

Collateral

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Sunndi Regional Adventure

Version 0.9

by Pierre van Rooden

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A monster prowls the Vast Swamp, threatening the community of Eyedrinn and frustrating their promises of much needed support in the war. Since they seem unable to deal with it, it is up to you to help the Hextorites with their problem...whether they like it or not.

A one-round Sunndi regional adventure for characters level 3-11 (APLs 4-10).

Resources for this adventure [and the authors of those works] include *Fiend Folio* [various], *SND4-06 Bren's Men* [Pierre van Rooden], and *SND4-08 Saving Dolkann* [Pieter Sleijpen].

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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Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D® campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL™ gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2007.

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Players Read No Farther

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

Preparing for Play

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D rule books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1. For your convenience, that appendix is split by APL.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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 dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. 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.

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

3. Sum the results of step 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.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs 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 and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND

This is a standard one-round Sunndi regional adventure. Characters native to the Sunndi region 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. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A character that does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check, the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Wastri invasion in Sunndi has caused much pain and suffering. They have pushed deep into the Sunndi wetlands, razing the county of Corul. Many dead lie in their wake, and many are to follow.

One of the frontlines of the war is Eyedrinn, a town in the south of Sunndi, built on the delta of the river Pawluck. The town is ruled by a count heavily influenced by the priesthood of Hextor, a rather unique occurrence in the freedom loving kingdom.

It also has a unique position in the war: while most of the Sunndi army fight the bullywugs from the north, Eyedrinn lies south of the enemy forces. Since it has a sizeable army, they have the potential to severely disrupt the bullywug's supply lines and, by creating another front, impeding their progress.

Unfortunately, so far requests from Sunndi's army for Eyedrinn to push north and face the Wastri forces has not been honored. Eyedrinn has their own frontline to the south, and have decided that it is imperious to secure that line before they commit their forces elsewhere. Their refusal has caused more friction with the Trithereonite leaders in the army, who have always been opposed to the Hextorite's presence.

According to Eyedrinn, securing the southern front has yet failed. Their problems started about a year ago. When the bullywugs invaded Corul, they also ran a diversion attack on Eyedrinn, moving as close as the town itself before they were turned back. The bullywugs were not the biggest problem – Eyedrinn has an army quite capable of fighting the raging humanoids, and several defenses aimed specifically towards aquatic opponents. But in the darkness of the night, one menace showed itself that the Hextorites were not able to defend against. At the southern fringes, a nightmarish creature appeared at the wall. Towering above the men, shrouded in the darkness of the night, it vented its rage on the soldiers. The monster was impervious to attacks, and mercilessly slew any in its path. A horn was blown, but when reinforcements arrived, they were too late. The monster had gone, leaving few survivors in its wake – most of which died later for their wounds.

Ever since then, the creature has wandered the swamp and attacked outposts. Few can give an accurate description of the creature, as it attacks by night and makes sure to destroy any light sources so it can use the cover of darkness. The few accounts given set all kinds of rumors loose of its nature: that it was summoned by the Wastrians and went out of control, that it was a fiend, or a terrible undead giant.

The priests made sure to quench as much as these rumors as possible, even 'promoting' witnesses to the eastern front so as to remove their influence on morale. Despite this, rumors keep popping up and have even reached the ears of officers in the Sunndi army.

Now, Count Kestor has decided that if Eyedrinn cannot deal with their own front line problems, he will have it done for them. With Bren's help, he is now looking for adventurers that can hunt down this so-called monster and kill it.

The monster: Despite the rumors, the monster is not a creature of Wastri origin. It is, in fact, a rogue blood golem – a construct originally designed by Hextorites. Intended to fight the bullywugs, it now attacks anyone in its path.

The blood golem was commissioned by a priest named Arnassos. Arnassos is an old-school fanatic, who dislikes the uneasy peace that Eyedrinn has with the, in his eyes, anarchist leaders of Sunndi. He has often

pushed for a more confronting approach, but the church has chosen to ignore him, preferring a more subtle path to government reform.

When the Wastri war was looming, Arnassos' proposals for the use of advanced dark magic to gain an edge over bullywug and Tritheronite alike, likewise fell on deaf ears. Arnassos was furious, and cast about for possibilities to get things his way. To his surprise, he actually found someone willing to sponsor his quest, from the most unlikely of places. Reese, a necromancer with some influence in the Bleak Academy, proved willing to aid him. Reese claimed that the Academy was ruled by an unlawful depot, who was pushing towards aiding the Wastrians – something he was vehemently opposed to. Reese was willing to help Arnassos with magic and funds, obtained through sponsors that though alike, to set up a secret lab, out of sight, to work on the construction of a blood golem, one of the most devastating opponents ever created by Hextorites. Arnassos, blind by his own faith, never doubted Reese's devotion, and didn't even consider that he might have ulterior motives.

Reese, truthfully worked hard, recruiting a few servants he could trust, as well as the help of a armor and weapon smith, a man named Meryn. Like Arnassos, Meryn was told that he was working for the greater good – the destruction of the bullywug invaders. But as the building of the construct progressed, Meryn started to doubt. When Reese started to use blood sacrifices to power the golem and circumvent requirements he otherwise couldn't reach, Meryn realized he had let himself in with an utterly evil man. But by then, it was too late. He was too deep involved. When Reese found out that the blacksmith was less than devoted, he had a *mark of justice* cast on him that would prevent him from telling what he knew.

Finally Reese, dissatisfied with the golem's problems to navigate the swamp and avoid its pitfalls, decided a most unusual and dangerous rite: to awaken the golem, and give it sentience, so it would become a most powerful opponent.

In a bloody rite, held at the last moment on the evening of the Wastri army's push for Corul, the vilest of magic was released – Reese sacrificed Meryn's assistant, Pailin, and granted the creature intellect, and its own will.

The ritual backfired: the golem did awaken to sentience, but the vile magic also turned it insane with bloodlust. Moments after awakening, it turned upon its makers. Reese teleported away – but his assistants were killed, their blood to be used as a power source for the creature.

Only Meryn survived. The golem somehow was incapable of harming the man that it perceived as its maker. It left the blacksmith behind, and moved into the swamp, seeking new blood – and found it at is traced the bullywugs heading for Eyedrin.

Meryn escaped towards Eyedrin, where he sought out Arnassos. The priest, shocked that his creation had escaped his control, had the man locked up under false

accusations – so he would not be able to lead anyone to the place where the creature was built.

When Arnassos heard that the army was to send a group of adventurers to help get rid of the monster, he realized his ploy might soon be found out. Thus, he hastily gathered about a few remaining trustees – including a few quite vile men – and ordered them to find the location where the monster was created, and destroy any evidence there pointing at his involvement, instead planting evidence that the Wastrians created the golem as a mockery of a divine justice.

Ideally, the men were also to capture the monster – possibly immobilize it, so it's 'flaw' could be dealt with. Failing that, Arnassos hoped that even if the adventurers would slay and survive the monster, they would be gullible enough to buy the evidence left behind, and nothing would be left to incriminate him.

To guide the party of trustees to the actual location, Arnassos arranged for the release of Meryn, so he could be used as an unwilling guide. Once the man would have led them there, the group were to kill him and leave him behind as a scapegoat, so he would never incriminate them – Arnassos didn't put much trust in the *mark of justice* that should silence Meryn.

The assassin: Arnassos is not the only one who would like the involvement of the Hextorites to stay hidden. Someone hired an assassin – a woman named Roslyn - to make sure the PCs do not uncover things that need to stay buried. The true identity of this agent is, for the moment, left to speculation.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Introduction: The PCs are hired by Jothwert, a companion of count Bren, to investigate the problems that Eyedrin seems to have with a wandering monster. The PCs should do this on some low profile, as the Hextorites do not really like interference.

Encounter 1 [Entering Eyedrin]: The PCs arrive in Eyedrin. Due to Jothwert's incapability to keep secrets, the Hextorites already know of their arrival. The PCs are met with captain Veeto, and immediately set up with two Eyedrin guards, to tag them during their investigation.

Encounter 2 [Baerrow's Borrows]: The PCs meet Jothwert's cousin, Baerrow, who informs them on matter sin town, and offers them the sue of his pet wolverine, Beauty.

Encounter 3[Spot Checks]: PCs can question Orland Weets, A few soldiers have some stories to tell, and it may come evident that the government is eager to keep things quiet.

Encounter 4 [The Vast Swamp]: The PCs enter the swamp, either to search randomly for tracks, or possibly following the general direction suggested by Weets or some of the soldiers.

Eventually, PCs should head towards the south-western bogs.

Encounter 5 [The Bogs]: The PCs find Meryn trapped in a tree – in a swampy area infested with zombies. He is former companions are dead, slain a hours earlier by the creature. Meryn attempts to fabricate a story on why he is there, disguising his real mission. He admits to knowing where the creature went, and can be a guide if the PCs decide to follow him.

Encounter 6 [Blood]: The PCs track the creature (or follow Meryn) to a undeeep lake, in which an unnatural hill seems to harbor the creature's lair. To enter, they have to pass through the water, and are quickly under attack of swarms of blood bloaters. As they enter, they risk triggering an alarm.

Encounter 7 [The Bunker]: The PCs find the creature's layer, and find out the truth – that the creature is an awakened golem, created through foul magic on orders of someone from Eyedrin. They also find evidence of Meryn involvement.

Encounter 8 [Roslyn Strikes]: Roslyn, recognizing Meryn as a threat to her employer, attempts to kill him, and to force the PCs to destroy the evidence, threatening to otherwise release a poisonous gas.

Encounter 9 [The Fist of Hextor]: A tapestry on the wall animates to spell doom on the PCs – moments later, the blood golem returns, and vents its rage on the PCs.

Encounter 10 [Homebound]: Returning home, the PCs are stopped by a force of Eyedrin guards, ordering them to attend a meeting with Lord Jarinto.

Encounter 11 [Paperwork]: Lord Jarinto desires to know what is going on. His brother, Huandor, the high priest of Hextor, also desires to know what the PCs found out.

When the PCs explain their findings, Anassos is summoned. It may come clear that Arnassos is not the only priest that knew of the monster – it was Huandor who hired Roslyn to cover up the Eyedrin involvement ...

Huandor explains to the PCs that revealing the true nature of the monster will cause a rift that may be averse to the outcome of the war.

Conclusion: The PCs return to Deltrees to meet with Jothwert. They have a moral dilemma: do they reveal the truth, and thus threaten to ruin a strategically important alliance, or do they hide the evil they witnessed?

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

This Scenario starts with the PCs being sent on a mission to aid the Hextorites of Eyedrin with their trouble – whether the Hextorites like it or not.

Since the PCs are not going to be paid for the mission, it is important to determine how they are being motivated. For Sunndi regional characters, saving the Kingdom may be enough motivation. Others may need more reasons.

To aid in finding motivations, or to add a personal touch, you can have individual members of the party being recommended by different NPCs or groups. Almost every major Sunndi organization (and several from outside the region) has a stake in the war, and recognizes – grudgingly, perhaps – that the support of Eyedrin is required:

- Bren has been asked to organize an aiding force, Any member of Bren's Men has therefore been invited by Bren himself. Given how the non-existent hierarchy among the 'men' works, PCs may actually already know everything about the mission (and likely from Jothwert).
- All other organisations involved in the war (The Sunndi Army, the Solar Shields, the Disciples of the Phoenix and the Royal Warders) have been asked to recruit members or affiliates.
- Both the Jade Mask and the Shroud have stakes at anything that goes on, and may send members, if only to 'keep informed'.
- While the Tritherionites are not particularly eager to aid the Hextorites, some of them would find it highly amusing if their champions would succeed where the Hextorites would fail.
- Jothwert, who does the hiring, is a distant relative of Markavios, a halfling who organizes pit fights in Pitchfield. Members of Markavios' Pit fighters may therefore have been sent down to 'help his wanna-be-a-hero cousin-twice-removed'.
- PCs who don't fall in any category may simply know people personally and been invited based on that. Anyone who has ever earned the favor of Count Kestor or Nolin Bren has been asked to attend by either a formal letter (in case of Kestor), or a personal messenger (in the case of Bren).
- Otherwise, PCs may accidentally have been recruited 'off the street' by Jothwert while visiting the village of Bren. After all, why let a capable looking adventurer pass by if you can stick him with a mission? It's not like Jothwert has any truck with formalities...

Captain Sandalee Glientyle, Jothwert the Methiculous, and Ulendesse were met first in SND4-06 Bren's Men.

Roslyn was also met in that scenario – though she was well disguised then. Most PCs only knew her as 'Rosy the barmaid', and it is unlikely that they recognize her until it is too late.

Also check if any PC received the favor or disfavor of count Jarinto in SND4-04 Saving Dolkann. Take this into account when the PCs encounter Jarinto – his behavior towards a particular PC should reflect his opinion of the character.

Also take note of anyone who played COR5-02 The Voice of Reason, and especially if anyone bought the Thrall Medallion.

Finally, One NPC, Meryn, is under the influence of a *mark of justice* spell. Meryn will be hit by wracking pains (his Con drops to 1), if he would ever reveal anything about building the blood golem. You are advised to read upon the spell on *Players's Handbook* page 252.

INTRODUCTION

If not having been dragged in by Jothwert, or a member of Bren's Men, the PCs have been told by their various contacts to go to the village of Bren in Brennathar, and meet Captain Sandalee Glientyle in the Phantom Player, at morning's glory.

PCs who met Glientyle remember her as an amiable but strict blond half-elf. However when they arrive she isn't there.

The Phantom Player is the small, mediocre and, typically, only inn in the village of Bren. Besides the sign, which shows a ghost on a stage, it is not very spectacular. This early in the morning, it is also rather quiet.

When you arrived last night, the place was filled with people – locals, but also soldiers, likely from the military camp around the ruins that you passed getting here, and the small sentry posts that you had to check in with as you moved south.

But as you gather in the common room as dawn breaks, there is almost nobody.

It is warm and humid inside. There are some theater props hanging on the wall and above the bar hangs a shield with a big sun painted on it.

A man stands behind the bar, polishing invisible spots on his glasses. On a bench near the window lies a blond short-haired woman. You recall her from last night, when you arrived. She was drinking quite seriously and not interested in conversation. The toll of the boozing seems to be paid, as occasionally there is a groan from her direction.

There is no captain Glientyle to greet you, though there are various other people, apparently also waiting for her.

The Phantom Player is an inn owned by a man named Ulqus, currently manning the bar. It is a small inn, with moderate fare.

Ulqus is amiable and a gossip, but he has a talent of getting things wrong and most of what he supposedly 'knows' is utter rubbish. For instance, while half the town may know the details, he is entirely unaware of the mission.

☛ **Ulqus:** Male human Com1; NG.

The woman asleep on the bench is Ulendesse, a monk who was kicked out of her monk order for reasons nobody has ever been able to pry from her lips. She now trains as a drunken master, and is quite often (like right now) caught drinking herself in a stupor. Most people think she has a dark past, and she is easy to upset, but she has turned to be a good friend to Jothwert. Ulendesse is aware of the mission, and that Jothwert is to brief the PCs, but she is out cold and won't rise for a while.

☛ **Ulendesse:** Female human (Suel) Mnk10/Drunken Master4; LN;

After the PCs wait for about half an hour, Jothwert bumbles in, entering with any early rising PCs he met on the street, and any PC members of Bren's Men (who quite possibly lifted him from his bed):

A halfling with really short trimmed hair stumbles inside. He looks only half dressed, his cloak is half over his shoulders and he is still tucking his blouse in his pants.

"Ah.. Uh... Up already eh? Ah... Sorry, sorry. Just woke up. It's just, drat, so early, what kind of time is this to meet? Argh.

Ah ... well, let's get it over with. My name is Jothwert. I'm here to brief you."

Jothwert the Meticulous is a halfling rogue, a former cat burglar. Bren caught him by sheer accident when he attempted to steal a valuable medallion from Bren's mansion. Bren had the burglar whipped, and afterward enrolled the halfling in his group. After all, a man that can get into Bren's bedroom without invitation is an asset. Jothwert is still quite mischievous, but he has gained the trusted respect of the other men and women.

☛ **Jothwert the Meticulous:** Male halfling Rog11; CG; Sleight of Hand +22.

If the PCs may ask where Glientyle is, Jothwert replies:

"Ah. Yes. well... She got. Ah.Ill. She is a bit fragile. Can't say what got into her..."

"Probably" – the woman on the bench seems to have woken and is now half raised, leaning on her elbows, "the mushrooms."

Jotwhert gives an embarrassed grin.

"Ah yes, well.... why do I have to get up then?"

"Probably because you put them in her food as a joke."

Jotwhert throws up his arms. "I didn't know she was allergic!"

