal 22 hit points), diamond body; AL LN; SV Fort +15, Ref +17, Will +14 (+16 vs. enchantments); Str 16 (22), Dex 16 (18), Con 16 (18), Int 10, Wis 16 (20), Cha 6. (Stats in parentheses include enhancement spells.)

Skills and Feats: Concentration +18 (+22), Listen +18 (+21), Spot +8 (+11), Tumble +18 (+20); Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical: Unarmed, Improved Grapple, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Stunning Fist. (Skills in parentheses add in stat bonuses without enhancement spells.)

Possessions: +1 bane (human) kama, +1 gloves of mighty fists, +2 cloak of resistance, amulet of health +2, potion of barkskin +2.

Ssessiness: Male Lizardfolk Clr3/Wiz3/MysticTheurge3; CR 10; Medium Reptilian Humanoid, HD 5d8+6d4+11; hp 57; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, ff 21 (+5 natural, +4 shield, +2 ring); Base Attack/Grapple +5/+5; Attack claw +5 melee (1d4); Full Attack 2 claws +6 melee (1d4) and bite +4 (1d4); SA Spells; SQ Hold Breath; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +13; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16 (18), Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13 (+14), Knowledge (Arcana) +8 (+12), Knowledge (Religion) +10 (+14), Spellcraft +13 (+19), Multiattack, Eschew Materials, Combat Casting. (Skills in parentheses add in stat bonuses without enhancement spells.)

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/4/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—[cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, light, read magic]; 1st—[shield of faith, divine favor, bless, cure light wounds, *protection from good]; 2nd—[bull's strength, silence, death knell, *desecrate]; 3rd—[~~magic vestment~~, dispel magic, ~~glyph of warding~~, *magic circle against good].

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/4/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—[acid splash, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue]; 1st—[~~mage armor~~, shield, enlarge person, ~~alarm~~]; 2nd—[cat's grace, owl's wisdom, invisibility, glitterdust]; 3rd—[haste, ~~fireball~~, dispel magic].

Possessions: Headband of Intellect +2, 2 arcane scrolls of wall of force -9th level caster, ring of protection +2, bag of holding - Type I, holy symbol of Sess'Innek, Ssessiness' Spellbook.

APL 12

Encounter Two-B

Lizardfolk Rogue: Male Lizardfolk Rog7; CR 8; Medium Reptilian Humanoid, HD 2d8+7d6+27; hp 64; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 15, ff 19 (+5 natural, +5 Dex, +4 studded leather armor +1); Base Attack/Grapple +6/+8; Attack: claw +11 melee (1d4+2); Full Attack: 2 claws +11 melee (1d4+2) and bite +9 (1d4+1); SA Sneak attack +4d6; SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +2; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +13, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +18, Hide +14, Jump +14, Move Silently +17, Spot +12, Swim +12, Tumble +19, Use Magic Device +16; Multiattack, Weapon Finesse, Combat Reflexes, Skill Focus: Use Magic Device.

Equipment: Studded leather armor +1, 2 arcane scrolls of greater invisibility - 7th level caster, 2 potions of greater magic fang +5, 1 wand of scorching ray 10 charges (7th level), 1 wand of touch of idiocy 10 charges (5th level), 2 arcane scrolls of fly (5th level), 2 arcane scrolls of dispel magic (3rd level), 1

divine scroll of entangle – 1st level caster, 2 arcane scrolls of fireball (5th level).

Encounter Five-B

LEECHWALKER (as presented in *MM II*)

Medium-Size Vermin

Hit Dice: 13d8+39 (97 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 12 (+2 natural) (touch 10, flat-footed 12)

Base Attack / Grapple: +12 / +13

Attacks: 2 tentacle rakes +13 melee

Damage: tentacle rake 1d8+4 plus wounding

Face/Reach: 5 ft. / 5 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood-drink, improved grab, wounding

Special Qualities: All-around vision, DR 10/piercing or slashing, immunities, vermin traits

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +5

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int –, Wis 13, Cha 7

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Search +4, Spot +8, Swim +12

Climate/Terrain: Any marsh or underground

Organization: Solitary, pair or gang (3-5)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always Neutral

Advancement: 14-26 HD (Medium-size); 27-39 HD (Large)

The leechwalker is a thirsty vermin that can drain a creature of all its blood in a matter of moments. It usually lurks in swamps or damp underground areas. A leechwalker appears to be a massive, six-foot tall humanoid covered with thousands of dark, writhing leeches.

