

KEOI 3-03

Escape From Waldon Mountain

**An Introductory D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
Keoland Regional Adventure**

Version 1.3

by Sean Smith

Pa Waldon dreams of rebuilding the family tavern. But the area is off limits ever since those strange men in black rode into town. What secrets are they hiding up on Waldon Mountain? An introductory adventure for 1st level characters.

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 three 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.

Scoring

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while

you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

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.

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 face 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. Three or 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 three 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.

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 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Adventure Background

The heroes encounter restless spirits atop a desecrated mountaintop, while attempting to keep a senile old farmer from awakening demonic forces. Don't forget to stay one step ahead of the Darkwatch in the process!

Adventure Summary

En route to the Upper Flen seeking employment, heavy weather drives the adventurers to take shelter in the small farming village of Waldon Pass. Aiding a farmer whose cattle are mired in the mud and blocking the road, the heroes meet both each other and Pa Waldon, pious patriarch of the Waldon clan. In return for their help, he offers a warm meal and room in his large dry mill during the stormy night.

Over dinner, the new heroes meet the many members of the Waldon family. The children escort Grandpa Zebulon Waldon to the dinner table, and he spins a yarn for the PCs. He tells how once, the Golden Arches Tavern served the townsfolk, and travelers came from far and wide to try his tasty steaks and sandwiches, made from cattle he raised himself. However Juril, a disgruntled cook who dabbled in the dark arts of Tharizdun (see KEO2-03 *Downtrodded*) cursed the mountaintop. The halfling cooks all teased him and played pranks on the strange loner, until he finally cracked and cursed them all. Grandpa tells how the Riders in Black arrived, and shut down the mountain roads by order of the Darkwatch.

That night a storm much like the one outside now caused the tavern to burn down as it was hit by multiple lightning strikes. The family moved to the bottom of the mountain and set up this mill. Only Grandpa's prized cow Bessie survived the fires, and lives to this day as a treasured ancient family pet out in the barn. At the conclusion of the storm, a lightning strike annihilates the barn and burns Bessie to a crisp. The Waldons inter their beloved family companion.

The next morning, Pa Waldon wakes the adventurers in a state of panic. Grandpa Zeb is missing, as is the youngest Waldon boy, along with a mule and wagon. Furthermore, the grave where Bessie was buried is empty! He offers what reward he can if the old coot can be stopped before he does something rash, such as break the Darkwatch curfew atop Waldon Mountain.

Following the wagon tracks up the mountain, a damaged fence and warning signs are encountered. If the heroes press on, they find the burnt down remains of the Golden Arches Tavern.

A leftover Darkwatch arrow trap guards the approach that needs to be bypassed. Inside the Golden Arches, the demented Grandpa Zeb has endangered the young grandson. Unless the players allow him to serve them the wretched garbage he thinks is food, or beat the stuffing out of him, the child's life is in jeopardy.

If players search him, they find a copy of an ancient treatise on activating the desecrated lands necromantic properties, left over from the despised short order cook of Tharizdun. It was twenty-five years to the day that the last storm of this magnitude struck the mountain. There is mention in the notes of a way to harness the great electrical power through means of a supplication to Tharizdun, and reanimate the dead. Grandpa has desecrated the basement with unholy symbols. Venturing into the basement, the heroes must overcome the animated corpses of halfling cooks who died in the fire long ago. In the basement within a strange summoning circle the grandson can be rescued, but before they can leave the basement, the animated Bessie rises from the dead.

As the adventurers leave Waldon Mountain a Darkwatch scout meets them. They are interrogated, and warned about disregarding forbidden areas in the future. Compliant players are allowed to leave, and contrary ones are given a warning.

If the child is rescued safely, the players may also receive a gift from the Waldon family for their troubles in the form of cattle to sell at the farmers market, as well as a home-cooked meal whenever they are in town.

Introduction

Another thunderous explosion, and the dark clouds unleash torrents of rain upon you and your traveling companions. You are soon soaked to the bone, cold wet and miserable. Thoughts of high adventure and fame give way to the reality of your wretched condition. The heavy rainfall continues as you experience the worst storm of your life. What started out as a journey seeking employment in the Upper Flen has mired you all knee deep in mud and torrential rain that threatens to drown your adventuring hopes before they have even begun.