"Yes, you did."

"I didn't know it was that SERIOUS!"

The woman shrugs, and lowers herself on the bench again.

"Just get on with it," she mutters.

Jothwert turns to the PCs to take their names, then sits himself at a table. Ulqus meanwhile gets him a large mug of tea.

"Right, well, I have been asked to brief you with an important and top secret mission..."

"Which means," a voice of the bench drifts in, "that by now the entire town knows about it."

Jothwerth glances annoyed in her direction, but continues.

"Yeah, well, the thing is, we are having some difficulty with the bullywugs. They are marching north and getting nearer every day. Very difficult to stop them, the wetlands are their terrain, nasty clammy toads that they are.

We need all forces, and particularly, we need some support from the south, from Eyedrin. If we can get those armor plated dung heads..."

"...He means the Hextorites..."

"...yeah... if we can get them to mount an attack from the south, that could really help us with stuff. It would seriously disrupt their...eh..."s

"...supply lines..." the woman prompts with some exasperation.

"Whatever. The thing is the dung head Hextorites have issues of their own. They say. And it's an internal affair. They say. They'd say anything, mind. However you put it, they are far too busy with their own stuff to lend support further up north.

Now, 'cause we need them, like it or not, we got to get some people out there to help them with their problem. Now they sent some diplomats over but those guys don't do squat but talk. Those dung beetles need a visit of some people that know about action, and solve the problem. Only we can't send the army, cause, well, we need them here too.

So we are going to send some expendables in the thick to do stuff for us. And with expendables I mean you, of course."

The halfling winks at you, implying that the last bit was a joke.

"Questions?"

Jothwert awaits the PCs' questions. He is not very organized, so if the PCs don't ask, they may be sent on their way entirely unprepared.

About the problem: From what I heard, it's nothing much. Just a monster. Well, ok, a BIG monster. I don't know specifics but they were assaulted by it when the bullywugs first attacked, and it is still wondering about. It's some big ugly swamp thing, some weird abomination. They haven't been able to deal with it. It has killed dozens of soldiers. See? Not a big thing. Easy to solve."

This is all Jothwert knows –bits of it are even made up on the spot. Whole he is right about the monster, he has no clue what the thing really is.

About pay: "We are a bit short on cash. Ok, a lot. Ok, so we don't have any. All stuff is going into the war machine. So we can't give you any coin. Or gems. Or anything of value. Look, it's a patriot thing. There is a war out. Do it for your country. Well. Do it for my country, then.

But, ok... look, we won't let you go out unprepared. We'll pay for your food and lodgings, and I got these vouchers, you can use them to get basic supplies and what I like to refer to as 'consumables'. Here, have some. I got plenty"

Each PC obtains a set of vouchers. The vouchers represent credit, that can be used to obtain equipment in any Sunndi regional, or any metaregional scenario that starts in Sunndi. The value of the vouchers is dependent on APL:

APL 4: Coin – 300 gp

APL 6: Coin – 450 gp

APL 8: Coin – 600 gp

APL 10: Coin – 750 gp

Credit can be used to buy any items that are normally Core Access through the LGCS, and any items to which this scenario grants regional access (wand of cure light wounds).

About who to contact/what to do in Eyedrin: "Well, the folks there are not too keen on us, so it's probably best if you stay low level. I have looked for a covert way to help you around there, so I briefed my cousin..."

"...which likely means," the woman cuts in, "that by now everyone knows you are coming..."

"...and," the halfling continues as if the interruption didn't happen, "he is called Baerrow. He owns a pawn shop."

He eyes the woman warily, but she just shrugs. "I'm saying nothing."

"Right. Well, he'll guide you through town. He knows all the good spots."

- "Especially the sleazy bars."

"I just knew you were going to say something like that."

About Eyedrin: "Well, it's a town under siege, totally walled off. Don't know too much about it except of course it's crawling with Hextorites. I did hear from my cousin though that it's peculiar as what it's built on top of the river. You'd say they'd be easy pickings for the bullywugs but I guess they have defenses that defeat approach over water. But never been there myself..."

They are quite strict there, though. Draconic laws. Try not to get into trouble."

About getting there: "Well, we are pretty close to it, so it's easy. You just go south and... uhm... now aight, that's the frontline... so... uhm... you get north, well, you go back, and then you go eastwards, past Deltrees, yes, and then south, if you skirt the woods you likely avoid the masses of bullywug patrols, and then, follow the edge of the Vast Swamp – look out for prowling undead - and you're there. If you get past the guard posts and don't get shot. Piece of cake.

Now, when you get back, you do the same thing, only... uhm... reversed, and, ehm... you know what? I'll just meet you at Deltrees when you come back.

About the Hextorites: They fled down south in the past, when we whooped their behinds at the end of the war. We tolerate them cause they are a buffer between us and the swamp.

A bit hard to know who you should be rooting for: the Hexes for keeping bullywugs off our backs, or the toads for keeping the Hextorites busy.

Ok, ok... I guess we are rooting for the Hextorites..."

About the ruins/military camp: That place? Well, the people from Corul had to evacuate when it was taken. Most moved north, a few stuck around right here. There are several people that offered shelter to refugees. Count Kestor also needed a place to set up camp, so he moved his soldiers to the ruins. Has been used before. I think it was an old temple ruin or something centuries ago. It's sort of an improvised headquarters for our forces now.

Not a good place to meet though, I'm glad Glientyle set us up here.

Make sure that the PCs know that they can get store vouchers for supplies before walking off, and that this is part of their payment. If the PCs don't ask, Ulendesse reminds them. The PCs also receive a set of papers identifying them as representatives of the Sunndi army, allowing free passage to Eyedrin.

Any other information is basically up to them to acquire from Jothwert.

ENCOUNTER 1: ENTERING EYEDRINN

Travelling to Eyedrin was far less easy as getting to Bren. It isn't even having to avoid the Wastri forces or swamp monster s- it is the numerous checkpoints, where your papers are looked through again and again. The closer you get to the south, the more often you are stopped by patrols. Close to the swamp, all of them are led by a man in the tell-tale black armor of the Eyedrin Hextorites, and you keep answering the same questions.

Finally then, you reach Eyedrin. From a slight rise in the landscape, you can see it lying. A large wall and numerous patrols are set around the village, which seems to consist of a network of peers and wooden bridges, built beside and mostly on top of the Pawluck river. Where it flows into the swamp, it has gone shallow but enormously wide, at least 600 feet, forming a pool dotted with little islands, on which the town is built. Several dams regulate the flow of water in the town, but it all looks like a very wet and humid, and above all uncomfortable place to live.

The only thing towering over the town houses are the guard towers, and a large keep, built along the river at the very eastern part of the village.

It seems you have just one more checkpoint to pass.

A description of Eyedrin can be found in Appendix 2.

Even with the papers Joreth gave them, the PCs have to suffer through various rigorous checks if they want to enter town.

Their arms and equipment are all checked. With the possibility of Wastri spies entering town, all weapons except simple weapons are normally confiscated, to be retrieved when they leave.

PCs that show their papers, or any who are actual member of the Sunndi army meta-organization, as well as any PC that has a military rank (such as members of Bren's Men), are exempted from this.

If PCs desire to stay unknown, and do not show their papers, they have to hand in their weapons just like everyone else. If they refuse to hand in their weapon they are not allowed in. They'll have to stay outside. There are no exceptions.

Sneaking weapons in is unwise – anyone found on the streets with a weapon he is not supposed to have is immediately charged with attempted assault – regardless of whether he drew the weapon or not. Attempted assault is punishable by ten weeks of hard labor - which means digging at the defenses of the town.

Actually drawing a weapon in town is cause for immediate arrest for heavy assault - regardless of rank. Heavy assault is punishable by six months of hard labor.

Attacking a guard is charged as treason, and means death (no appeal).

Only domesticated animals are allowed into town. Wild animals are not allowed, though with a DC 15 Diplomacy check a PC may convince the guards that this wolf is actually a big dog. Obviously wild animals (such as bears) are not let in (even if they are sentient such as animals with the celestial template). Familiars are generally considered domesticated (though really strange advanced familiars may be refused). Smuggling an animal in town is likewise treated as attempted assault.

Everybody except the guards has to be inside come nightfall. Being out at night means arrest and four days of hard labor.

All these measures seem draconic but PCs need to remember that they are entering a town at war, ruled by Hextorites. This is far different than pleasant Brennathar.

It is possible PCs are cocky, but there is not point in making a scene – PCs that resort to violence or are abusive to the guards are arrested, stripped of gear, and charged with attempted assault. In short, the PCs either comply with orders, or refuse to enter town. In the last case, it may be harder to find out what is going on, but since there are also guards outside the city gates, they could start their investigation there: continue with encounter 3.

Once the PCs have entered town, continue with the following:

You finally step onto the muddy square past the town gates. It feels like you stepped into a hive. It is

amazing how many people can live in such a small town, the buzz of people going about their business is amazing. Not a few inside are guards, but you notice that there are quite a group of common people in here too. None look too well off, but all are far to busy to dwell on their meager existence.

Everything here seems to be coated in a grim. The streets filled with mud, and everything of wooden bears a coating of algae.

Unless the PCs tried to sneak in using a disguise (and without showing their papers), they have been spotted long ago. Captain Veeto is to have a word with them.

If PCs snuck in under disguise, they are not noticed, and the following encounter doesn't take place. In that case, the PCs are not assigned Delin and Roslyn as guards. This may make a number of encounters in town (such as talking to soldiers) more difficult.

Eventually, the PCs presence is noted - when they leave town, Delin and Roslyn are sent after them. Delin tracks the PCs, and the two catch up on them in Encounter 8, where Roslyn makes her move (see the troubleshooting section in that encounter).

Next the gate, a door opens in the guard house, and a man in breastplate, the sign of Eyedrin - Hextor's fist over a triple wave - on his chest. He stares at you with disdain.

"Are you Bren's men?"

Whether the PCs admit or deny the question is not very relevant - captain Veeto, the man in charge of the city guards, is already aware of the PCs purpose here. There's no Bluff check that can get them past him.

♣ **Captain Veeto:** Male human fighter 7; LE, see Appendix 1 - All APLs;

♣ **Guards (5):** Male human fighter 3; LN, see Appendix 1 - All APLs;

Regardless of what the PCs answer he continues:

"Get in here." He points his thumb towards the guard tower. "I have a word with you."

The PCs better follow - disrespect of the law is harshly punished in Eyedrin (generally a week of hard labor teaches a lawbreaker some respect).

The guardhouse is simple room with one table and a rack for clothes and arms. There are not even any chairs here. A ladder leads up to the next floor.

Two guards - a man and a woman - in chain mail are posted near the door.

The man walks into the room, then briskly turn around.

"I am Veeto.", he says, "Captain of the guards of Eyedrin. This is my town. This is my place. Here count my rules."

The captain poses a moment to gauge the PCs reactions, but as soon as one starts talking, he interrupts and goes on:

"I know why you have been sent here," he continues. "And who you are." He takes a note out of his belt, and quickly rattles your names from the piece of paper.

"Right? Well. I can tell you that we don't like trouble makers here. We don't like people nosing about and disrupting command. If it were up to me, I'd kick you all out of this town right now."

The man eyes you menacingly.

"But apparently others have different ideas. I have been told to be 'cooperative'. Make sure you can conduct your mission. Make sure you stay out of trouble.

Well... they didn't tell me how to do that, and they didn't tell me to be nice.

So. Planning to GO anywhere? Planning to DO anything? If you are, you are going or doing things my way."

The captain awaits a response from the PCs.

He currently has an attitude of unfriendly, and it is not likely to improve much. The best a Diplomacy check can get him - if PCs even attempt to try - is indifferent. If the PCs ever manage to make him hostile (by using Intimidate, attacking, or being very, very rude), he snaps and has them ordered in chains for disrespecting an officer (a week of hard labor).

The less cooperative they are, the more annoyed he gets (though never to breaking point unless the PCs give reason). If the PCs are cooperative, and explain what they are planning, that improves his mood, though it is a futile effort to warm him up.

If he can be made indifferent for the moment, he continues:

"Good. So you choose to work with me. I am sure we can get along fine if you follow the law and stay out of private business. What constitute private, I can hear you think? Well, I'll make it easy for you."

He motions the two guards at the door over.

"These are privates Belin and Roslyn. They'll be guiding you through the town and beyond - Belin is a decent tracker. They can get you in and out of town, and they know their way around. And they'll tell you when you are getting into private matters.

Do we understand each other? Then I guess you should be off on your way..."

If the PCs are uncooperative, the captain gets enough after some arguing.

"Enough! I am tolerating you in my town and that is that. You are a burden and I have no time to deal with you."

He motions the two guards at the door over.

"These are privates Belin and Roslyn. They'll be your escort. They'll be my eyes and ears, so I know what you're up to. Anything you want to do – it goes through them. Anywhere you want to go – they'll follow you. Got that?"

Now... get out of my sight!"

Once outside again, the party is expanded with two people.

Creatures: Belin and Roslyn appear to be typical Eyedrinns guards. They follow their orders to the letter, and follow the PCs everywhere, keeping note of where they go and what they do.

Belin is what he seems to be – a tracker in service of the Eyedrinns army. He is not a very social figure, being uncomfortable around humans. He is a good tracker, and can pull his weight in a fight if needed, but he is not a thinker and not someone to take initiative.

Roslyn is a different story. Roslyn is not her real name, and she is certainly no common guard. She is a professional assassin, a master in disguises and an expert liar. She has been hired to make sure the PCs do not uncover things that need to stay buried. Should the PCs find evidence that is detrimental to the priests, she is to 'take measures'. Until then, she should aid the PCs, as the priesthood desire the 'monster' to be destroyed – as long as their involvement stays hidden. As a professional assassin, Roslyn doesn't ask too many questions. However, she has deduced that the monster is beyond her own capabilities, and she expects the Hextories caused its appearance but lost control.

Roslyn may have encountered the PCs before. In "SND4-06 Bren's Men", she was hired to murder the Ahllissan emissary. She was disguised as a bar maid then, and in the past two years she has grown and changed a lot. She looks nothing like that time.

She tries to stay in the background. Only if a PC who met her before (played Bren's Men) actually pays closer attention to her and engages her in conversation, he or she may make a DC 18 Spot check to notice that she "looks familiar". A second, DC 24 Spot check recognizes her as "Rosy the barmaid" from Bren. Even then, a player or PC may not realize that she was an assassin. If they do, and accuse her of it, she claims that she was pardoned, and now works "for the good of the kingdom". She refuses to explain why she was pardoned.

If PCs go so far as to check her story (for which they need to visit the government building), they find that she is right, and that Roslyn had received a recommendation from High Priest Huanador.

Captain Veeto is unaware of all Roslyn's assignment – he thinks he picked her out of his recruits himself.

♣ **Belin:** Male human Rgr5; hp 28; LN; see Appendix 3.

♣ **Roslyn:** Female human Mnk1/Ftr2/Rog2/Assn1; hp 33; LE; see Appendix 3.

Development: As implied, PCs can use the two as guides. They know the town well and can tell about some of the defenses, such as the colony of blood bloaters in the water (see Appendix 2 and 4). While they know little of the monster attacks, they can help the PCs get into contact with guards that do. They also know where Baerrow lives, and can escort the PCs here.

PCs may consider getting rid of the guards, but this would be unwise. They would be violating an order, and should they 'loose' their companions, the town guard are on their heels within the hour, arresting them for disregarding guards orders or obstruction of the law. Of course, once the PCs leave town and enter the swamp, it may be easier to lose them.

Troubleshooting: Eyedrinns is not a friendly environment. It's brutal and strict and punishment is harsh. PCs should be careful and try to roll with the punches rather than go against the grain. Should they push it, it is your task as a DM to remind them of the danger: their PCs may get arrested – which basically takes them out of the adventure.

If PCs persevere in bad behavior, they may get arrested. There are hundreds of armed men in Eyedrinns – some of them quite high level. Hence, unless PCs have a trick so they can flee (like a teleport spell), they'll be arrested and sentenced to hard labor (costing between 1 and 26 TU, depending on the violation).

Note that anyone who gets into trouble like this loses all favors with the Sunndi Army or the Hextories of Eyedrinns. Anyone with a rank in the army is demoted.

Note that should one PC poses problems, the remainder of the party need not necessarily be arrested too.

Also, PCs have the option to leave town – in that case, they have to find their own ways to talk to the guards (encounter 3), or look for the monster in the swamp (encounter 4).

ENCOUNTER 2: BAERROW'S BORROWS

You have happened upon a long peer that runs along the river line, to small shack on the center of a rock outcropping. It looks in a disheveled state. The windows are boarded up, and the roof is patched with all matter of junk.