Combat: Leechwalkers are incapable of sizing up prey, so they fearlessly go straight for the kill, regardless of their opponents capabilities. They usually try to grab their foes, hoping to drain blood through the thousands of mouths that make up their hides.

Blood Drink (Ex): A leechwalker can drink the blood from a grabbed victim with a successful grapple check. This attack deals 2d4 Constitution drain.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a leechwalker hits an opponent that is its own size or smaller with a tentacle rake attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +13). If it gets a hold it can use its blood drink ability in the same round. Thereafter, the leechwalker has the option to conduct the grapple normally or simply to use its tentacle to hold its opponent (-20 penalty on the grapple check, but the leechwalker is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals tentacle rake damage and blood drink damage.

Wounding (Ex): A wound resulting from a leechwalker's tentacle rake attack bleeds for an additional 3 points of damage per round thereafter. Multiple

wounds from such attacks result in cumulative bleeding loss (two wound for 6 points of damage per round, and so on). The bleeding can only be stopped by a successful Heal check (DC 10), or the application of a magical healing spell. Creatures that are not subject to critical hits are immune to the wounding effect of the tentacle rake attack.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A leechwalker can see in all directions at once. It gains a +4 racial bonus to Search and Spot checks, and it cannot be flanked.

Immunities: A leechwalker is not subject to nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or death from massive damage.

Encounter Six-B

Erazzmuzz: Male Lizardfolk Mnk13; CR 14; Large Reptilian Humanoid, HD 2d8+13d8+60; hp 135; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 70 ft.; AC 33, touch 18, ff 30 (+3 Dex, +3 Wis, +2 monk, +5 natural, +4 *mage armor*, +4 *barkskin*, +2 *magic vestment*); Base Attack/Grapple +10/+17; Attack Unarmed +17 melee (2d6+5, 19-20/x2) or +1 *human bane kama* +16 melee (1d8+4); Full Attack Unarmed +17/+17/+17/+17/+12 melee (2d6+5, 19-20/x2); Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft. (if enlarged); SA Greater flurry of blows, unarmed strike, ki strike (magic and lawful), stunning fist (DC 19); SQ Improved evasion, SR 23 (diamond soul), still mind, purity of body, slow fall (60 ft.), wholeness of body (heal 26 hit points), diamond body, abundant step, freedom of movement; AL LN; SV Fort +18, Ref +17, Will +17 (+19 vs. enchantments); Str 16 (22), Dex 16 (18), Con 16 (18), Int 10, Wis 16 (20), Cha 6. (Stats in parentheses include enhancement spells.)

Skills and Feats: Concentration +20 (+24), Listen +20 (+23), Spot +10 (+13), Tumble +20 (+23); Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical: Unarmed, Improved Grapple, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Knockdown, Stunning Fist. (Skills in parentheses add in stat bonuses without enhancement spells.)

Possessions: +1 *bane (human) kama*, +2 *gloves of mighty fists*, +2 *cloak of resistance*, *amulet of health* +2, *potion of barkskin* +4.

Knock-Down: Your mighty blows can knock foes off their feet. Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +2, Improved Trip, Str15+. Benefit: Whenever you deal 10 or more points of damage to your opponent in melee, you make a trip attack as a free action against the same target.

Ssensitivity: Male Lizardfolk Clr3/Wiz3/Mystic Theurge5; CR 12; Medium Reptilian Humanoid, HD 5d8+8d4+13; hp 64; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 10, ff 25 (+5 natural, +4 *mage armor*, +4 *shield*, +2 *ring*); Base Attack/Grapple +6/+6; Attack claw +6 melee (1d4); Full Attack 2 claws +6 melee (1d4) and bite +4 (1d4); SA Spells; SQ Hold Breath; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +14; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 16 (18), Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15 (+16), Knowledge (Arcana) +10 (+14), Knowledge (Religion) +12 (+16), Spellcraft +15 (+21), Multiattack, Great Fortitude, Eschew

Materials, Combat Casting. (Skills in parentheses add in stat bonuses without enhancement spells.)