The players may introduce their characters here, and the Judge should encourage them to take whatever actions they deem appropriate to brace themselves from the storm. A bardic knowledge check, or a Knowledge (Local or Geography), Survival check (all DC 10) will inform alert players that a small town is ahead, and there are fresh animal tracks (cattle) in the mud as well. Civilization means warmth and shelter!

Pressing onwards, the sounds of confused cattle can be heard above the storms fury, along with the shouts of men. Around the bend in the muddy road are several large cattle mired in the mud. A farmer and his two young sons attempt to prod them forward. They look as wet and miserable as you feel, and their job at hand an impossible one.

Pa Waldon and his two sons, Jonboy and Jasen could use a hand. Pa Waldon is a pious patriarch of the family and oversees the Mill. Jonboy is literate and sensitive. Jasen is very musical and an accomplished lute player. If the players will aid them in moving their cattle onto their farm nearby, they will be offered a warm, dry place to stay in the family mill and a hot meal cooked by the indomitable Ma Waldon.

Pa, Jonboy and Jasen Waldon: Male human Com1; hp 5 each, AL NG.

If the players ignore or move around the cattle, then they can still come upon the farmstead and meet Ma Waldon. However room and board will cost 6 gp per character, and they will receive a -2 circumstance penalty to any Cha-based skill checks when dealing with Pa Waldon and his sons. PCs will not receive the *Y'All Come Back Now* benefit at the end of the module.

PCs that hunker down outside or otherwise avoid staying at the farmhouse will spend an utterly miserable evening in one of the worst storms in recent memory. In the morning, they will be awakened to the shouts of Pa Waldon. (Skip to Encounter One, read the description of the farmstead in the aftermath of the lightning storm, and pick up the action from Encounter Two if the PCs speak with Pa Waldon)

Encounter One: The Farmhouse

Read the following as the PCs arrive at Waldon Pass and the homestead of the Waldons.

The weather continues to worsen, soaking you all thoroughly. The flashes of lightning are intense and disorienting against the black clouds and coming nightfall. The hazy outline of a cluster of buildings is off the road to the left. Approaching closer you make out a small Lumber Mill, a barn and a large single story farmhouse.

Inside the farmhouse is the rest of the Waldon clan, who greet travelers warmly if Pa and his boys accompany them. Upon arrival the players may interact with Ma Waldon the homemaker, Mary Ellen the tomboy and eldest daughter, and Jim-Bob the youngest who dreams of flying. Grandma Waldon sits propped

up in a chair by the fire, incapacitated by a stroke. Grandpa Zeb makes an appearance later during dinner.

Players may stow their gear and dry off in the Mill. The Mill is currently unused, as many of the local workers have packed up and left. They may interact with the family while dinner is being prepared. Here are some tidbits the Judge can give out. Not all of them are true, but are believed by the simple family. The Judge can give out information as appropriate to the role-playing.

- The Waldon family recently used itinerant Geoff refugees during harvest season to keep the Mill going. They also raise and breed cattle.
- There is a large mountain nearby that was the original home of the Waldon family. They ran a tavern that burned down many years ago, when Grandpa Waldon was a young man.
- Pa dreams of reopening the tavern, but folks stay away from Waldon Mountain, as it is unsafe.

While pious, the Waldon family does not worship any gods, and keep their distance from divine practitioners.

Dinner with the Family

Ma Waldon smiles timidly, and invites you all to the dinner table. The large oak table is clear-cut from a massive tree, but a natural sealant coating the wood gives it a polished veneer. Extra chairs are brought out, and the children are moved to the kitchen to dine in order to make room for you. A simple meal of warm stew, bread and vegetables is spread so that all can share the farmer's meager repast. The oldest son, Jonboy, escorts the senior of the family, Grandpa Zebulon Waldon, to the head of the table. "Most folks call me Zeb." He offers a toothless smile. JonBoy lowers the old man into his chair, and takes up his place to Grandpa's left.