All matter of items are leaning against the building walls, or stacked on a number of rafts tied to poles. Nets tied between the peer and various mooring poles, contain even more junk; driftwood, various iron and copper implements, and a few weapons so far gone you would do better to fight with your bare hands. Propped up against the shop, like a big doll, is even something that you recognize – after a few tries – as a thoroughly rusted full plate armor.

A sign near the start of the peer reads "The Borrowers".

A large ferocious crocodile is chained to the door of the shack. As it senses your approach, it jumps up, and, it's jaws wide, darts at you at an amazing speed, it's chain jostling behind it.

The creature is Beauty, Baerrow's 'domesticated' crocodile pet. It is one of a few creatures that are allowed inside the gates.

☛ **Beauty:** female crocodile; hp 22; Monster Manual page 271.

Beauty runs up to the PCs, but before she can reach them, the chain pulls taut. She shakes her head and snaps at the PCs, but can't get closer.

Druids or ranger PCs can try to befriend Beauty, using their wild empathy ability. Beauty starts as unfriendly.

Once befriended, or if befriending her fails or is not attempted, Baerrow comes out.

The door to the shack opens, and a bespeckled halfling peers out.

"Beauty!" he shouts, "Heel!! Let the friendly people alone!"

Instantly, the croc turns, and dashes at the young man, who now steps outside.

"Good girl!" he comments, as the beast twirls around him, almost tripping him with her tail.

"No worries!," he shouts your way. "She's a real softy. She won't harm a fly! I guess you are the people Jothwert sent over? I'm Baerrow! Come on in!"

Assuming the PCs confirm, he beckons them in.

☛ **Baerrow:** male halfling Exp3 (AL N).

Beauty glares at them (except any PCs that befriended her), but doesn't attack.

Inside, the shack is even more stacked with stuff. All matter of items can be seen – most of it useless, though here and there you see items that could be of moderate use - lanterns, animal skins, rope and other gear.

Baerrow works himself to the end. You can hardly stand in here – but somehow it is possible to find a place to sit down – if it isn't exactly comfortable.

"So," the halfling says, "can I get you a drink? I guess you are full of questions eh? Eager to start?"

Baerrow has mint tea, cinnamon tea, blackroot tea... in fact, a whole variety of tea... but nothing else. He offers a cup to everyone – including to the guards, who refuse.

Once settled, he is ready to answer questions. Like Jothwert, he doesn't volunteer any unless they ask – he has no clue what the PC want or need to know.

Here are thing Baerrow knows bits and pieces of:

The monster origin: "Well, the beast turned up several months ago, when we were under attack of the First Wave – that's how they call the first organized attack of the toadmen. Terrible slaughter, and we might have been overrun if it weren't for the fact that we were prepared, and the town defenses were set up to deal with those water treaders. Otherwise my guts would now be hanging from a pike!

But anyway, that's the first time the toads used their critter. It turned up on the south walls, and wreaked havoc – took out almost everyone there, quite some of its own people too. When reinforcements arrived it was gone, but it has been back often enough since then."

The monster's looks: "Not sure what it looks like. It's enormous, that's for sure. I heard it has multiple arms, and moves like lightning. Ravenous appetite too, form the horror stories I heard. But I don't know too much about it, I mean I never actually saw it. You should probably ask someone else."

The monster behavior/sightings: "It attacks at night mostly, at least I don't know of any other attacks. It stays to the swamp though. Good thing too, imagine it wandering the country side."

If PCs ask for specific locations where it has been sighted, Baerrow doesn't know, but says that friend of him, Oland Weets, is a logistics guy and he may know more.

Casualties: "Oh, I don't keep count on the number of dead, but dozens, really. We loose guards every week, though of course you can't be sure if they all fall to the monster. But some definitely do. And the priests, they don't let on how many dead there really were. We have to guess. Something about army intelligence... not sure how intelligent it is if you don't know the number of dead?"

The bullywugs: "Nasty buggers" *spits in a corner * "filthy little racist beast. They are the most brutal creatures ever. They are totally incensed, and they move through the water quicker than us, so if we can't bait them on dry land we are done with. Lucky the town has it's own means to get them out of the water."

The town defenses: "Well, you haven't been in the water yet, have you? That's cause of these."

Baerrow points out a glass jar on a shelf. It is filled with water. Inside it buoys a strange looking blob. It looks like the white of an egg, but it is flecked with red. It moves about, apparently alive.

"Blood bloaters. They suck the blood out of anyone in the water. The army releases a whole colony of these little monsters whenever the toads attack. Swimming her isn't very safe. Kills all the fish, but the bullywugs are weakened, take the drive out of them. Those critters can suck a man dry in minutes."

The swamp: “Oh, I don’t go there. It’s wet. And there’s plants, and mosquitoes, and all kinds of monsters. Bullywugs. And undead. And of course a whole load of creatures ready to leach the blood out of you.”

If PCs ask what he means by the last one, he points out the blood bloater.

Witnesses: “Well, most people who met the monster are dead. I don’t really know of any guards that survived. Odd, really. Like it doesn’t like witnesses? You could ask my friend, Oland. Maybe he has heard of any. He knows all about how the troops move.”

How he can help them: “I wish to help you, but I am not going monster hunting. I can lend you some of my stuff, if you like?”

I got all kinds of gear useful in the swamp. Tents, torches, gel that protects against mosquitoes – it smells though. I have some old weapons but they are a bit rusty.

Oh, and you can take Beauty! If you need any protection, she’ll help all right!”

Most of what PCs can borrow from Baerrow is simple gear – most of what can be found in table 7-8 (Adventuring Gear only) in the PHB, as well as a small collection of simple weapons. Everything he has is second hand though, and none of it is masterwork.

The weapons are so rusted they have a -2 penalty to hit and damage. The full plate that the PCs saw outside works, once cleaned a bit, but confers an additional -2 armor check penalty (to a total of -10) and anyone wearing it loses their Dex bonus to AC.

Beauty may, of course, be useful (especially to a low level party), as she can fight and is well at home in the swamp, but she is hard to handle. Like all untrained animals, she needs a Handle Animal check for her to perform any tasks. Unless the PCs manage to befriend her, she does her work sullenly and any animal handling checks are at a -4 penalty. Her tricks are Heel, Attack, Follow, and Stay.

Once the PCs have their information – and possible borrowed items or Beauty – they can move on to investigate further (encounter 3), or get into the swamp to search (encounter 4).

ENCOUNTER 3: SPOT CHECKS

There are a number of people the PCs may try to question if they desire more information. Baerrow can introduce them to his friend, Oland Weets, who works in field provisions. PCs may also decide to talk to the guards, or, if they are daring, visit the the priests or the local government.

OLAND WEETS

Every army has this person that knows everybody, and that everybody knows. The person that can tell you

where everything else is, and how expensive it is, that can get you what you need when you need it. In Eyedrin, this person is Oland Weets.

Weets manages the army warehouse, and is in responsible for the distribution of equipment and rations. Since he also sets up supply lines, he is intimately aware of where troops are – and when disastrous things happen to them.

Baerrow can easily bring the PCs in contact with him.

You are led to a large, flat building near the town gates. The storage rooms of most of the armies supplies.

Horses are being saddled and shod, ferocious dogs are kept in pens, and the building itself is filled with crates and barrels, containing the fair that is to keep the soldiers fed.

Weets is a slightly obese man. He grows his thinning hair long, possibly the vain hope that it will concealing the balding patch on the top of his head.

He looks at you questioningly, and you have the feeling you are being measured up.

“You’re no soldiers,” he says finally. “so I don’t think you are here to stock up on rations. You need something more specific, then, I guess?”

While Weets is willing to help the PCs, he isn’t exactly eager. If the PCs explain that they are here for information on the monster, he seems hesitant. Only if the PCs also mention that Baerrow sent them, or that they are his friends, he mellowes.

Should the PCs have Beauty with them, Weets first demands to know how they came in possession of the wolverine.

“Ah, well. A friend of Baerrow is a friend of mine. One of my best suppliers. I don’t know if I can help you much though, but I’ll see what I can do. What do you wish to know?”

Weets is willing to tell, but still uncomfortable – especially with any guards present. Quite a few people that were too talkative recently got moved – generally to the frontlines.

The following is what Weets can tell the PCs. Since he doesn’t know what the PCs need, have the PCs offer some questions and select his answers from there :

- **First appearance:** The monster appeared during the siege of the bullywugs, almost a year ago. The bullywugs attacked Eyedrin with a small force. It turned out to be a mere distraction as their actual goal was Corul, miles to the east.
- **Since then:** It has wandered and made casualties with alarming frequency.
- **Last appearance:** The last post to be attacked was – as far as Weets knows- the Widow Tower – a wooden tower at the fringes of where the Hextorites control

swamp territory. Weets can point it out on the map. The last attack was only a week ago.

- **Number of attacks:** At least one guard post is attacked every two weeks or so. Weets deducts this from the type of supplies that are needed and when supply lines are sundered.
- **Number of Deaths:** Weets is sure there are quite a few deaths, but the army tries to cover it up. They try to prevent the enemy from finding out how successful they are, and demoralizing the men.
- **Where the attacks take place:** Apart from the siege, the monster hasn't shown itself near the town. The attacks are in a well defined area. Weets can draw a crude map showing where most of the attacks occur – going by the logistic info he has. Hand the PCs Player Handout 3.
- **The monster itself:** Very few people saw the monster – and few that did talk about it, so it is unknown what it looks like. All Weets knows is that it's big, and capable of killing several men on its own.
- **Evidence or tracks:** All sites that were attacked were investigated by the Hextorites, who don't let anyone else near. All evidence is taken to the temple, where it is examined. However, three months ago, in some confusion over a set of spoiled rations, a box of stuff from an attacked guard post was accidentally brought on site. The priests didn't know about it, and Weets kept it that way, as they scare him to bits and he rather not have them on site. He had the crate carted in the back of the store house, though he has no idea if it still there or if it was taken away when waste was collected.

PCs who desire to track the crate need to search the warehouse. It's not hard to find the place where Weets stored I, but there is quite a bit of junk there.

If the PCs do not tally too much, a DC 20 Search finds it – out of the storehouse, on the back of a cart about to set off. The cart driver is a simpleton, who is willing to part form the cart for a few silver.

Inside the cart are a broken tent, a shattered horn, several shattered crossbow bolts, a few swords and a broken breastplate armor. Everything is caked in dried blood.

A DC 15 Search or Craft (weaponsmithing) check reveals that the swords edges are dulled – as if they hit something too hard for them to break. Another DC 15 Search or Craft (or armorsmithing) check reveals that the armor was crushed by a large smashing blow.

THE SOLDIERS

There are all kinds of rumors going around amongst the soldiers. Some are true, based on stories from the few surviving soldiers before they were moved to other places, or from people who visited the sites. Others are false, the product of conjecture or twisted accounts.

If the PCs are on their own, soldiers won't talk to them. Only if they have the two guards with them, or if

they can make themselves convincingly appear as soldiers, (such as by using a *change self* spell), do the soldiers trust them well enough.

Depending on how much time the PCs take questioning, soldiers can tell them the following:

- The monster is a big, dark skinned creature. Sightings place it between nine and twelve feet tall.
- It has killed a lot of soldiers – some say it has multiple arms.
- It's a bloodthirsty fiend, wielding wicked weapons.
- It doesn't only attack soldiers – bullywugs have been found that were killed by it.
- The bullywugs may actually have summoned it. Their clerics often loose control over their creatures.
- It is most bloodthirsty – it eats its victims and drinks their blood.
- Some say it's an undead creature, created by the Bleak Academy.
- It may be a vampire – rumors say streaming water repels it.
- It doesn't approach town. It sticks to the swamp. Swamp patrol was dangerous before, but now only the truly unlucky patrol there.
- A few men survived. Most were immediately questioned by the priests, and moved to the front soon after the attack.
- There are still a few soldiers about that saw it during the siege.

Tracking the soldiers that actually saw the creature is difficult. It requires A DC 15 Gather Information check to track each of the following individuals:

- **Wesel:** A cowardice pale soldier that isn't too eager to tell his story. A DC 15 Diplomacy check or a DC 15 Intimidate Check can convince him to tell his story. According to Arnan, he and his squad heard it approach, crashing through the undergrowth. shakes and is Bloodthirsty as it is, it isn't quiet – it makes quite a sound, like grinding. They didn't wait for it and fled like the wind. Lucky enough it didn't move that fast and they got away.
- **Ren:** A braggart who swears he was on the walls when the creature attacked the city. He described it as a multi-armed fiend - he's sure it wielded weapons, with which it smashed it's comrades from the walls with lightning speed. If probed a bit, he admits that it was pitch dark and he saw only shadows.
- **Arnan:** A tough soldier who arrives at one of the massacre sites shortly after the attack. He followed the trails of the beast – something he got a reprimand for – and tracked it quite a bit, until the bogs, where he turned back. He can point out the direction it took (southwest). He didn't see it, but measured it's footsteps and thinks it is about nine feet tall (at APL 6 and 8 it's 12 feet). The tracks were

odd, definitely not natural. The attack was on the Widow Tower, which had been attacked several times.

THE PRIESTS

The investigation thus far has taken place by the Hextorites, so PCs may desire to ask them some questions.

As can be expected, the priests are not very forthcoming with information.

To get them to talk, the PCs have to identify themselves. If they are not yet – or no longer – accompanied by Delin and Roslyn, they are first sent to captain Veeto to obtain a 'guide'.

Even then, It requires quite a bit of effort to obtain information. The PCs need to make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to actually get to talk to someone who is up to date with facts – failing means they get to speak to a number of acolytes, who cannot tell them much more than what can be gleaned of the guards. PCs who have the favor of count Jarinto have a +4 circumstance penalty, while PCs who have a disfavor with Jarinto have a -4 circumstance penalty on this roll (or a -2 if another PC does the talking – the disfavor affects Diplomacy attempts of the entire party and are cumulative if more PCs have the disfavor). PCs with the disfavor cannot assist on the Diplomacy check.

If the PCs succeed, they are sent to talk to father Buccia. Buccia is a cleric who takes care of the wounded and the dead. Unlike most of Hextor's priests, who seek to punish rather than to heal, Buccia channels positive energy. As a healer he is popular with the men, and as such he knows a good deal of what goes on. He is not 'soft' though – he is very determined and selective in how he uses his powers, and who benefits from them. He can be as ruthless and relentless as any of the other clerics. His choice to 'heal' is a practical one: wounded men can't fight!

On the other hand, since the wounded and dead burden him, he is more willing to speak of the happenings than other clerics.

Depending on what they ask him, Buccia can tell the PCs the following:

- The monster is a large creature that periodically attacks. It always attacks under cover of darkness and attacks – as far as the priests can determine – exclusively in melee.
- The priest can globally indicate where the attacks come from. This is similar to the information obtained from Weets.
- That area is crucial as it represents the southern frontline. They frequently send in patrols, often with engineers to seek out places where new fortifications can be added. These patrols now fall to the monster.
- The monster is quite intelligent. It only attacks at night and hardly ever leaves any witnesses.
- Normal weapons seem incapable of harming it.

- Quite a few corpses were bloodless, as if an undead creature feasted on them.

THE GOVERNMENT

The guards, the tax offices, the town administration, almost every element in the Stalward government is controlled by the Hextorites. Count Jarinto's main advisor is his brother, head cleric of Hextor, high priest Huandor.

As such, questions asked to any official regarding the monster are met with a wall of silence, unless the PCs manage to somehow gain the Hextorite's grace.

Even then, the government has little to add to what the priests were already willing to tell the PCs.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE VAST SWAMP

At some point, the PCs should head out to the Swamp to search for the monster.

The Vast Swamp is a dismal place. Water is everywhere – shallow pools of near stagnant water, little streams whose muddy banks are full with reeds, and even solid ground is mostly mud that sucks at your boots. Occasionally, there is a trail, only slightly dryer, allowing you to pass a bit quicker as long as you stay single file.

Everything around you looks the same. At some point, the twisted trees just start looking the same.

You could have the PCs spot some common swamp threats – such as a crocodile – along the way, or perhaps even a wandering zombie – they are not that uncommon. None of these should be threatening or pose a real threat – add them for flavor.

Far more than flavor are the blood bloaters. They infest the swamp at this place. While they are an excellent defence to the bullywugs, they are also dangerous to others who enter the water.

Blood bloaters generally only flock in swarms in certain places, but PCs may get the attention one of these little pest if they spend too much in the water. While a single blood bloater is a mere annoyance, it can still cause damage.

After several hours in the swamp, the PCs may start noticing that they have a parasite lagging along. With a DC 15 Survival check, they'll notice that they all have a few tiny little oozes latched onto their skins, each sucking their blood through the skin. Once noticed, they are easy to get rid of – you just scratch them off – but untreated they may actually cause damage.