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/5/4/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—[*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic*]; 1st—[~~*shield of faith*~~, *entropic shield*, *divine favor*, *bless*, *cure light wounds*, **protection from good*]; 2nd—[~~*bull's strength*~~, *silence*, *calm emotions*, *death knell*, **desecrate*]; 3rd—[~~*magic vestment*~~, *protection from energy*, *dispel magic*, *glyph of warding*, **magic circle against good*]; 4th—[*spell immunity*, *freedom of movement*, ~~*imbuement with spell ability*~~, **death ward*].

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/5/4/4/3); base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—[*acid splash*, *ray of frost*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*]; 1st—[~~*mage armor*~~, ~~*mage armor*~~, *shield*, *enlarge person*, ~~*alarm*~~]; 2nd—[*cat's grace*, *owl's wisdom*, *invisibility*, *glitterdust*]; 3rd—[*haste*, ~~*fireball*~~, *dispel magic*, *heroism*]; 4th—[*greater invisibility*, *ice storm*, *polymorph*].

Possessions: Headband of Intellect +2, 2 arcane scrolls of wall of force -9th level caster, ring of protection +2, bag of holding – Type I, holy symbol of Sess'Innek, Ssessiness' Spellbook.

DM Aids: Synopses

A Royal Rescue

The PCs are called to Kimberton, the capital of the newly established Viscounty of Nume Eor, to help Viscount Richart Jorgos. Arriving at the capital, they find that the town is still under construction, and the keep of the viscount is nothing more than a wooden framework surrounded by as-yet unmortared bricks.

Richart, surrounded by his three closest advisors, tells the PCs that his scouts have learned that lizardfolk are massing in the Hool very near his land. He sent his cousin, Frederik Tannen, to look into the matter, but the young man seems to have disappeared. The PCs might be able to learn more about the threat in Haven, a newly established town comprised mainly of half-breeds.

In Haven, the PCs learn a bit more about the lizards, and they are asked by Vexander, the half-elven leader of Haven, to also search for missing half-orcs who never came back from their patrol of the swamp. He asks a half-orc druid, Holden Bloodreaver, to give the PCs more information and a map of the area.

Entering the swamp, the PCs come across a lizardfolk cleric performing a sacrifice to his dark god, asking the foul deity for help in the upcoming war against the humans of Keoland. The PCs rescue the human, who is Frederik Tannen. Later, the PCs come across a peaceful lizardfolk from the neutrally aligned Marshgrove Tribe. This lone lizardfolk tells the PCs that three large tribes are coming together—something unprecedented in his memory—to wage war on Keoland. He is not sure exactly who is bringing them together, but they are humans who wear the holy symbol of Kelanen.

The PCs then sneak into the lizardfolk village, rescuing three half-orc prisoners and finding documents confirming that a group known as the Fraternity of the Brazen Blade is supporting the lizardfolk.

Hunt in the Hool

Only a few days after their successful rescue of Frederik Tannen and the Haven half-orcs, Richart again calls upon the heroes. This time, a Scarlet Brotherhood operative named Hutin Yo Bin has escaped from captivity into the swamp. The authorities were not able to get any information out of the monk, but they believe he was in the area of the evil Hool lizardfolk.

None one is sure how he escaped. Before his escape, he was fitted with a magical necklace that could not be removed and that could be used to track him into the Hool, where he fled. The PCs use a similar necklace to follow his signal.

The PCs enter the Hool in a skiff on the trail of the monk. They chase him to a small island, where they are attacked by a hydra. Immediately after defeating the hydra, they lose the signal for tracking Hutin. The PCs find an empty potion bottle on the island, showing that Hutin had imbibed a potion of *non-detection* to escape. A few hours later, the signal returns.

Hutin then leads the PCs through the domain of a swamp troll. Defeating that creature, the PCs arrive at a swamp village inhabited by elves. The PCs use diplomacy to convince the elves that Hutin is a Scarlet Brother, and the elves help capture him. The PCs find on him a ring of invisibility. While partying with the elves of the swamp village of Ob Noqui, the PCs learn that these elves are mostly escaped slaves from the lands controlled by the Scarlet Brotherhood.

On the trip back to Kimberton, the PCs can ambush a lizardfolk search party, which has been alerted to the fact that Hutin has escaped. Back in Kimberton, after dealing with the lizardfolk, the PCs can discuss the situation with Richart. The fact that someone in Nume Eor probably helped Hutin escape is discussed.