During dinner, the DM should roleplay Grandpa's story as much as possible rather than reading it verbatim.

"My family came to Waldon Mountain long ago, and built a great tavern atop it. People came for the steaks. We always kept the kitchen full of fat halfling cooks. Never trust a skinny cook, I always say. We raised our own cattle and used my family recipe of several herbs and spices to flavor the tastiest steaks in the kingdom. I still have ol' Bessie. She's the greatest cow in the world. Why, a Royal Herald once stopped for a night en route to Fort Ravonar, and he said so himself!"

"So, ya ever meet any royalty?"

Players should be encouraged to embellish on their characters back story and origins. After the players have all participated, continue.

Grandpa Zeb motions to Grandma, who rocks silently near the fireplace. “Yep, the missus and me met all sorts of adventuring types back in the day. This was before Geoff got invaded by them giants, and before our Ranger King Skotti. We took in a traveler, skinny guy, said he was good with the barbeque. Never trust a skinny cook, did I say that? Anyway, we were short-handed that year and had him work in the kitchens. Them other halflings teased him something awful, and I guess one day he snapped. Juril was his name. Anyways, seems the boy had a dark gift. He said he could fix up a mojo that would make things come back that were buried there. Then them black riders shows up and...”

Grandpa is hushed up sharply by Ma Waldon. “We don’t talk of such things in this house, especially over dinner, Papa!”

The family looks uncomfortable, and go about picking at the remains of their meager dinner.

Any further information may be gained through Gather Information or Diplomacy rolls (DC 12). Allow a circumstance bonus of up to +3 if the PCs have been respectful or helpful to the family. The Judge should impart the information through roleplaying.

- Juril was fired after Grandpa Zeb caught him poking around with bones in the animal cemetery atop Waldon Mountain. Juril promised a curse on them all.
- Soon after the disgraced short order cook left, riders in black arrived asking questions and headed towards the Rushmoors in search of Juril. They claimed to have the King’s authority, and were knights of some kind.
- The halflings all had burrows in the basement of the tavern, snug and warm. But they came down with a sickness soon afterwards.
- A freak lightning storm similar to the one tonight caused a fire that burned down the tavern. The next day the riders in black arrived and relocated everyone off the mountaintop. Signs and fences were put up, warning severe penalties to anyone caught returning to Waldon Mountain by order of the Knights of the Malagari.

A brilliant flash of lighting illuminates the Mill and the barn outside. It has the children’s painted caricatures of Bessie the cow with colorful hearts and rainbows over the door. The rain pouring down

outside seems frozen in the moment, as the barn is struck by a ragged bolt of fury from the heavens. As the barn explodes, a large cow shaped silhouette against the night sky arcs upward from the force of the lightning strike, and plummets towards the Waldon homestead!

“By the Laughing Rogue! Bessie! Nooooo!” Grandpa Waldon’s cries of horror are mixed with the growing “Mooooo!” of the immolated cow streaking towards the earth. The bovine comet breaks through the front porch with a massive crash. The children turn in fear, crying for their parents as the charred cow’s remains smolder in the large crater indented on the remains of the family’s porch. The whole place smells like steak.

Players can aid Pa Waldon and Jonboy dig a pit out back as the rain lets up some, and the storm seems to pass. They insist on burying their beloved Bessie the moment the storm abates long enough for them to do so. After burying poor Bessie, the disconsolate farmer shows players where they can bunk for the night in the dry empty Mill. The tearful children lead a muttering, shocked Grandpa Waldon off to bed.

In the distance, you hear Pa Waldon putting each of his distressed children to bed, ending with a faint, “Goodnight, Jonboy.”

You slip off to sleep shortly afterwards. Flaming, mooing cows visit your nightmares and you have visions of a thin, dark- robed figure of shadow. Over his head, he seems to be praying to a huge light-draining sphere that replaces the moon above.

A Knowledge Religion DC 20 may recognize in this nightmare one of the representations of Tharizdun, ancient god of entropy.

Encounter Two: ?