If PCs don't notice them or don't treat them, after some hours, they get weaker from losing blood. They lose 1 hp. If they fail a DC 10 Fort save, they also get 1 Strength damage. Of course by then they'll notice that they are infected, and can remove the pest. Assume that

once the pest is noticed, the PCs are alert and no further Survival checks are needed.

Note that Belin is a ranger knowledgeable with the swamp and aware of the pests. If the PCs have treated him well or are smart enough to realize the usefulness of his skills and made him their guide, he can make them aware of the blood bloaters. If the PCs treat him bad or ignore him, he merely keeps himself and Roslyn safe.

Resting or spending the night: The swamp is obviously unsafe. PCs can determine to rest, but there is a risk that the creature attacks them at night.

Delin will advise against rest – knowing the nature of the swamps – using the possibility of an attack, as well as the risk of losing the trail, to encourage the PCs to push onwards.

If the PCs do rest, there is a 50% chance that the monster tracks them down. Note that it has skills in Hide and Move Silently, and that it may use these to sneak closer and attack with surprise.

If this happens and the PCs win, they have completed their mission. Of course the nature of the attacker is then also clear. Try to encourage the PCs to continue on, to find the creature's lair and its origin. If needed, you can use Delin or Meryn (see encounter 6) to encourage them on.

The Widow Tower: Ideally, either Weets or Arnan have pointed the PCs towards the Widow Tower. If not, the PCs may stumble on the track leading there – as it is the deepest Eyedrin guard post into the swamp, it is an obviously place to start an investigation anyway. However without clues, PCs may be wandering around for quite some time before they find it. In that case, if the PCs get along well with their Belin and Roslyn, you can have them propose that course after a few hours.

Following a muddy track, you finally see something that breaks the monotone of the swamp's vegetation.

At the edge of a small stream, on spot that is slightly higher than the rest, stands a wooden tower, with a low palisade stretching along the stream at either side of the tower for for about twenty feet.

It's a two-story wooden building, set up from logs. One side is heavily damaged, like it has been smashed. A half-hearted attempt seems to have been made to repair it, but the broken wood is still visible.

Two tents are set up below. On the top of the tower is a canvas spun, providing shelter for those up there.

Have the PCs make a spot check. At a DC 20 or higher, they spot the tower at 100 feet (the maximum range at which you can see it through the vegetation). For each 2 points below DC 20, they spot it at 10 feet shorter distance, to a minimum of 30 feet at DC 6.

Let the PCs decide what to do. Once they approach within 50 feet, they are spotted by the tower guards.

As you approach, a man's voice calls out from the tower.

"Stand! Raise your hands and identify yourself!"

Creatures: The four guards posted at this desolate spot have been here for three days. They haven't seen anything much so far, but are very on edge. They are not hostile, but still ready to fire at anything that appears threatening.

Tactics: If the PCs do not act rash and explain their presence, there is no problem – while people coming to investigate the site doesn't help to calm their nerves much, they won't shoot them for it.

PCs that act violent or do not obey the order to halt and explain, however, are fired upon. PCs may have a bit of a task ahead to prevent a full-out fight. Whatever they do, Belin and Roslyn won't fight – they duck to seek cover the moment a fight begins. If the PCs do not manage to end the fight prematurely, they run off to inform their captain that the PCs attacked.

The PCs can prevent a full-out fight as long as they do not attack themselves, and explain themselves (likely from cover) using a DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Should it come to serious blows, the guards stay at their tower and fire crossbow bolts, while one blows the horn – the latter is futile, reinforcements are not likely to arrive for hours, but PCs need not know this.

Development: Once the guards are calmed down or the PCs defeated them, the site can be investigated.

The tower has obviously been damaged by something heavy slamming into the side. The patchwork is rudimentary. Apparently the army did not consider it worth it to properly reinforce it.

Otherwise, the area bears obvious tracks of something large passing through the area. The muddy tracks are mostly illegible, but it is not so hard – a DC 12 Search check - to find a trail leading roughly south-west.

The guards, if questioned, don't know anything beyond what can be learned from soldiers in encounter 3. They can point out the tracks if the PCs manage to miss them.

Following the tracks is not so hard at first. To follow it accurately, a DC 12 Survival check is needed for every mile tracked (a total of ten checks). If a check is failed, ten minutes of backtracking and searching may find it again on a DC 14 Survival check - if it is not found, the track is lost.

If none of the PCs can track, Delin can do it if the PCs ask him.

The track leads roughly south-west though, so even if the party has no tracker or the track is lost, there is a likely direction to take, which may hopefully lead to where the creature went. This course of action includes a lot of backtracking and travelling through tougher terrain, and is far more tiring.

In that case, when the PCs arrive at the bogs, in encounter 5, they all need to make a DC 10 Constitution check or take 1d6 non-lethal damage and become fatigued. PCs with the Endurance feat have a +4 on this check. Also roll for Belin and Roslyn (note that Belin has Endurance).

Note that eliminating the nonlethal damage also eliminates the fatigue. Belin can use a *cure light wounds* to remove fatigue from himself or from Roslyn.

Eventually, PCs should head towards the south-western bogs, and you can run encounter 5.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE BOGS

As the PCs enter the south western bogs, whether following the tracks or simply moving in that direction counting on luck, they'll run into the bogs of Aestophatus. Tracking becomes a lot more difficult here – a DC 23 Survival check is needed to follow the original trail – as large areas are completely flooded with muddy water.

Note that some PCs may now be fatigued.

These bogs are pretty treacherous, and only certain areas are safe to travel. Parts of the bogs are obviously hazardous – unless the PCs fly, only a few number of routes allow passage at all.

Treading off the paths here quickly sends the PCs into quicksand areas. Some patches have a pool of brackish water on top and are easy to identify, others are less obvious. In general, these areas are obviously unsafe and PCs can avoid them. If for some reason they don't and enter these areas, there is a 50% chance for each 5 foot movement that they run into quicksand (see below on how quicksand works).

Even the 'dry' paths are not entirely safe, but danger is less prevalent here, and initially PCs sticking to the tracks do not run into treacherous areas.

After traveling for about an hour, have PCs make Listen check. The PC with the highest check hears the following first:

A sound reaches your ears. It is as if you hear someone call out. It's a thin, frightened voice, a man's voice, and as you listen more carefully, you can recognize it as a cry for aid.

It seems to come from a wise patch of dense, high reeds. Over the tips of the reeds, you can only just make out a gnarled tree.

The voice comes from the tree – and indeed, looking closer, you can see a man-shaped form in its branches.

Arnassos miscalculated the dangers of the bogs, the strength of the creature, and the capability of his men. Halfway through the bogs, they ran into the golem, who had tracked the party down. The massacre was almost complete – only Meryn survived. The golem's connection to his 'maker' caused it to disregard the man as a possible victim – a rare show of compassion. Having gorged himself on the party's blood, he left the corpses – and

Meryn – behind. It is Mervyn calling for aid that the PCs hear.

☛ **Mervyn:** male human (Oeridian) expert 3; AL N; hp 12; see Appendix 1 – All APLs

See Appendix 5 for a map of the area.

Trap: Most of the area here is actual a shallow bog. The reeds are high and obstruct the view. They count as heavy undergrowth and provide concealment (30%) to those within 5 feet and full concealment to anyone further away.

It costs 4 squares of movement to move into a square of bog and reeds. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 5. The reeds grant a +5 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. Running and charging are impossible.

In addition, PCs run the risk of walking into patches of quicksand, as noted on the map. A character approaching a patch of quicksand is entitled to a DC 8 Survival check to spot the danger before stepping in.

Characters in quicksand must make a DC 10 Swim check every round to simply tread water in place, or a DC 15 Swim check to move 5 feet in whatever direction is desired. If a trapped character fails this check by 5 or more, he sinks below the surface and begins to drown whenever he can no longer hold his breath (see the Swim skill description).

Characters below the surface of a bog may swim back to the surface with a successful Swim check (DC 15, +1 per consecutive round of being under the surface).

Pulling out a character trapped in quicksand can be difficult. A rescuer needs a branch, spear haft, rope, or similar tool that enables him to reach the victim with one end of it. Then he must make a DC 15 Strength check to successfully pull the victim, and the victim must make a DC 10 Strength check to hold onto the branch, pole, or rope. If the victim fails to hold on, he must make a DC 15 Swim check immediately to stay above the surface. If both checks succeed, the victim is pulled 5 feet closer to safety.

Creatures: Shortly after the golem left, a number of hungry undead – cannibal zombies – turned up, drawn by the massacre. Meryn climbed up in a tree to get out of their reach. The undead have not reached him yet. They made a few attempts, but Meryn had a number of holy water vials, and splashing those at the undead made them retreat. He has since ran out of the holy water, but the zombies, despite being moderately smarter than their normal kin, have not realized this yet. Instead of attempting to get to him, they patiently wait until their prey grows tired and falls into their arms.

Remnants of the war and a creation of the Bleak Academy, these undead are a nasty plague. They have been spreading for a while, as the necrotic disease that creates them resides in their bodies for several days – infecting any creature they attack. In the specimens encountered here the potency of the disease has

dwindled somewhat, and it's symptoms now merely resembles filth fever.

Note: The cannibal zombies know the location of the quicksand (through trial and error) but this advantage is offset since they can't charge and rely on melee attacks. Also, since the PCs are expected to have two guards with them, there are more zombies than normal for the EL.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **Diseased Fast Cannibal Zombies (6):** hp 21 each; see Appendix 1 – APL 4

APL 6 (EL 7)

☛ **Diseased Fast Hunting Cannibal Zombies (7):** hp 50 each; see Appendix 1 – APL 6

APL 8 (EL 9)

☛ **Bloodthirsty Diseased Fast Hunting Cannibal Zombies (7):** hp 92 each; see Appendix 1 – APL 8

APL 10 (EL 11)

☛ **Bloodthirsty Diseased Fast Hunting Cannibal Zombies (8):** hp 139 each; see Appendix 1 – APL 10

Tactics: Unless the PCs are exceptionally stealthy, the zombies are likely aware of the approaching PCs. Rather than attack, they initially wait for the PCs to approach. They move towards the PCs when they get within move distance (15 feet at APL 4, 45 at higher APLs). If the PCs didn't notice the zombies before, they can avoid being surprised if they make a DC 15 (at APL 4) or DC 19 (at higher APLs) Listen check to hear the zombies before they move.

Note that due to their poor Dexterity and the terrain, once the zombies move and fight their location can be pinpointed automatically unless a PC is deafened.

The zombies are not particularly intelligent, but know that flanking is advantageous, and recognize it when their attacks are not as effective as hoped.

If possible, they use bull rush to push a tough opponent in an adjacent quicksand patch. They don't have enough tactics to plan this or move into position specifically for such an action – they only do this if it simply happens to be possible at that moment.

If a PC is down and doesn't move, they assume it is dead. If there is another threat in their immediate vicinity, they change targets. Otherwise, they continue to attack the body on the ground, feasting on its flesh – even if the body is long dead.

Besides this, they are headless of danger and simply attack until destroyed.

Meryn stays in the tree, and does not participate in the fight in any way.

Belin and Roslyn, if present, aid the PCs as much as they can (i.e. by flanking or, at lower APLs, holding of one or two zombies). While they are not particularly trained to fight undead, they should be able to give the PCs a bit of an edge in this fight. Have the zombies concentrate their attacks on the PCs were possible – Roslyn should

not die in this encounter, so be sure to not move her into an impossible situation.

Treasure: The zombies don't carry anything of value.

If the PCs take some time to look about, they find five corpses that are almost entirely eaten but that look relatively fresh (about a day old). Clothing and armor are torn, but several weapons and backpacks are strewn about. Aside from three heavy flails and heavy steel shields, a shortsword, four heavy crossbows, a repeating heavy crossbow, and a hand crossbow (all with ammunition) can be found. In a torn open backpack the PCs can find some potions, six sunrods, a smokestick, two tanglefoot bags, and a bullseye lantern.

Meryn owns a *golembane scarab* which he took from the hide out. The item does not look so much like a scarab as like a cloak clasp, with the symbol of Hextor embossed on it. The latter is hard to see due to mud and filth, and without scrutiny it looks rather unassuming. PCs are likely to only find it with a *detect magic*. At this moment Meryn doesn't offer it and if the PCs want the clasp they have to forcefully take it from him. Note that *detect magic* does not detect the *mark of justice*, as it has been rendered undetectable using *Nystul's magic aura*.

If asked, Meryn said he found it in a ruin and claimed it as his (which is basically true).

All APLs: Loot – 72 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – *golembane scarab* (208 gp), *oil of bless weapon* x3 (8 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* x3 (4 gp each).

Detect Magic Results: *Golembane scarab* (Moderate Divination).

Development: Once the zombies are defeated, Meryn clambers down the tree.

PCs are likely curious what he was doing there. Meryn isn't eager to tell he truth – while he feels responsible, he fears punishment – not only that of Eyedrinn law, but also the mark of justice that has been placed on him. He has been told that, should he ever reveal anything about the project or name Arnassos, his health will dwindle, and he will be wracked with horrible pain.

Arnassos did give Meryn a story to tell – in case the group would encounter patrols. Meryn sticks to this story when the PCs question him.

Not everything he says is true, of course, but a simple Sense Motive check won't reveal this: Meryn is such a wreck of nerves that his fear – natural considering the circumstances – is all that can be deduced. Magic such as *zone of truth* or *detect thoughts* can, of course, reveal that he is lying (though it won't reveal the truth).

“My companions... they were... attacked... by ... by the monster.”

The man points at the eaten corpses. “All... all of them dead! I... don't know why I survived...” The man looks upset, filled with dread.

“We were tracking the perimeters of the front, trying to... map the area and find suitable places to

build new... fortifications. I'm an engineer... we got... we got off track..."

He points to a few backpacks that are shredded and whose contents is all over the bogs. Fragments of papers with notes and sketches of maps are strewn about, useless through the water and splattered with blood.

"All... all gone..."

The PCs may be curious to what the monster looked like, but their witness has little to tell:

"I... fainted." The man shakes, the sweat of fear on his brow. "It was... Large. Enormous.. Dark. Armed...A fiend of darkness... I don't... I can't tell you more... I fainted... It was horrible."

This is a lie: since Meryn fears describing the monster with too much detail will set off the mark of justice, he fabricates a bit of his story there.

While he does not wish to face punishment, Meryn does feel guilty, and would like to repent. Once he realizes that the PCs are here to hunt the monster, he realizes that if he can aid them, they might set his wrongs right.

If the PCs reveal to him that they hunt the monster, and push him for more information, he offers his aid:

Suddenly, the man seems to realize something. He looks up, to you as if he had just had a revelation.

"I... I know... I know where it goes! Oh yes! I know of a bunker... not far from here. Underground! I had... a map of the area... gone now... but... I can take you there!"

Meryn hopes that leading the PCs there may somehow redeem him – without setting off the mark of justice.

If the PCs decide to place their trust in him, he nods enthusiastically, obviously eager that he can help. Once the PCs let him guide the way, he leads them to encounter 6.

If the PCs do not trust Meryn, or simply do not talk to him about their mission, they can always try to follow the monster's tracks. With two DC 13 Survival checks they can follow the fresh tracks to the creature's lair.

If none of the PCs can track, Delin, if present, can do it if the PCs ask him.

If the PCs have no tracker or loose the track, they have to make an educated guess as to what general direction to go, and hope to be lucky. This means a lot of stumbling through the bogs, making false turns, backtracking, etc, all of which takes quite a while is quite tiring. By the time the PCs find the bunker (encounter 6) they all need to make a DC 12 Constitution check or take 1d6 non-lethal damage and become fatigued. If they are already fatigued they become exhausted. PCs with the Endurance feat have a +4 on this check. Also roll for Belin and Roslyn (note that Belin has Endurance).

Note that eliminating the nonlethal damage also eliminates the fatigue. Belin can use a *cure light wounds* to remove fatigue from himself or from Roslyn.

Troubleshooting: It is possible that some PCs, using the right amount of magic, may realize that Meryn is lying. Facing him with his lies upsets him, but he refuses to change his story. Diplomacy, Intimidate checks, and even magic such as *charm person* won't help in this regard – Meryn fears for his life should he tell the truth.

If the the PCs pressure him enough, he can relate the following without triggering the mark of justice:

- The creature is not natural. It was created.
- The creature has a dark and evil nature, it loves to kill.
- Meryn was involved with the creature's creation, but he severely regrets it.
- He would love to tell more but he "can't".
- He thinks the magic clasp on his cloak may help.
- He took the clasp when he "fled" the bunker. He doesn't know what it is, but he knows it was created "for emergency cases".