Predators and Prey

While heading through Kimberton to meet with Jorgos about a new mission, the PCs witness a young scribe being assaulted by a thief. The thief appears to be trying to steal books about the Hool Beacon, also known as Baltron's Beacon. The scribe says that she has been studying

Keoish history, including the history of the Beacon, under a sage named Wizenthorp.

The Viscount asks the PCs to travel to the Beacon and see what is happening there, in particular to see why recent criminal activity has focused on stealing information regarding the Beacon. The PCs can gather some information from Wizenthorp.

On the way to the Beacon, the PCs can stop in the half-breed village of Haven to gather additional information. Then en route to the Beacon, the PCs come across a scene of carnage: several evil lizardfolk bodies. As they take in the scene, the deceased lizardfolk's brethren come upon the scene and attack.

At the beacon, the PCs find the area surrounded by a magical field that won't allow passage. As they investigate the field, a horrible dinosaur sent by Sess'Innek himself, attacks. When the monster finally dies, members of the Marshgrove tribe come out to thank the PCs for removing the threat. They are healed and given respite. A noise frightens away the Marshgrove members: the Cult of the Black Flame has come to search the beacon now that the menace has been removed.

Old Secrets Never Die

On their way to Jaedrae, the PCs find themselves ambushed by kobolds, including a resurrected former protégé of Baltron named Leptor, who can tell the PCs more about what happened to create the light that is Baltron's Beacon.

Viscount Jorgos wants the PCs to travel to the beacon to investigate the beacon again. He has received further information about gaining access to the Beacon's tower from a lizardfolk druid of Semuanya (that race's god of survival and propagation) named Sselyuuna. The lizardfolk provides the PCs with a dragon's tooth that can be used to operate a series of teleporters within the Beacon.

The PCs teleport to several strange locations, including the tower of Baltron's Beacon. While in the tower they bask within the glow and begin to age rapidly. Another teleporter leads them into the ferlow seed from which the light is emerging. Within this tiny seed is a pocket dimension that acts as a prison. A black dragon, containing the spirit of the person who was once Baltron, tells them how his assistant Leptor meddled with magical experiments first attempted by the Cult of the Black Flame, and he opened a rift to another plane. Since that time, Baltron has been fighting vitrioli, strange elemental creatures who are attempting to open the rift large enough to let through some horrible demonic creature. Baltron tasks the PCs to find a way to destroy the ferlow seed before the demonic creature escapes.

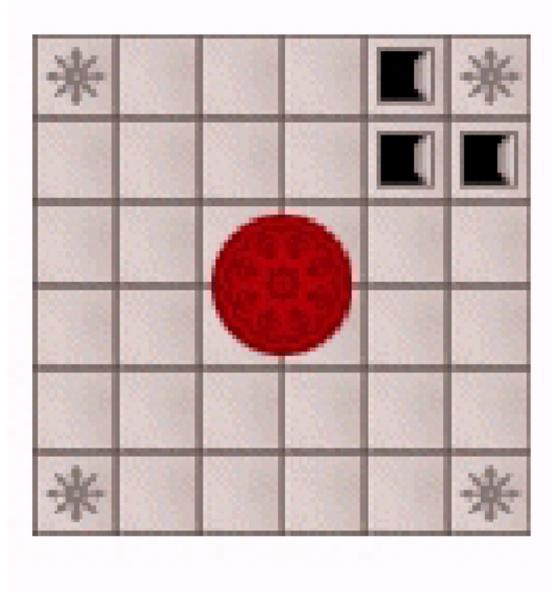
Warts and All

The PCs are asked by a Herald of Keoland to enter the Hool in search of a rumored lost village. It is the hope that this village can assist Keoland in opening supply lines to the city of Westkeep, which was retaken from the Sea Princes and the Scarlet Brotherhood a few years previous.

The PCs learn that this village does indeed exist. However, a strange mix of humans and amphibians inhabits it—a Conclave of worshippers of the bizarre god Wastri. As an act of good faith, the leader of the Conclave asks the PCs to drive away a group of lizardfolk who have infested a temple to some bullywugs that have contact with the Conclave.

While doing so, the PCs come to learn that some of the lizards worship a peaceful, neutrally aligned lizardfolk god of survival and propagation, while others worship a god of slaughter. The PCs have the chance to help a lizardfolk druid who follows the peaceful deity. In doing so, they earn his favor. That druid is Sselyuuna.

DM Aids: Maps #1 and #2



One Square = 5 feet