In the morning, Pa Waldon discovers Grandpa’s departure. He pleads with the heroes to go after him.

Pa Waldon enters the Mill at sunrise, still dressed in his long white nightshirt. “Please, friends, I need your help again! Grandpa Zeb’s taken plumb leave of his senses! He’s dug up Bessie and taken the wagon up Waldon Mountain!”

A cursory examination will reveal that the hastily dug pit that Bessie was buried in last night has been dug up. A few charred bovine bones remain in the mud. The wagon is missing as well, with tracks easily discernable heading up a faint path winding up Waldon Mountain. In the daylight, the small mountain looks to be a half-day’s trek uphill through scrub growth and forest.

Ma Waldon bursts out the door, sidestepping the cow-shaped crater in the porch. "Little JimBob is gone a'missin' too Pa! Oh woe and fie! We are a'cursed all over again. We offer kindness to strangers, and this is our repayment? She sobs loudly.

Pa Waldon turns apologetically to you all. "Now, don't mind Ma, she's distraught. Please, can you help us? We are sworn not to venture up that mountain to our lords, but you made no such promise. If you could fetch Grandpa before he gets up to any mischief, what little we have I offer you. Please...find my boy? There are no nearby lords or law we can go to for help."

The trail is easily followed into up the mountain towards its summit. As the heroes press on for several hours following the wagon and mule tracks, they come to a large wooden fence and gate that seems to encircle the mountaintop. Signs in Common and Keoish warn "No Trespassing", and "Private Property". Both warn of dire consequences "by order of the King and punishable by torture." The gate has been broken open, and the wagon tracks continue past the warnings.

If the players balk at entering and breaking the King's edict, remind them that the site has already been breached. (This won't matter to the Darkwatch, but what the hell, see if the players buy it). If they go in, proceed to Encounter Three.

Otherwise, continue to the end of the adventure, and the arrival of the Darkwatch scout.

Encounter Three: Rocky Mountain High

Another hour's travel up the mountain brings you to the crest. The overhanging trees give way to a large clearing, still damp from yesterday's rainfall. It is late afternoon. A mule and wagon are abandoned to the left of the path. Ahead is a burned out but reasonably intact tavern. The large door is closed, and above the entryway hangs a battered but still legible sign proclaiming this as "The Golden Arches."

A search of the areas can find windows boarded up, and it seems that the roof is very unstable. It will collapse for a fall of 1d6 subdual if anyone climbs atop it. The only safe way in seems to be the front door. Grandpa Zeb is a wily sort, and knew of the trap on the door. He reset it in case the Darkwatch followed him.

Wooden Doors: 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 10; AC 5; Break DC 18.

Trap: The Darkwatch, who periodically sends scouts to replenish its poison and check the cursed area,

trapped the door long ago. Grandpa's clumsy resetting of the trap has greatly reduced its effectiveness.

While the Search check of DC 19 is required to spot the trap, and to subsequently disable it, the PCs may notice that the door has recently been tampered with in some fashion with a Spot check (DC 15).

APL 2 (EL 3)

Poisoned Arrow Trap: CR 3; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; lock bypass (Open Locks, DC 30); Atks +12 ranged (1d8 plus poison, arrow); poison (Large monstrous scorpion venom, DC 14 Fort save resists, 1d4 Con/1d4 Con); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 15.

Development: Setting off the trap alerts Grandpa to the party's presence.

Encounter Four: Welcome to the Golden Arches

Entering the Golden Arches, you see signs that someone has tried to clean up the burned out place and tidy up. The floor is swept of debris, and the broken tables are propped up with chair pieces or wooden struts. A semblance of a table setting is on one long scorched table, set for six. Mismatched cups and broken pottery adorn the table. A steady drip of water pools near one setting, coming from a huge rend in the ceiling that shows the sky above.

Tottering out of the back kitchen area is Grandpa Zeb. He holds a bubbling cauldron of some foul smelling stew. A dirty chefs hat and apron adorn his elderly frame, and a wicked meat cleaver stained black is holstered in his wide leather belt.