If the PCs force Meryn through magic (such as *dominate person*), he tries to resist with all his might, then blurts out: "Anassos!" and then instantly collapses in fits of pain as life is leached from him, and his Constitution reduced to 1. Once he drops, he become unable to answer questions, entering a comatose state of pain and suffering.

PCs may be able to remove the mark of justice (cast at 10th level) once they realize that it is present – though this most likely happens only after it activated. Note that *detect magic* does not detect the mark of justice, as it has been rendered undetectable using Nystul's magic aura (cast at 10th level, it still lasts several days).

If PCs free Meryn of his curse, they can use a DC 13 Intimidate check or a DC 20 Diplomacy check to get the truth out of him. In that case, Meryn can tell them the following. He is very reluctant, so let PCs work a bit for the answers (knowing all this in advance does give them an edge). Any of the following answers will otherwise trigger the mark:

- The monster is a blood golem, which was created in an underground bunker.
- A dark wizard named Reese created it, using foul rituals, including vile sacrifice so as to bypass the need for higher level magic.
- Reese took instructions from a person from Eyedrin, a priest named Arnassos.*
- Reese was from the Bleak Academy. He also took instructions from a woman who he referred to as 'M'.
- The golem was intended to be one of an army of servants, to be set loose on the bullywugs at a predefined moment in time.*
- Meryn, as engineer and blacksmith, was to create the golem's armor. However, he never suspected the

foul and evil deeds the people would go to. Once he knew, he couldn't go back.

- The golem was a failure as it couldn't navigate in the swamp. To remedy this, Reese used a dark and foul ritual, sacrificing Meryn's assistant in order to 'awaken' the golem. Unfortunately, the golem went mad instead. It broke loose, and went on a killing spree.
- Reese panicked and teleported out. All other people present, save Meryn, died. Meryn doesn't know why he was spared – nor why the golem didn't kill him last time.
- When he told Arnassos, the priest locked him up. He later was to bring a group of mercenaries to the bunker, to destroy all evidence.*
- Meryn does not know who placed the *mark of justice* on his head. He was blindfolded when it happened.

*) The moment Meryn is about to reveal any of the items marked with an asterisk, Roslyn decides that he is revealing too much on the Eyedrin involvement, and shoots him before he can, using Quick Draw and her death attack. See *encounter 8: Roslyn Strikes* on how to run this.

The PCs have never heard of Arnassos, but Belin knows a few facts:

- He is an elder Hextorite priest, who came to Eyedrin after the war.
- He is quite bitter and haughty, and not very much liked.
- He was a low-ranking cleric in commander Stoa's army (Stoa occupied Newkeep during the war).
- His superior, a man named Veyn, is many years his younger.
- Veyn is in charge of the southern front. Arnassos is responsible for the patrols that recon the frontlines, so Veyn can determine where reinforcements are needed, or to determine likely places for fortifications. He hates his job.

It is also possible PCs think of returning Meryn home for whatever reason. In that case, Belin suggests that Roslyn takes him home, while he and the party push on. If the PCs agree to this, Roslyn kills Meryn once she is out of sight, and then doubles back, following the party to finish her mission.

ENCOUNTER 6: BLOOD

The environment seems to get wetter as you progress. Ahead of you lies a small lake, it's surface water near-stagnant and topped with a layer of algae and rotting plant life. A large hill rises up in the center, covered in reeds.

From a distance, DC 15 Spot check reveals an entrance in the hill, partly obscured by the reeds. The entrance is partly underwater.

Once the PCs get to the hill-island, they can also find the entrance with a DC 10 Search check.

The hill is the 'bunker' – and the lair of the creature.

Trap: The bunker's entrance is warded with a silent *alarm* spell, but the recipient of the spell, Reese, is no longer present. Take note though if the PCs set the alarm. Other than the *alarm*, there are no traps.

Creatures: The water in this area, due to the large amount of blood, has attracted several colonies of blood bloaters.

Anyone entering the water gains their attention. Unless they dig themselves inside, the PCs have to go through the water to enter, so it is likely they attracting the colonies. The colonies are near impossible to see due to the muddy water.

If anyone studies the water for at least a round, a DC 14 Search check makes them notice a few of the blood bloaters.

Ad-hoc xp: If PCs manage to enter (and leave) the bunker without going through the water, award them xp as if they successfully encountered the blood bloater swarms anyway.

APL 4 (EL 1)

☛ **Blood bloater swarm:** hp 22; see Appendix 4

APL 6 (EL 2)

☛ **Blood bloater swarm (2):** hp 22 each; see Appendix 4

APL 8 (EL 3)

☛ **Blood bloater swarm (3):** hp 22 each; see Appendix 4

APL 10 (EL 4)

☛ **Blood bloater swarm (4):** hp 22 each; see Appendix 4

Tactics: The blood bloaters only tactic is to overrun any PCs in the water, and gorge themselves on their blood. They do not follow on land.

Development: Once the PCs pass inside the hill, they follow a partly submerged corridor for about sixty feet. At the end, it steeply rises towards a dry patch. It then suddenly slopes down again, and a stone stair case leads down, to a, enormous, and surprisingly dry room.

A DC 18 Search or Survival check reveals that a large (or huge) creature recently passed.

A DC 23 Search or Survival check reveals that the creature apparently wore some kind of armor.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE BUNKER

The room entered is pitch dark. It was originally lit by magic light, but the focus of that enchantment – a bright gem in the ceiling - was destroyed by the creature.

Read or paraphrase the following once the PCs have means to see in the darkness.

The room you enter is dark, but the impression you have is that it is enormous. It must have been dug out, but it's wands are fortified by compacted earth that is smooth to the touch. No doubt. Magic has been used to create this place.

There are several doorways in the walls to the left and right. Rubble on the floor indicates that there must have been furniture here at some time, but it was smashed to pieces. Ceramic pieces of pottery, and various tools used in various crafts are strewn about the floor.

If the PCs turn about, they see the following:

Above the entrance to the is hall hangs a large tapestry. It is of black silk, and looks almost like a shroud. In shades of dark and light, the face of an elven woman is painted on it, regarding you impassively.

Treasure: The tapestry is of fine silk and can fetch a nice price.

All APLs: Loot – 20 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

If the PCs have a means to see past 120 feet, or if they move further into the room, they can spot the end:

At the end of the room is a massive, metal forge. It's fires are out, but when turned on it must have generated an enormous heat.

It has been battered badly. The heavy iron doors of the forge have been smashed with such force they now bend inwards. Two of the hinges have broken loose, but the doors are so badly bent that they are wedged in the forge.

Again, the debris of work benches and craftsman's tools is scattered about.

More sinister than the forge though, are the large smashed ceramic jars at either end of the forge, and the iron altar in front of it. On the stained altar's surface lies a desiccated corpse, it's skull cut open.

A strong, almost nauseating smell emanates from the altar and jars, and the dark red-brown stains that cover everything can only be dried blood.

This room was used to forge the blood golem – it's armor was forged here, and its body created from the blood in the jars, drawn from victims sacrificed on the altar.

The body on the altar was Paylin, Meryn's former assistant. Reese sacrificed the boy to obtain the ingredient to awaken the golem. The foul and lengthy

ritual enabled Reese to perform magic that would otherwise have been beyond his grasp. It is Paylin's death that haunts Meryn the most. When he sees him, he grasps his face and starts shaking and crying, sinking to the floor in shock.

Debin takes the scene in with shock, but does not act – he turns to the PCs for guidance. Roslyn, as always, stays to the back, but keeps her eye on Meryn.

The central room does not contain anything except the items shown. PCS can make a few deduction from this though. Most checks are quite hard as almost everything that could work as a clue has been destroyed :

- A DC 20 Craft (blacksmithing) or similar check reveals that the forge, and implements found, is used to create armor and weapons. From the tools and forge, it can be deduce that the weapons were likely made for a creature of size large or larger.
- A DC 20 Knowledge(Religion) check points out that the 'man on the altar was likely a sacrifice. The way his skull was cut open is atypical though.
- A DC 25 Knowledge(Religion) check reveals that the sacrifice was not aimed at a specific deity. (This contrasts with the Hextor symbol if it was found)
- A DC 20 Knowledge(Arcana) check reveals, from runes set in the altar and the symbolic placement of the jars, that the focus of this room was an elaborate arcane ritual, powered by blood. Powerful magic must have been used.
- A DC 25 Knowledge(Arcana) check reveals that some kind of evil force was summoned.
- A DC 30 Knowledge(Arcana) check reveals that what was summoned was not a creature.
- A DC 35 Knowledge(Arcana) check reveals that besides this ritual, someone attempted the creation of a golem.
- A DC 40 Knowledge(Arcana) check reveals that the final ritual was a powerful magic spell that summoned an evil spirit, awakening the golem to sentence.

The body on the altar is inanimate. If it is moved, below it is a blood-smeared etch in the surface of the altar of a fist claspng barbed arrows. It is easily recognizable as the symbol of Hextor.

Layout of the bunker: See the map in appendix 5.

To each sides of the hall are three rooms. The three rooms to the right were separated from the hall by curtains, which are still in place. The three rooms to the right originally had iron doors. Two of these doors have been smashed in, on is still intact.

ROOM I

This room contains two beds, each with a wooden chest at the foot end. On the floor of this room are the bodies of two men – emancipated and dehydrated.

The room is faintly lit by an oil lamp on a small wooden table, which is still, miraculously, burning.

The room was the sleeping quarters of Reese's assistants. These two low-level wizards perished when the blood golem went mad, and their bodies were disposed in this room.

Treasure: Each chest holds scholar and traveler's clothes and a purse containing coin. One of the scholars still carries a *wand of knock* (charges vary per APL) used to enter Room VI.

The oil lamp is magical, and functions similar to an *continual flame*.

APL 4: Loot – 1 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – *continual flame lamp* (4 gp), *wand of knock*, 5 charges (38 gp).

APL 6: Loot – 1 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – *continual flame lamp* (4 gp), *wand of knock*, 10 charges (75 gp).

APL 8: Loot – 1 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – *continual flame lamp* (4 gp), *wand of knock*, 20 charges (150 gp).

APL 10: Loot – 1 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – *continual flame lamp* (4 gp), *wand of knock* (375 gp).

Detect Magic Results: *Continual flame lamp* (faint evocation), *wand of knock* (faint transmutation).

ROOM II

This room contains two beds, each with a wooden chest at the foot end.

On a small wooden table stands an oil lamp, now out.

This was the room of Pailin and Meryn. It is featureless. Unlike the others, the two did not have any magical light to their disposal.

Treasure: If the PCs check the chests, they find a few flasks of lamp oil, and some commoner's clothes.

One chest also holds a toolbox. These contain masterwork artisan's tools, for use in blacksmithing. Each tool has a small symbol on it – a stylized “M”. At the bottom of the toolbox is inscribed “Property of Meryn Arvynsson”.

All APLs: Loot – 5 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

Obviously, finding the toolbox clues the PCs that Meryn is far more involved in this, and is not man innocent victim of the creature. See Encounter 5 on how to handle it if PCs decide to question Meryn. Take note of encounter 8: Roslyn Strikes.

ROOM III

This room is bare. There was a cot here, but something smashed it. A wardrobe and a table are likewise in barrels

This was Reese's room. The golem totally smashed it.

ROOM IV

The door to this room is entirely gone.

This was obviously some type of laboratory - event though the entire place is in ruins, the remains of glass vials, powders, dried liquids and various odd ingredients that cover the floor indicate it as a workplace.

To the far end of the room stands something that looks like a large marble sink.

This was the laboratory, where special ingredients were mixed to add to the blood to create the golem. The sink at the end was used to work with aggressive and volatile ingredients such as acids.

Entering this room requires some care, as the floor is covered in glass shards – the effect is as if the entire room is covered in caltrops (See PHB page 126).

Treasure: A DC 15 Search check reveals some items between the debris that survived the onslaught. Among items found are expensive material components (such as diamond dust and onyx gems), laboratory equipment, some simple alchemical items (including a box of twenty tindertwigs, five sunrods, a smokestick, a flask of antitoxin and two flasks of acid), and some potions.

APL 4: Loot – 16 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – none.

APL 6: Loot – 16 gp, Coin – 20 gp, Magic – none.

APL 8: Loot – 16 gp, Coin – 30 gp, Magic – *oil of greater magic weapon* (62 gp).

APL 10: Loot – 16 gp, Coin – 40 gp, Magic – *oil of greater magic weapon* (62 gp), *oil of greater magic weapon* +2 (100 gp).

Detect Magic Results: *oil of greater magic weapon* (faint transmutation), *oil of greater magic weapon* +2 (moderate transmutation).

ROOM V

The door to this room has been badly damaged. It remains but has been partly forced open.

A PC can maneuver himself through the opening with a DC 10 Escape Artist check as a standard action. The door is stuck in this position, but can be pushed further open with enough force.

Stuck Iron Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 35 (60 when mended); AC 5; Break DC 28 (stuck).

This room looks like a workshop. It contains a work bench with a rack containing various craft tools, an moveable anvil a crane, a smaller forge with bellows, and a sizeable oven.

This was the workroom where Meryn worked. The bloodgolem crushed the door but did not actually enter it. The anvil and bellows were generally moved to the main hall when actual work had to be done, so it was close to the forge. The oven was used to make pottery material (including the large jars in the hall).

Treasure: PCs can loot the place for the artisan tools and items. Among the items is a portable crane and a masterwork hacksaw (see Appendix 5)

All APLs: Loot – 15 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

ROOM VI

This door to this room is the only one the golem didn't try to break open. It is still closed and *arcane locked* (at caster level 12).

☛ **Arcane Locked Iron Door:** 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; AC 5; Break DC 38 (*arcane lock*).

This room looks like a study – though it is as spartan as the other rooms. At one end of the room is a writing desk with a chair. A large bookcase is against one wall, though there not many books or scrolls on it.

Everything is lit by two large lamps, each shedding it slight from an iron peg in opposing walls.

Here is where Reese studied his notes and designed the rituals to craft the blood golem. It is also where he read and wrote his correspondence – and the one place where the PCS may find evidence of his crimes and Eyedrin's involvement.

Treasure: The bookcase is mostly empty. A few scrolls and books remain – most are reference material on dark rites and blood sacrifice. One deals with the calling of evil spirits, and a last book is a basic work on constructs and animate objects.

Actual interesting work is not to be found. Reese was not able to acquire much work to store here – the Academy was quite reluctant to lend him any books. The few works he did have he kept close to him, and when he fled, he took them with him. The few remaining books still fetch a fair price on the market.

APL 4: Loot – 23 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 6: Loot – 26 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 8: Loot – 163 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 10: Loot – 378 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

Development: The desk contains various notes and other work material. Using these notes, a DC 15 Knowledge(arcana) reveals that the person responsible was working on a golem. A DC 20 Knowledge(arcana) check reveals it to be a golem created from the blood of sacrificial victims. The latter check also reveals that the author was working on a high level spell, *awaken construct*, magic that the author would normally not be able to use, but which apparently would be in reach if the right vile ritual and sacrifice were used.

The desk doesn't seem to contain any more than this. However, a DC 20 Search check reveals a hidden compartment in the desk's lower right side.

Trap: The compartment is trapped with a small trap which activates when opened. If the trap activates, it breaks a vial containing acid, which instantly dissolves the letters in the compartment, destroying the evidence.

☛ **Trap:** CR 1/2; mechanical; touch trigger; repair reset; lock bypass (Open Lock DC 30); Acid vial: destroys the compartment's contents; Search DC 16+APL; Disable Device DC 13+APL.

Inside the compartments are two letters. One (player handout #1) is written in common. The other (player handout #2) is written in infernal (only hand it out once PCs manage to read the language).

The last letter is unsigned and unaddressed. It is written in a particular type of vellum though. If it is held against the light, a watermark can be seen: the face of a gaping demon.

A DC 15 Knowledge(arcana) or Bardic Lore recognizes it as the sign of the Bleak Academy.

ENCOUNTER 8 : ROSLYN STRIKES

At some point during the investigation, Roslyn decides it is time to act. This is either when the PCs start interrogating Meryn and force him to speak, or when they find the documents incriminating the Eyedrin cleric Arnassos.

Once this happens, Roslyn decides to first take out the prime witness – Meryn. She has been studying him for quite some time, and already has a light crossbow in hand. She plans to use either her sneak attack or death attack on him in a surprise attack.

Preferably, she attacks with as few people present as possible – but if circumstances dictate otherwise (i.e. when Meryn is to tell the truth about Arnassos) – she doesn't delay.