"Stew's on, boys! Come and eat up! Visitors are always welcome to the Golden Arches! Why we served over twenty score a season!" he cackles.

"Eat...you must eat now! I will not answer any questions until you eat! Please, you must try my stew! TRY IT!"

Players may muscle past the old man pretty easily, but he will grow hostile and attack any players with his cleaver if they refuse to eat. Killing Grandpa will reflect badly on the players, who will be ineligible to receive from Pa Waldon a monetary reward or the offer of a free meal whenever they're in town. He may be struck for subdual damage or grappled fairly easily. He refuses to answer any questions, begging the players to please try the stew if captured.

APL 2 (EL 3)

Grandpa Zebulon Waldon: CR 3; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 3d6+3; hp 15; Init +6; Spd 30 ft. (6 squares); AC 14 (armor +2, Dex +2); Atks +3 melee (1d6+1, meat cleaver); SA Sneak Attack +2d6; SQ Evasion; Mad as a Hatter, Trapfinding Trap Sense +1; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Disable Device +5, Hide +5, Listen +9, Move Silently +5, Open Locks +6, Spot +9, Tumble +8. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Skill Focus (Tumble).

Equipment: Meat cleaver (treat as hand axe), leather apron (treat as leather armor), chef's hat, thieves' tools, Juril's "cookbook".

Mad as a Hatter (Ex): Grandpa's insanity gives him a +4 circumstance bonus to his Will saves against any Enchantment spells or effects.

Development: When the characters overcome Grandpa Zebulon, they may discover a battered black journal, the Cookbook of Juril, a disciple of Tharizdun, the God of Entropy.

If players eat the stew then Grandpa settles down. Otherwise he will have to be subdued (see above for Grandpa's stats). Those that do find it is made of refuse and foul spoiled meats, and must make Fort save (DC 15) or be stunned (sick and incapacitated) for 1d4 rounds. However, after they recover, Grandpa will chat amicably with them about whatever they wish to know. He will in turn impart the following information:

- The child is safe in the basement. He hasn't been sacrificed - yet. (Because of this, Grandpa has no control over any undead created during the dark ritual)
- The cow Bessie was buried down in the basement, planted in the "special place."
- The old man followed the instructions of the ceremony as best he could from the cookbook. He was missing some "ingredients" but like a good cook, he substituted as best he could. Tallow candles instead of unholy ones, metal ore dust instead of silver grounds, etc.

Encounter Five: Kiss the Chef

Beyond the burned out kitchen is a heavy, closed door set into the floor.

The door is neither locked nor trapped. If the PCs open it, refer to *DM Aid #2*; the PCs are about to enter the area marked "Storage Room."

The door reveals a set of scorched wooden stairs. They are rickety, and go down into the darkness of the unlit basement. Many tarpaulins cover stacks of crates, casks and containers; you would guess this was a storage room for the tavern.

The stairs creak and rattle but are safe. When the PCs reach the bottom, halfling zombie chefs throw off their tarpaulins (their one action for their first round in which they act) and attack the heroes.

APL 2 (EL 2)

Small Halfling Zombies (6): CR ¼; Small Undead; HD 2d12+3; hp 14; Init +0; Spd 30 ft. (6 squares; can't run); AC 11 (touch 10, flat-footed 11) [+1 natural armor]; Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, slam); SQ Undead, Single Actions Only; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 11, Con --, Int --, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills: None; *Feats:* Toughness.

Single Actions Only (Ex): Zombies have poor reflexes and can only perform a single move action or attack action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round, but only if it attempts a charge.

Encounter Six: Unholy Cow!¹

This is marked "Ritual Chamber" on *DM Aid #2*.

You find yourself looking into what once might have been the tavern's wine cellar, given how cool this place is. The room is surprisingly untouched by the fire and well preserved. A small child lies unconscious on the floor within a bloody red circle adorned with hand painted strange sigils. The boy is the missing Waldon child, and lies atop a large, freshly dug mound of dirt. Eight newly dug holes are in the floor near the entrance. Tracks emerge from them and pass out of the doorway in which you now find yourselves.