Everyone present may make a Sense Motive check opposed by Roslyn's Bluff check to notice a subtle shift in attitude from the woman, a fraction before she attacks. Those who make it may act in the surprise round.

Creatures: Roslyn is a professional assassin. She has worked for several groups in the past. After her last assignment, in which she attempted to assassinate Ahlissan emissary, she fell into the hands of the Sunndi government. Normally, she would have been executed, but Roslyn has powerful friends. In exchange for information regarding the Wastrian forces that had previously hired her, she was pardoned. She was given a second chance, and drafted in the Eyedrin army – who have no problems with harboring a dark-hearted murderer.

For while, Roslyn's behavior was exceptional. But the past has a tendency to resurface. When the PCs were hired to investigate the monster, she was assigned as their aid – with the express order to make sure than any involvement of Eyedrin in the scene was to be silenced – using any means possible.

Note: Roslyn's attack is a one-time shot. As a melee combatant she is not likely to make much chance, as her powers are useless after the initial surprise round.

Therefor the EL of this encounter is treated as half that of a normal combat.

APL 4 (EL 3)

☛ **Roslyn:** female human fighter 2/monk 1 /rogue 2/assassin 1; hp 33; see Appendix 1 – APL 4

APL 6 (EL 4)

☛ **Roslyn:** female human fighter 2/monk 1 /rogue 2/assassin 3; hp 48; see Appendix 1 – APL 6

APL 8 (EL 5)

☛ **Roslyn:** female human fighter 2/monk 1 /rogue 2/assassin 5; hp 58; see Appendix 1 – APL 8

APL 10 (EL 6)

☛ **Roslyn:** female human fighter 2/monk 1 /rogue 2/assassin 7; hp 68; see Appendix 1 – APL 10

Tactics: Roslyn uses her death attack on Meryn if possible. If she is not able to step into melee range, she uses her crossbow and fires a bolt, counting on her sneak attack to kill him. Otherwise, she quick draws her dagger and stabs him.

Once she has attacked, the PCs are likely all over her. To get the upper hand, she attempts to use the vial of inhaling poison on her as a threat. Provided she survives to her next action, she quickdraws the vial, and readies an action to smash it the moment anyone attacks her or moves closer:

Roslyn suddenly holds up her hand, showing a fragile vial, containing a strange ashen liquid.

“Don’t let me use this!” she shouts. “This will kill us all! And I’ll use it!”

The vial contains an inhaling poison (the strength of which varies by APL - see Roslyn’s stat block for effects). While PCs may gamble that it is not potent enough to kill or incapacitate them, they are still in the lair of a powerful creature – if the poison doesn’t kill them, it may weaken them considerably. Roslyn is quite aware that the PCs may not stand up to the creature if she uses the vial (and makes the PCs aware of it if they seem too boisterous).

Since Roslyn expects the PCs to kill her anyway, she is not averse to use the poison. If the PCs do not listen to her, she smashes the vial. Only a swift action that manages to incapacitate or disarm her can prevent this.

Roslyn tries to catch as many people as possible in a 10-by-10 foot area. By preference, she does not include herself, but if cornered she may decide to do so. After that, she tries to run – if needed using *light foot* to allow herself to get away without provoking attacks of opportunity.

If the PCs listen, she demands the PCs show her the letters (if they found them in room VI) – and then orders them to burn them.

It is not likely that PCs desire to do so, but she demands they destroy them or she uses the vial. PCs can try to talk her out of this action. Intimidate doesn’t work – she is too much a professional – but Diplomacy may work if the PCs promise to either let her go free, or a fair trial at Eyedrinn. A DC 35 Diplomacy check then convinces her to surrender.

If the PCs actually destroy the letters as asked, she willingly surrenders once she is guaranteed a fair trial at Eyedrinn (no Diplomacy check is needed, as her ‘work’ is done).

Any other outcome prompts her to use the vial, and try to make good her escape.

Throughout this encounter, Debin does nothing – he is unsure who he should support: his former companion that has apparently gone mad, or the strangers who he has little reason to trust.

If the PCs manage to overcome Roslyn, he suggests she be taken to Eyedrinn to face trial there.

Treasure: Roslyn has mostly only common gear on her, and most of it is recognizable as belonging to the Eyedrinn guards.

Only the poison is of value. It is useless to the PCs, but if they can obtain it, it can be sold – PCs with ethics can turn it in to a local temple, and gain a similar monetary reward for their efforts.

APL 4: Loot – 42 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 6: Loot – 167 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 8: Loot – 208 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 10: Loot – 583 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

Development: If the PCs capture Roslyn alive, she is silent about her employer. Alls she says is that she attempted to “protect the faith.”

Troubleshooting: It is possible some PCs have got ‘rid’ of Debin and Roslyn earlier in the scenario. In that case, Roslyn convinces Debin to tracked the PCs through the swamp. They arrive at the bunker shortly after the PCs do.

Roslyn is, in that case, less aware of what has gone on. Instead, she orders the PCs under arrest, and demands they explain themselves. As soon as they do, she continues her action as planned above.

Note that if PCs attack before Roslyn does (to prevent their arrest), Debin joins the fight against the PCs.

ENCOUNTER 9 : THE FIST OF HEXTOR

Shortly after the PCs dealt with Roslyn, the blood golem returns to it’s lair. It’s dramatic return is heralded to the PCs if they set of the silent *alarm* when they entered the lair, and did not (yet) remove the silk tapestry.

Detect scrying: If those conditions are met, anyone who has *detect scrying* up, realizes they are being scried. If the person protected succeeds at an opposed caster level

(18) check, he gets a flash of a young elven woman's face. The distance or location of the scribe is hundreds of miles to the south east.

While this information is accurate enough at this moment to use as a focus for a teleport spell, anyone foolish enough to try this is lost and does not return.

What happens to those PCs is unknown. No amount of scrying can further discern their locations, and they are effectively out of the scenario. It takes several weeks before they surface again, at the edge of the Vast Swamp, dazed and unable to recall what happened. Their backs are covered in scars, and the two previous weeks are only a blur of darkness, pain, and fear.

PCs who have gone through this pay 2 more TUs for spending their days in the swamp (but they need not pay upkeep over those TU). Note on the PC's AR that the character has been 'Marked'.

A PC that teleported away otherwise gets all the favors and disavors as the other PCs.

The tapestry: The tapestry on the wall now animates:

You catch a movement out of the corner of your eye. Up on the wall, the tapestry seems to ripple, to move. It is as if the face on the cloth becomes alive.

It eyes you, then its lips move, and a whisper can be heard.

"Trespassers. Burglars. Thieves."

Anyone who has played COR5-02 The Voice of Reason may realize, on a DC 15 Wis check, that they saw a cloth quite similar to this in that module – though it didn't animate then.

If anyone has the **Thrall Medallion** from that module, they must make a DC 26 Will save or be *dominated*. Regardless of the outcome, that person hears a voice in his head.

"My thrall. It is not time for the truth yet. Destroy what you found, and you will be safe."

Take note that the command involves the destruction of the letters – the PC is not asked to fight his companions.

Give the PCs a round to react. Casting spells at the cloth is a bit futile – it's a simple item that can be easily destroyed, but is not actually a threat. Instead, they better think how to face the creature coming their way.

The creature comes: The creature is by now on its way, passing through the tunnel to the bunker. If Meryn is still alive, run the following:

Meryn suddenly pales. "It comes!" he shouts, fiddling his cloak, "I can sense it! It comes our way!"

One round after this statement, a bashing sound comes from the entrance.

If the PCs did not encounter the cloth and did not have Meryn to warn them, they are possibly surprised. Anyone who makes a Listen check opposed by the

golem's Move Silently check can take one standard action – the rest are surprised as the golem descends from the stairs. If the PCs were warned, skip the surprise round.

What comes down into the hall is a nightmarish contraption. A gigantic creature forged of steel, with spiked heavy flails instead of arms that whirl around threateningly.

Its abstract face has red dots of light, which seem to burn with hatred.

Its armor is splattered with blood.

It thunders at you in a strange tongue.

The language is infernal. What the golem shouts is "Mortals! Face the wrath of Hextor!"

Creatures: the blood golem of Hextor is an awakened golem, created from the blood of sacrificed victims. While, unlike other golems, it is sentient, the process of making it turned it insane. It is a bloodthirsty killing machine, who recognizes no authority except Hextor itself – or a perverted image thereof.

It's goal is to feed on blood, and, once it sees the PCs, it attacks with relish.

Note: the blood golem is quite powerful, but it has little moving space in the bunker, and has no ranged attacks. As such its EL is calculated a bit lower.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **Weakened Awakened Blood Golem:** hp 85; see Appendix 1 – APL 4

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Advanced Awakened Blood Golem:** hp 170; see Appendix 1 – APL 6

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Advanced Awakened Blood Golem:** hp 210; see Appendix 1 – APL 8

APL 10 (EL 13)

☛ **Advanced Awakened Blood Golem:** hp 250; see Appendix 1 – APL 10

Tactics: The blood golem fights solely in melee, using his whirling attack where possible. It focuses its attack on any spellcasters – wizards are a preference, as it hates them with a passion.

The cloth, meanwhile, does nothing but look on.

PCs that have been *dominated* by the cloth may defend themselves as long as they keep their goal – to destroy the letters – in mind. The battle may give them an excellent opportunity to do so. Once the letters are destroyed, they can turn their full attention to the battle – the cloth doesn't hamper them in this fight.

Debin helps as much as possible, providing flanking and using aid other on people more capable to deal damage to the creature than he.

Roslyn, if still alive, also joins the fight. If the PCs bound her she shouts to be released so she can aid.

Meryn, if alive, does nothing but fiddle his cloak. The blood golem, seeing him as his creator, does not attack him.

This battle is meant to be quite hard, especially at lower levels (even with the help of Delin and Roslyn). It can be made a lot easier if the PCs have realized the properties of the clasp on Meryn's cloak – but it is up to the PCs' inquisitiveness to find that out.

Development: Once the creature is destroyed, it can be examined more closely. There is not much left of the creature itself – the being inside the armor: all that is found is that the insides are caked with blood.

The armor and weapons are not salvageable, but can be disassembled – allowing the party to take some pieces as evidence.

When the PCs look back at the cloth, they see that it hangs limp – whoever was watching them is gone.

ENCOUNTER 10 : HOMEBOUND

Having defeated the creature, and likely gathered evidence of Arnassos' involvement, the PCs return home.

The journey is mostly uneventful, but as they approach the Hextorite's outpost (likely the Widows Tower), a group of guards approaches them. If the PCs somehow teleport or fly to Eyedrin, you can have this occur as they enter town.

Half a dozen men in the armor of the Hextorite guards approach as you appear from the swamp.

Some of them look at you with some curiosity, but the front man seems unimpressed with your appearance. It is Veeto, the captain of the guards that spoke to you when you arrived. He looks annoyed.

"You survived, then?" – it doesn't sound very pleased – "Well, I would personally prefer to whip you for dragging my men in there, but apparently someone higher up has some issues with you first. You are ordered to appear before His Exaltedness Lord Jarinto. I hope he leaves something for me once he is done."

Creatures: These are Hextorite guards. They are merely ordered to find the PCs and escort them to Eyedrin.

This is not intended as a fighting encounter – and you may discourage PCs by pointing out that fighting Eyedrin guards is going to put them in disfavor with the army – if not in jail. However, if PCs resist, they will face a fight. Note that in this case Debin fights the PCs too.

If PCs have Roslyn with them, and she is bound, Veeto demands an explanation. If Debin is still present, he can confirm the story if the PCs tell the truth. In that case, Roslyn is slammed in irons and dragged off to face questioning.

Without Debin (i.e. if he died), the PCs face a situation where it is their word against Roslyn's. It is not likely that Veeto believes the PCs, especially when

Debin died, but he follows protocol and has Roslyn taken away for questioning – but it is apparent that she is going to get off easy.

Resisting to hand over any prisoners is certain to lead to conflict.

All APLs (EL 9)

♣ **Captain Veeto:** Male human fighter 7; LE, see Appendix 1 – All APLs

♣ **Guards (5):** Male human fighter 3; LN, see Appendix 1 – All APLs

Tactics: These are hardened but simple soldiers, used to fight bullywugs face to face. Half of them enter melee. The other half takes out bows and readies to fire at any spellcaster the moment he starts casting.

Veeto leads his men in melee.

Development: The most likely outcome is for the PCs to surrender Roslyn to the authorities, and to follow their escort to meet with count Jarinto.

In that case, go to encounter 11.

Should PCs or totally void the encounter (i.e. when they travel directly to meet with Joreth in Deltrees) skip encounter 11, and go to the conclusion.

Treasure: There is no treasure to be obtained even if the PCs fight and win – all the soldiers have is common gear, and most of it is recognizable as belonging to the Eyedrin guards.

Troubleshooting: the one thing that can go wrong here is PCs not respecting the authorities, and ending up with a fight with the guards.

In that case, the army will eventually hear from it. If there were only some wounded, the authorities smooth things out, and the PCs merely get a reprimand. They don't earn any military recognition points for this scenario.

If any soldiers died, PCs earn a disfavor with the army, lose all army recognition points (those in the past and those earned in this scenario), and face trial. This sentences them to jail for 26 TU, and fines them 500 gp per soldier that died.

ENCOUNTER 11 : PAPERWORK

The office of count Jarinto is a luxury room, with plush carpet, beautiful tapestries, a crystal chandelier, lazy chairs, and finely crafted hardwood furniture. A stark contrast with the squalor you saw elsewhere in the town.

Count Jarinto is a man who turned grey at a young age. His face is tired and heavily lined, his look grim. He is in the chair behind his desk, his arms leaning on his desk, as you enter. He looks old and frail compared to the man next to him, who stops talking softly as you enter, to turn and look at you. He is a tall man, with long dark hair in several

braids. His grey eyes sparkle like cold diamonds. He is dressed in black armor, wrapped in a large black coat. The symbol of a fist holding barbed daggers is embossed on his breastplate. It gives a red metal gleam as it is hit by the light of the fire nearby.

He gives you a strange grin – it is not sure if he is smiling at you or growling.

The man at the desk looks up and nods at you, sternly.

“You are the investigators sent by Kestor?”

Jarinto, the man behind the desk, waits for the PCs to confirm, then continues. The man beside him is his brother, High priest of Hextor, Huanador.

♣ Lord Jarinto Male human Ari6; LN

♣ Huanador Male human Clr11; LE

There are also two guards near the door.

♣ Guards (2: Male human fighter 3; LN, see Appendix 1 – All APLs

“Good. My name is Jarinto, appointed vassal of this place. This here is High Priest Huanador of the faith of Hextor.

My sources told me you were successful in finding the creature that plagues us. I need a full report.

What did you find?”

“Excuse me, brother,” Huanador suddenly interrupts. “While I would not dare to imply that the count of Corul would send us people of a mischievous bend” – gives a smile that is all but a threat – “I would think that it may be appropriate to take precautions that all that is told here is... the truth?”

Jarinto looks annoyed at the interruption but sighs.

“Yes, yes. I guess so.” He looks up at you. “I am sure you have no objection to subject to magic that will assure us that you will speak truthfully?”

Jarinto asks the PCs if they will subject to a zone of truth spell being cast. It hardly matters if PCs object or not – Huanador casts the spell anyway. If PCs submit freely, the questioning that follows is amiable – if they save against the spell, the questioning is held in far colder tone, and more insistent for answers.

Once the spell has been cast, the PCs can do their story. Jarinto listens to what they say. He demands to see any evidence the PCs have, and pushes for the following information depending on what the PCs tell him:

- The nature of the creature
- Who was behind it.
- If the PCs found any lead to a sponsor.

If the PCs reveal the involvement of a Hextorite priest, Jarinto looks shocked.

Jarinto stares at Huanador, unbelieving.

“Your people are involved?”

Huanador raises an eyebrow.

“I think you know quite well, brother, that I would have informed you if we would ever grant permission to delve in matters of such nature.”

He turns his glare at you.

“You have proof? A name? Who is this priest supposed to be?”

If the PCs give the name of Arnassos, Huanador calls forth a guard and orders to bring the named man.

About ten minutes later, the guard returns.

A thin, man enters. He is old, and walks with a limp. Unlike most priests you saw in town, he doesn’t wear armor. Instead, he wears simple robes, though there is the familiar Hextorite flail hanging at his side.

His face is wrinkled, but his eyes sparkle. He doesn’t seem very worried to be summoned. In fact, he looks hautain, almost arrogant.

“I was called?”

Jarinto nods.

“You are Arnassos?”

The man nods. “As you well know, yes.”

“There have been allegations against you.”

The lord motions towards you.

“By these people.”

The man eyes you hatefully.

“There are? And what, prey, are they, then?”