The addled Grandpa Zeb has buried the dead cow here and drawn the incomplete sigils and unholy circle here. The halfling zombies were raised and lurched out of the room. The circle protects the child for now. However if the players break the circle and remove the child, they awaken the malign beast that now stirs below the cursed ground. As the child is brought out of the room, the freshly slain thing rises from the dirt with a hellish *Moooo!* in search of blood and brains to eat!

¹ With our sincere apologies to Phil Rizzuto.

APL 2 (EL 1)

Bessie the Undead Cow (Large Cow Zombie): CR 1; Large Undead; HD 6d12+3; hp 27; Init +0; Spd 30 ft. (6 squares); AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15) [-1 size, +6 natural]; Atks +4 melee (1d8+4, slam); Face/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ Undead, Single Actions Only; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 11, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills: None; *Feats:* Toughness.

Single Actions Only (Ex): Zombies have poor reflexes and can only perform a single move action or attack action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round, but only if it attempts a charge.

Tactics: On its action it either engages those within range, or attempts a charge against the nearest PC. Bessie fights until dispatched.

Treasure: In the shallow halfling graves are some dirty but valuable silverware and plates. Silverware (100 gp)

Encounter Seven: The Man in Black

After defeating the undead, and breaking the circle, the players may gather up the missing child and the senile Grandpa Waldon, and leave the burned down tavern. However, their trespassing and the evocation of the black arts in Keoland's borders have drawn some attention to the mountaintop.

You exit the burned out tavern, happy to have survived your strange ordeal. However, cresting the rise of the mountain some forty feet away is a dark cloaked rider in black studded leather armor. He has a longbow and full quiver, and fine shortsword at his belt. The brooch design of an owl clasps his cloak to his throat, and adorns a shield strapped to his saddle.

“Hail there, please come out! You are trespassing on the King’s land. Did you not see the signs banning this area by order of the King and Darkwatch? Come out and explain yourselves, please.”

The mounted rider brings his horse up. He seems a capable ranger, and eyes you all warily.

The Rider introduces himself as Stealth (Rgr 6; AL LN; use DMG stats for NPC Ranger if needed), and on closer inspection he will be identified as a half-elf.

He will ask the group as a whole to explain their actions. Rudeness or confrontational PCs will gain the *Unfavorable Notice of the Darkwatch*. On the other

hand, reasonably polite PCs will gain the *Favorable Notice of the Darkwatch*.

Stealth will be exceptionally interested in Grandpa Waldon's actions and any information on Juril that the players may turn over, including the journal. After a satisfactory interrogation, the players are asked to take the small child home, and to stay away from Waldon Mountain in the future. Next time they decide to cross into Darkwatch-quarantined lands, they are warned, they may not be so lucky. Stealth is respectful but firm, perhaps seeing some of the PCs as allies in the war against the darkness. Or perhaps it is simply because he is alone, and does not need a confrontation with an adventuring party at this time...

Stealth will call in a Darkwatch strike team to re-consecrate the area and erase any undead threat to Keoland. Grandpa Waldon will be collected for “questioning” by Stealth if he is still alive. (Stealth gives his word as a Knight of the Realm that Grandpa will be taken care of and returned as soon as he's able) The players may proceed to the Waldon homestead. If the journal and Grandpa are turned over to Stealth, and the players are respectful, they will each be given a small gem as a thank you for their information.

Treasure: Small gems (40 gp)

Conclusion

The players make their way back to the Waldon family in a light drizzle of rain. The family has gathered local farmers, and Pa Waldon was about to lead them with torches and pitchforks up the Mountain to save his son, and in defiance of the Darkwatch edicts. They take Grandpa's “detainment” in stride, realizing there isn't much they can do and that it might be for the best.

If the child is successfully returned, then Pa Waldon gifts each player with one of the family's cattle in thanks. These fine cattle belonged to Grandpa Zeb and will fetch a great price in the next town over at market. They are worth 74 gp per player. Pa Waldon insists they take it, as it is the least the family can do as Grandpa Zeb put them all in such harms way. The players may spend the night and enjoy another Waldon feast. However, during the meal, strange quiet Grandma Waldon will seem to stare at the players, a strange demented half smile upon her face.