Creature: Arnassos is indeed the man behind the scheme. He is arrogant and believes himself superior, the only true believer in his god. He is, however, frail, and not hardly as great a cleric as he feels he deserves to be – he blames the church for holding him back.

Arnassos: Male human cleric 3; LE, see Appendix 1 – All APLs;

The PCs have a chance to lay forth their accusations. As they speak, the man doesn’t say a word. He doesn’t sweat, does not even blink – he calmly listens.

Once they are done, he answers:

“So, that is it, then?” He scowls. “Fine. Well, can I continue with my work then?”

Jarinto pales.

“You don’t deny this?”

The man’s eyes glitter.

“Deny? Why would I deny? I did the work of the Scourge of the Heavens! I called forth the wrath of the Tyrant! Deny?”

He laughs maniacally as he eyes those present.

The PCs may desire to ask questions or throw accusations, but Arnassos hardly listens. Below are a

number of responses Arnassos may give (they need not necessarily fit the question).

"Proud! This rotten core, this land ruled by anarchy! Falling sway to those monsters of the mud! A sign from the gods! The trial for their commitment to chaos!"

Ah, I knew...only true loyalty could have us – only devotion – a not mere prayer alone, no! An instrument I created, an avatar of the Scourge of Battle, who would sweep aside the threat of the swamp, and bring order!."

"And once the prototype is done...an army! An army of righteousness!"

Two questions prompt an actual response. If the PCs mention him working with the Bleak Academy, or ask whether the other priests knew:

"Prah! The men of this dump call themselves faithful! But they would not desire me to finish my dream! They would not listen to my ideas or requests! Nay! Nut I found allies, Allies in the swamp, sick of the chaos of their heathen brethren and willing to aid in the bringing of justice... in exchange for power, of course,... but the Scourge rewards those who aid him!"

If the PCs mention the assassin, he answers:

"I don't know anything about that. I don't work with women. They are weak."

At some point, Jarinto cuts in:

"Your game is over, Arnassos." Jarinto says, eyeing him.

"Over?" the man stares at him "Over?!"

At that moment, he grabs the flail at his hip and, frothing, storms forward.

"Unbeliever!"

Let PCs roll initiative, and allow them to interfere. If a PC steps forth to interfere, Arnassos instead turns his anger to the PCs. Jarinto and Huanador do not interfere, and at Jarinto's gesture the guards also stay back.

If no PCs steps forth, Anassos manages to get a hit in on Jarinto. The count is hardly enough to survive a blow, but he is dazed. The next moment, Huanador furiously loosens a searing light spell, killing the old man instantly.

Once Anassos is dead, or restrained (and carried off by the guards), continue:

"Well," Jarinto looks at you in shock. "It seems you were right. I don't... I don't believe it. What can I say?"

"Nothing, my dear brother", the high priest interrupts. "In fact, it would likely be best if..."

everyone... is silent about this... unfortunate accident."

"Accident?" Jarinto croaks. "People died!"

"The unfortunate side effects of war," the priest continues. "What is important is the great picture. See," he looks at you, "the north counts on us. They need our support. That's why they sent you. But would they dare ask us if they knew that there was a bad apple amidst us? If they hear of these atrocities? I know the Trithereon rabble too well. Their pride won't allow them to fight with us for the greater goal."

No, for the good of the land, it is best if we all...keep quiet about it. Don't you agree?"

If the PCs disagree, Huanador adds "That...is a pity." He doesn't enter in any further discussion.

Jarinto looks uncertain.

"Well. I cannot forbid you to speak. But my brother has a point. I fear though, that I will have to leave this in your hands."

You are dismissed."

One final thing the PCs may ask. If anyone thinks to ask Huanador directly if he sent the assassin, he answers:

"Is it a crime to protect the faith? There are many who would say that devotion is a great good, but it is wrong to confuse your quest for glory for true faith."

True faith means seeing everything, making sacrifices. Sometimes, the truth brings the greatest suffering. You have to strike it down without mercy."

In the end... does it matter who gave the orders? She sought to protect the faith. She was on a mission of the Scourge of Battle. She was the true believer."

And that is all Huanador has to say about it.

CONCLUSION

The PCs can return to Deltrees, where they meet up with Jothwert, who asks their report.

It is up to the PCs to determine if they speak the truth and reveal the Hextorites' involvement. If the PCs managed to destroy the monster, they gain the **favor of Bren**. This also includes 10 Army Recognition points.,

They also obtain the **vouchers** as pay for their involvement.

If the PCs reveal the involvement from the Hextorites, they gain the **favor of the church of Trithereon**, who see their suspicions on the evil of Eyedrinn confirmed.

If they instead keep the truth to themselves, they gain the **favor of count Jarinto**.

No PC can have both the favor of Jarinto or the favor of Trithereon.

Their choice may also affect the course of the war... but the repercussions may become apparent much later.

Note the choice of the PCs in the campaign consequences!

A PC that owned the thrall medallion and succumbed to the dominate of the cloth gains the “**My Thrall**” entry.

CAMPAIGN CONSEQUENCES

This module has "Campaign Consequences"; that is the outcome of this module will directly affect future events in the course of the campaign. The answers to some of the questions below may seem trivial or pointless, but because of the complex nature of the back story and campaign all information requested is vital.

Please send your answers to poc@sunndi.org as soon as possible. General comments about the module are also welcomed at this address.

1. What happened to Meryn?
2. What happened to Roslyn?
3. Was the golem destroyed?
4. What happened to Arnassos?
5. Did the PCs tell Jothwert that the Hextorites were involved?

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 5: The Bogs

Defeating the zombies

APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP

Encounter 6: Blood

Entering the bunker

APL 4	30 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	90 XP
APL 10	120 XP

Encounter 8: Roslyn Attacks

Defeating Roslyn

APL 4	90 XP
APL 6	120 XP
APL 8	150 XP
APL 10	180 XP

Encounter 9: The Fist of Hextor

Defeating the blood golem

APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP

Encounter 11: Paperwork

Stopping Arnassos attack on Jarinto

APL 4	30 XP
APL 6	45 XP
APL 8	60 XP
APL 10	75 XP

Story Award

Recovering all evidence (without destroying it)

APL 4	30 XP
APL 6	45 XP
APL 8	60 XP
APL 10	75 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 4	135 XP
APL 6	150 XP
APL 8	165 XP
APL 10	180 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 4	675 XP
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APL 6
APL 8
APL 10

900 XP
1125 XP
1350 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.

Loot = Looted gear from enemy; Coin = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; Magic = Magic Items.

Encounter 5: The Bogs

All APLs: Loot – 72 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – golembane scarab (208 gp), oil of bless weapon x3 (8 gp each), potion of cure light wounds x3 (4 gp each).

Encounter 7: The Bunker

All APLs: Loot – 20 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

Encounter 7: The Bunker – Room I:

APL 4: Loot – 1 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – continual flame lamp (4 gp), wand of knock, 5 charges (38 gp).

APL 6: Loot – 1 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – *continual flame lamp* (4 gp), *wand of knock*, 10 charges (75 gp).

APL 8: Loot – 1 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – *continual flame lamp* (4 gp), *wand of knock*, 20 charges (150 gp).

APL 10: Loot – 1 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – *continual flame lamp* (4 gp), *wand of knock* (375 gp).

Encounter 7: The Bunker – Room -II:

All APLs: Loot – 5 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

Encounter 7: The Bunker – Room -IV:

APL 4: Loot – 16 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – none.

APL 6: Loot – 16 gp, Coin – 20 gp, Magic – none.

APL 8: Loot – 16 gp, Coin – 30 gp, Magic – *oil of greater magic weapon* (62 gp).

APL 10: Loot – 16 gp, Coin – 40 gp, Magic – *oil of greater magic weapon* (62 gp), *oil of greater magic weapon* +2 (100 gp).

Encounter 7: The Bunker – Room -V:

All APLs: Loot – 15 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

Encounter : The Bunker – Room 7-VI:

APL 4: Loot – 23 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 6: Loot – 26 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 8: Loot – 163 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 10: Loot – 378 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

Encounter 8: Roslyn Attacks

APL 4: Loot – 42 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 6: Loot – 167 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 8: Loot – 208 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 10: Loot – 583 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

Total Possible Treasure

APL 4: Loot: 194 gp; Coin: 20 gp; Magic: 286 gp;
Total: 525 gp

APL 6: Loot: 322 gp; Coin: 30 gp; Magic: 323 gp;
Total: 675 gp

APL 8: Loot: 500 gp; Coin: 40 gp; Magic: 460 gp;
Total: 1,000 gp

APL 10: Loot: 1,090 gp; Coin: 50 gp; Magic: 785 gp;
Total: 1,925 gp

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Voucher: You have obtained a set of vouchers. These represent credit, that can be used to obtain equipment in any Sunndi regional, or any metaregional scenario that starts in Sunndi. The value of the wavers is dependent on APL:

APL 4: Coin – 300 gp

APL 6: Coin – 450 gp

APL 8: Coin – 600 gp

APL 10: Coin – 750 gp

Credit can be used to buy any items that are normally Core Access through the LGCS, and any items to which this scenario grants regional access (*wand of cure light wounds*).

The favor of Bren: ???

This favor allows you to join Bren's Men.

You also obtain 10 Military Recognition points.

The favor of the church of Trithereon: ???

The favor of count Jarinto: ???

This favor can be spend to erase one disfavor with count Jarinto.

“My Thrall”: You have been enthralled by the medallion you bought, and are now unable to part with it. You cannot sell the thrall medallion.

Item Access

APL 4-8:

- Crane, portable (Adventure, AEG)
- Hacksaw (Adventure, AEG)
- Golembane scarab (Adventure; DMG)
- *Wand of cure light wounds* (Regional; DMG)
- *Wand of knock* (5 charges) (Adventure; PHB)

APL 10 (all of APLs 4-8 plus the following):

- *Potion of greater magic weapon* +2 (Adventure; DMG; 1,200 gp)

APPENDIX 1: STATBLOCKS

ALL APLS

EYEDRINN GUARDS

Captain Veeto: Male human Ftr7; CR7; Medium-sized humanoid (human - Oeridian); HD 7d10+14; hp 30 (58); Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (touch 11, flat-footed 17); Base Atk +7/+2; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d8+5, flail +1); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+5, flail +1); AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +12, Listen +4, Sense Motive +5, Spot +4; Blind Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Weapon Focus (spiked gauntlet), Weapon Specialisation (heavy flail)

Possessions: masterwork spiked breastplate, heavy steel shield, spiked gauntlet, dagger, *cloak of resistance* +1, *longsword* +1;

Eyedrinns Guards: Male human Ftr1; CR1; Medium-sized humanoid (human - Oeridian); HD 1d10+2; hp 14; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk +4 melee (1d8+2, heavy flail) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+2, heavy flail) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +2, Listen +3, Ride +3, Spot +3; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (heavy flail).

Possessions: Spiked scalemail, heavy shield, light crossbow, 10 bolts, heavy flail, dagger.

Eyedrinns Elite Guards: Male human Ftr3; CR3; Medium-sized humanoid (human - Oeridian); HD 3d10+6; hp 30; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2, heavy flail) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+2, heavy flail) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +4, Listen +3, Ride +5, Spot +3; Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail).

Possessions: masterwork spiked breastplate, spiked heavy shield, masterwork light crossbow, 10 bolts, masterwork heavy flail, dagger.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE BOGS

MERYN

CR 2

Male human (Oeridian) expert 3

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

(+0 Dex)

hp 12 (3 HD)

Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee none

Base Atk +1; Grp +1

Abilities Str 11, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 9

Feats Skill Focus (armorsmithing), Skill Focus (weaponsmithing), Nimble Fingers

Skills Appraise +7, Craft (armorsmithing) +10, Craft (weaponsmithing) +10, Disable Device +8, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (religion) +3, Open Lock +8, Search +7

Possessions craftman's clothes, *golembane scarab*

Mark of Justice (Ex): Meryn is under the influence of a *mark of justice* spell. The spell is cast at 10th level.

ENCOUNTER 11: PAPERWORK

ARNASSOS

CR 2

Male human (Oeridian) cleric 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; Senses Listen +7, Spot +8

Languages Common, Old Oeridian

AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9

(-1 Dex)

hp 14 (3 HD)

Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee heavy flail +0 (1d10-1/x3)

Base Atk +1; Grp +0

Special Actions spontaneous casting, rebuke undead 4/day (+0, 2d6+4, 3rd)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 3rd):

2nd—*darkness*, *shatter* (DC 15), *spiritual weapon*^D (melee +4, damage 1d8+1)

1st—*bane*, *command* (DC 14), *magic weapon*, *protection from good*^D

0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic*, *guidance*

D: Domain spell. Deity: Hextor. Domains: Evil, War

Abilities Str 8, Dex 9, Con 7, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 12

SQ spontaneous casting, rebuke undead 4/day (+0, 2d6+4, 3rd)

Feats Combat Casting, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (heavy flail)^B, Weapon proficiency (heavy flail)^B

Skills Concentration +4 (+8 when casting defensively), Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6

Possessions scholar robes, heavy flail

ENCOUNTER 5: THE BOGS

CANNIBAL ZOMBIE CR 2

NE medium undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +2, Spot +3

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12

(+0 Dex, +2 natural);

hp 21 (2 HD); DR 5/slashing, fast healing 5

Immune undead immunities

Resist Turn resistance +4

Fort +0, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

Speed 60 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +2 (1d6+1+disease);

Special attack option Disease, fast

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Abilities Str 12, Dex 10, Con -, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 1

Feats Improved Turn Resistance

Skills Listen +2, Spot +3

SQ Fast, undead traits, fast healing 5

Disease (Ex): *Filth fever*; Infection: injury; DC: 12; Incubation period: 1d3 days; Damage 1d3 Con + 1d3 Cha.

Fast (Ex): A cannibal zombie is not restricted to taking single actions only. However, it still cannot attack more than once in a round. A fast zombie can run normally.

ENCOUNTER 8: ROSLYN STRIKES

ROSLYN CR 6

Male human (Suel) fighter 2/rogue 3/assassin 1

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages: Common, Ferral

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 32 (6 HD)

Fort +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee longsword +4 (1d8);

Melee masterwork dagger +10 (1d4);

Ranged light crossbow +9 (1d8);

Special attack option Sneak attack +3d6, death attack (DC 12), poison use

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +4

Atk Options Combat Expertise, Quick Draw

Assassin Spells Known (CL 1st):

1st (1/day)—*obscuring mist*, *lightfoot*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10

SA Sneak attack +3d6, death attack (DC 12)

SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +9, Climb -1, Disguise +9, Hide +9, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Spot +7, Swim +0, Tumble +7

Possessions: masterwork breastplate armor, longsword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, masterwork daggers (2), smokestick, silk rope, vial of *Ishentav*. **Poison (Ishentav):** Inhaled DC 13, 1d6 Str / 1d6 Str;

ENCOUNTER 9: THE FIST OF HEXTOR

AWAKENED WEAKENED BLOOD GOLEM OF HEXTOR CR 8

LE Large construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +6, Spot +7

Languages Infernal

AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20

(-1 size, -1 Dex, +3 armor (rust-damaged +1 *fullplate*), +9 natural);

Without armor 17, touch 8, flat-footed 8

(-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 65 (10 HD); blood reservoir (empty); DR 10/adamantine

Immune magic immunity, construct immunities

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

Weakness rust vulnerability

Speed 20 ft. in *fullplate* (4 squares can't run), base movement 30 ft.

Melee 2x masterwork heavy flail +13 (1d10+6); or

Melee 2x slam +12 (1d8+6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +17

Atk Options whirlwind of death

Special Actions blood siphon

Combat Gear +1 *fullplate*, 2 masterwork heavy flails

Abilities Str 22, Dex 8, Con -, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 3

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Stealthy, Track

Skills Hide +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Spot +7, Survival +8

SQ blood dependency, construct traits

See Appendix 2 for a description of the golem's special abilities

ENCOUNTER 5: THE BOGS

CANNIBAL ZOMBIE

CR 3

NE medium undead

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent, Listen +6, Spot +6**AC** 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12

(+0 Dex, +2 natural);

hp 50 (5 HD); DR 5/slashing, fast healing 5**Immune** undead immunities**Fort** +1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +6**Speed** 60 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** bite +5 (1d6+3+disease);**Special attack option** Disease**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +5**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 10, Con -, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 1**Feats** Improved Initiative, Improved Turn Resistance, Track^B**Skills** Listen +6, Spot +6**SQ** Fast, scent, undead traits, fast healing 5**Disease (Ex):** *Filth fever*; Infection: injury; DC: 12; Incubation period: 1d3 days; Damage 1d3 Con + 1d3 Cha.**Fast (Ex):** A cannibal zombie is not restricted to taking single actions only. However, it still cannot attack more than once in a round. A fast zombie can run normally.**Scent (Ex):** A cannibal zombie has the scent ability.