Treasure: Waldon's cattle (74 gp)

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter Three

Defeat, avoid or survive discharging the arrow trap (hey, that which does not kill you makes you stronger!): 90 xp

Encounter Four

Defeat Grandpa Zeb without killing him: 90 xp

Note: Slaying Grandpa earns ZERO xp

Encounter Five

Defeat the halfling zombies: 60 xp

Encounter Six

Defeat the Zombie Cow: 100 xp

Story Award

Save the child from Waldon Mountain: 90 xp

Total possible experience:

450 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.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter Five: Unholy Cow

APL 1: L: 100 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

Encounter Six: The Man in Black

APL 1: L: 40 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

Conclusion:

APL 1: L: 74 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: L: 214 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp - Total: 214 gp

Special

Unfavorable Notice of the Darkwatch: Your disposition towards the Knights of the Malagari has not gone unnoticed. The next time you interact with a member of the Darkwatch, you suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to all Cha-based checks involving this group. This item is then voided at the end of the adventure during which this modifier came into play.

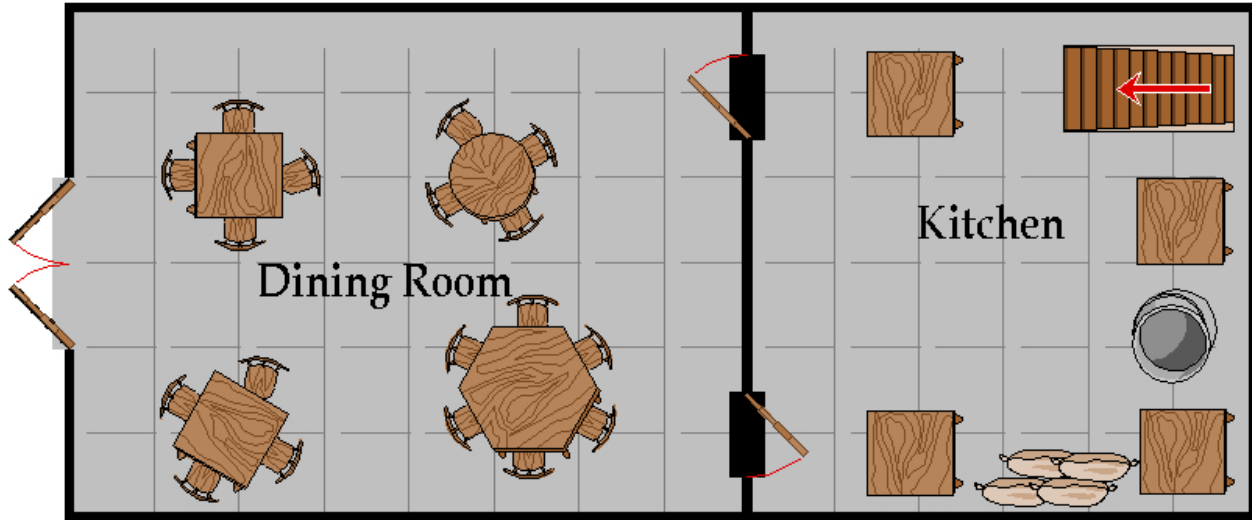
Favorable Notice of the Darkwatch: Your cooperation with the Knights of the Malagari has not gone unnoticed. The next time you interact with a member of the Darkwatch, you enjoy a +1 circumstance bonus to all Cha-based checks involving this group, except Intimidate. This item is then voided at the end of the adventure during which this modifier came into play.

Y'all Come Back Now, Ya Hear? You enjoy the hospitality of the Waldon family and can drop by for a home-cooked meal... even if Grandma Waldon keeps staring at you the whole time. In game terms, you may choose to accept a free Standard lifestyle anytime you play an adventure that takes place, wholly or in part, within the County of Flen in Keoland.

Items for the Adventure Record

None

DM Aid #1



The Golden Arches Tavern

One Square = Five Feet

DM Aid #2