ENCOUNTER 8: ROSLYN STRIKES

ROSLYN

CR 8

Male human (Suel) fighter 2/rogue 3/assassin 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7**Languages:** Common, Ferral**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 48 (8 HD)**Fort** +6 (+7 vs. poison), **Ref** +9, **Will** +4**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** longsword +6/+1 (1d8);**Melee** masterwork dagger +12/+7 (1d4);**Ranged** light crossbow +9 (1d8);**Special attack option** Sneak attack +4d6, death attack (DC 14), poison use**Base Atk** +6/+1; **Grp** +6**Atk Options** Combat Expertise, Quick Draw**Assassin Spells Known** (CL 3rd):

2nd(1/day)— invisibility, pass without trace

1st (3/day)— *lightfoot*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike***Abilities** Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10**SA** Sneak attack +4d6, death attack (DC 14), poison use**SQ** Evasion, improved uncanny dodge, +1 save against poison**Feats** Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Bluff +9, Climb -1, Concentration +8, Disguise +9, Hide +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Spot +7, Swim +0, Tumble +7
Possessions: masterwork breastplate armor, longsword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, masterwork daggers (2), smokestick, silk rope, vial of *Urthyank*.**Poison (Urthyank):** Inhaled DC 19, 1d6 Str / 1d6 Str;

ENCOUNTER 9: THE FIST OF HEXTOR

AWAKENED ADVANCED BLOOD GOLEM OF HEXTOR

CR 10

LE Large construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +8, Spot +9**Languages** Infernal**AC** 24, touch 8, flat-footed 26(-1 size, -1 Dex, +7 armor (rust-damaged +1 *fullplate*), +9 natural);

Without armor 17, touch 8, flat-footed 8

(-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 120 (14 HD); blood reservoir (empty); DR 10/adamantine**Immune** magic immunity, construct immunities**Fort** +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5**Weakness** rust vulnerability**Speed** 20 ft. in *fullplate* (4 squares can't run), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** 2x masterwork heavy flail +16 (1d10+6); or**Melee** 2x slam +15 (1d8+6)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +20**Atk Options** whirlwind of death**Special Actions** blood siphon**Combat Gear** +1 *fullplate*, 2 masterwork heavy flails**Abilities** Str 23, Dex 8, Con -, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 3**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Power Attack, Stealthy, Track**Skills** Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +11, Spot +9, Survival +8**SQ** blood dependency, construct traits

See Appendix 2 for a description of the golem's special abilities

APL 8

ENCOUNTER 5: THE BOGS

CANNIBAL ZOMBIE

CR 5

NE medium undead

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent, Listen +8, Spot +9

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12

(+0 Dex, +2 natural);

hp 92 (10 HD); DR 5/slashing, fast healing 5

Immune undead immunities

Resist Turn resistance +4

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

Speed 60 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +8 (1d8+3+disease/19-20);

Special attack option Bloodthirsty, disease

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +8

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con -, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 1

Feats Improved Critical(bite)^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Improved Turn Resistance, Track^B

Skills Listen +8, Spot +9

SQ Fast, scent, undead traits, fast healing 5

Bloodthirsty (Ex): If a cannibal zombie scores a critical hit against a living target, that creature takes 1 point of Constitution damage.

Disease (Ex): *Filth fever*; Infection: injury; DC: 12; Incubation period: 1d3 days; Damage 1d3 Con + 1d3 Cha.

Fast (Ex): A cannibal zombie is not restricted to taking single actions only. However, it still cannot attack more than once in a round. A fast zombie can run normally.

Scent (Ex): A cannibal zombie has the scent ability.

ENCOUNTER 8: ROSLYN STRIKES

ROSLYN

CR 10

Male human (Suel) fighter 2/rogue3/assassin5

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages: Common, Ferral

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 58 (10 HD)

Fort +6 (+8 vs. poison), **Ref** +10, **Will** +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee longsword +7/+2 (1d8);

Melee masterwork dagger +13/+8 (1d4);

Ranged light crossbow +10 (1d8);

Special attack option Sneak attack +5d6, death attack (DC 16), poison use

Base Atk +7/+2; **Grp** +7

Atk Options Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Quick Draw

Assassin Spells Known (CL 5th):

2nd(3/day)— *invisibility*, *pass without trace*, *spider climb*

1st(4/day)— *jump*, *lightfoot*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10

SA Sneak attack +5d6, death attack (DC 16), poison use

SQ Evasion, improved uncanny dodge, +2 save against poison

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +11, Climb -1, Concentration +14, Disguise +9,

Hide +13, Listen +7, Move Silently +13, Spot +7, Swim +0,

Tumble +7

Possessions: masterwork breastplate armor,

longsword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, masterwork daggers

(2), smokestick, silk rope, vial of *basilisk breath*. **Poison**

(**Basilisk breath**): Inhaled DC 17, 1d6 Con/ 1d6 Con;

ENCOUNTER 9: THE FIST OF HEXTOR

AWAKENED ADVANCED BLOOD GOLEM OF

HEXTOR

CR 12

LE Large construct

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +11,

Spot +12

Languages Infernal

AC 27, touch 9, flat-footed 27

(-1 size, +0 Dex, +9 armor (+1 *fullplate*), +9 natural);

Without armor 18, touch 8, flat-footed 18

(-1 size, +0 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 210 (18 HD); blood reservoir (20 hp); DR 10/adamantine

Immune magic immunity, construct immunities

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8

Weakness rust vulnerability

Speed 20 ft. in fullplate (4 squares can't run), base movement 30 ft.

Melee 2x masterwork heavy flail +21 (1d10+7); or

Melee 2 x slam +20 (1d8+7)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +25

Atk Options whirlwind of death

Special Actions blood siphon

Combat Gear +1 *fullplate*, 2 masterwork heavy flails

Abilities Str 26, Dex 10, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 4

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Bullrush, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Stealthy, Track

Skills Hide +12, Listen +11, Move Silently +12, Spot +12, Survival +12

SQ blood dependency, construct traits

See Appendix 2 for a description of the golem's special abilities

APL 10

ENCOUNTER 5: THE BOGS

CANNIBAL ZOMBIE **CR 6**

NE medium undead

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent, Listen +10, Spot +11

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12

(+0 Dex, +2 natural);

hp 139 (14 HD); DR 5/slashing, fast healing 5

Immune undead immunities

Resist Turn resistance +4

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +11

Speed 60 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +11 (1d8+4+disease/19-20);

Special attack option Bloodthirsty, disease

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +10

Abilities Str 18, Dex 10, Con -, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 1

Feats Improved Critical(bite)^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Improved Toughness, Turn Resistance, Track^B

Skills Listen +10, Spot +11

SQ Fast, scent, undead traits, fast healing 5

Bloodthirsty (Ex): If a cannibal zombie scores a critical hit against a living target, that creature takes 1 point of Constitution damage.

Disease (Ex): *Filth fever*; Infection: injury; DC: 12; Incubation period: 1d3 days; Damage 1d3 Con + 1d3 Cha.

Fast (Ex): A cannibal zombie is not restricted to taking single actions only. However, it still cannot attack more than once in a round. A fast zombie can run normally.

Scent (Ex): A cannibal zombie has the scent ability.

ENCOUNTER 8: ROSLYN STRIKES

ROSLYN **CR 12**

Male human (Suel) fighter 2/rogue3/assassin7

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages: Common, Ferral

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15

(+4 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 68 (12 HD)

Fort +7 (+10 vs. poison), **Ref** +12, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee longsword +9/+4 (1d8);

Melee masterwork dagger +15/+10 (1d4);

Ranged light crossbow +12 (1d8)

Special attack option Sneak attack +6d6, death attack (DC 18), poison use

Base Atk +9/+4; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Quick Draw, Spring Attack

Assassin Spells Known (CL 7th):

3rd(2/day)— *deeper darkness*, *false life*, *nondetection*

2nd(4/day)— *alter self*, *invisibility*, *pass without trace*, *spider climb*

1st (4/day)— *jump*, *lightfoot*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10

SA Sneak attack +6d6, death attack (DC 18), poison use

SQ Evasion, improved uncanny dodge, +3 save against poison

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +15, Climb -1, Concentration +16, Disguise +11, Hide +15, Listen +7, Move Silently +15, Spot +7, Swim +0, Tumble +7
Possessions: masterwork breastplate armor, longsword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, masterwork daggers (2), smokestick, silk rope, vial of *Mist of Nourn*.
Poison (Mist of Nourn): Inhaled DC 25, 1d8 Con/ 1d8 Con;

ENCOUNTER 9: THE FIST OF HEXTOR

AWAKENED ADVANCED BLOOD GOLEM OF HEXTOR **CR 14**

LE Huge construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +14, Spot +14

Languages Infernal

AC 28, touch 8, flat-footed 28

(-2 size, -1 Dex, +9 armor (+1 fullplate), +12 natural);

Without armor 19, touch 8, flat-footed 19

(-2 size, -1 Dex, +12 natural)

hp 250 (22 HD); blood reservoir (20 hp); DR 10/adamantine

Immune magic immunity, construct immunities

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9

Weakness rust vulnerability

Speed 20 ft. in fullplate (4 squares can't run), base movement 30 ft.

Melee 2x masterwork heavy flail +27 (1d10+11); or

Melee 2 x slam +26 (1d8+11)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Atk +16; **Grp** +36

Atk Options whirlwind of death

Special Actions blood siphon

Combat Gear +1 fullplate, 2 masterwork heavy flails

Abilities Str 34, Dex 9, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 4

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Bullrush, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Stealthy, Track

Skills Hide +14, Listen +14, Move Silently +14, Spot +14, Survival +15

SQ blood dependency, construct traits

See Appendix 2 for a description of the golem's special abilities

APPENDIX 2: EYEDRINN

Eyedrin (town): Conventional; AL LN; 200 gp limit (due to the war); Assets 12,000 gp; Population 724; Mixed (human 660, half-orc 35, half-elf 20, halfling 7, gnome 2).

Authority Figures: Lord Jarinto, male halfling human Ari 6. Lord Jarinto wields power as a count, but is in fact a regent, appointed by a 'democratic' process – at least, democratic according to the teachings of Hextor.

Important Characters: Great Scourge Huanador, male Clr11 of Hextor, high priest of Hextor; Captain Veeto, male human Ftr7, Captain of the guards and town sheriff; Cletis, male human Clr2/Ftr5, officer of communications; Eiric Hadwather, male half-elf Exp8, merchant;

Eyedrin is a squalid town in the far south of Sunndi, where the Pawluck river flows into the Vast Swamp. The town acts as a buffer against the incursions of the bullywugs in the east, and quite a few raids have been stopped by the militia of the town. The worship of Hextor is still practiced in Eyedrin, and Hazendel has allowed the settlement to grow.

Still, the Hextorites are not ever popular elsewhere in Sunndi. Only the desperate and the unscrupulous move to the town. For the defense of Sunndi, the support of the Hextorites is important. Hazendel hopes to get the Hextorites accept aid from the Trithereon knights and the Warders, to better defend Stalward. Until now, the Hextorites have defended their part of the border on their own.

Eyedrin is built not so much on the shore of the Pawluck as on the river delta itself. It is a mass of small islands, with interconnecting bridges and peers. The wooden houses are set on poles driven deep into the soggy ground, giving the only means for stability to build on.

Only the South Gate and the Scourged Fortress are stone. The gate is only mockingly called this way – it consists of two stone pillars with accompanying watch towers, set on each side of the river where it leaves the town and flows into the swamp. Between the two towers, a net of barbed chains can be raised to block access to anyone who would try to enter town through the river.

The fortress is built on one of the few solid patches of ground, a little bit from the river shore. Here, the massive building rises from the soil like a clenched fist. It serves as lord Jarinto's keep, as the Eyedrin standing army headquarters, and, most importantly, as the temple of Hextor.

The remainder of the town are wooden houses – some hold no more than one room for families to live in. The largest buildings are reserved for the army – the long barracks, the stables, and the warehouses.

The town is surrounded by a wooden palisade set with sharp glass and shrapnel to discourage climbing. The many streams that flow out from the river are framed with watchtowers that can lower hard wooden

gates – often these gates are down already, as the river ways are used only infrequently.

The water is notoriously unsafe. Whenever the bullywugs attack, the cleric release aquatic oozes into the water, tiny blood-sucking monsters that attack in swarms. These take the advantage of the bullywugs in the watery environment away by weakening them, but even though the oozes are recalled by the clerics once the battle is fight, it is impossible to get all of the out, and a swimmer could get a nasty surprise in these waters.

The water is also unfit for consumption in its normal state. A special unit of clerics is in charge of filtering the water as to make it palatable, though it still smells bad and has a strange coppery after taste.

Overall, due to the war, this town is a town of soldiers. Very few merchants stay here. The ones that remain are either providers for the war, or remnants of the original family (the Hadwathers), who came here centuries ago to harvest the plants of the swamp, most of which are useful as rare potion ingredients, as medical herbs, as odd spice, or, in the case of the bog sprout, as a more common but tasty vegetable.

As the name suggests, the Vast Swamp is huge and as such a single page cannot contain enough information to describe it completely. It should contain enough information though to run this adventure, which takes place in the eastern fringes of the Vast Swamp. If a scenario requires more specific information, then this will either be given at the proper scene or in another appendix.

Description

The Vast Swamp as a whole is not unlike the Everglades in Florida in real life Earth. It is hot, humid, wet and teeming with life. Large parts of the swamp are unsurpassable for humans without a boat. Here humans and elves do not reign supreme, but lizardfolk and bullywugs are the most dominant sentient life.

The northern fringes in which this adventure takes place though contain bigger patches of dry ground either due to vegetation or low hills that rise above the mud and water. In open areas and waterways sight can extend several hundred yards before being blocked by reeds and bushes; within the reeds it is limited to a few feet at best. Mosquitoes and leeches are a constant pest, leaving bleeding wounds (no damage, but distressing) when removed. Large, hairy (harmless) spiders scuttle through the reeds, and small crocodiles swim about (and flee when the PCs pay them any attention). Other swamp life includes otters, muskrats, silver white herons, king fishers, ducks, geese and countless other birds. Alders or other swamp trees cling on to life on the numerous dry spots, covered in Spanish moss and similar, long tendrilled lichen and surrounded by patches of tall reed and reed-like plants. A constant warm wind makes the temperature bearable, but causes the reeds to rustle, giving a -2 circumstance penalty to any listening checks.

There are many reasonably dry points within the northern fringes, though these are covered with dense plant growth and relatively difficult to traverse through. Even these dry grounds in general are muddy even outside the rain season. Though there are always exceptions to the rule on top of exceptional tall hills that arise out of the surrounding muck on several places. These dry areas are islands within huge patches of shallow water that become more rare the farther south one goes. These patches are overgrown with reed and trees especially adapted to having wet feet. In these watery areas there is about 3 inches of mud covered by one foot of water, though occasionally this may change to 1' of mud under 2' water for a total depth of 3 foot. Also, if any traveler through this does not take steps to test the ground (prodding with sticks), they might be surprised by a sudden dip into a mud-filled hole. Deeper channels of slowly flowing water and small lakes overgrown with water lilies cut through these shallow areas like veins. These channels and lakes can

APPENDIX 3: THE VAST SWAMP

be quite deep, forcing travelers to swim through murky water.

A traveller in this region in general will only get wet feet and if you know the way, a boat will not be needed. Though even an experienced wanderer will have to wade through the muddy water frequently, which may cause occasional trouble for halflings and dwarves, as well as spell books and miscellaneous equipment. It pays to have watertight bags with you, though the high humidity and many rains during the rain season prevents anything from ever becoming truly dry during this season. So everything will be slimy, smelly and filthy in no time whatsoever.

Sentient Life and Unlife

Even though the Vast Swamp is inhospitable to human or olven inhabitation, it is still considered the home by several different groups of sentient creatures. Three groups of creatures are the true masters of the region and they are either feared or respected by those who travel through the Swamp.

The Vast Swamp is most infamous for the bullywugs that have made this area their home and who continually raid Sunndi to the north. The bullywugs of the Vast Swamp are more intelligent and organized than their more wild cousins described in the Forgotten Realms Monster Manual. They worship the lawful deity Wastri who promotes the destruction of dwarves, elves, gnomes and halflings, and who considers humans and amphibians far superior. Unlike regular bullywug clerics, clerics of Wastri are treated as normal clerics and they can choose from the domains Animal, Law and War. They can only rebuke undead and cast spontaneous inflict spells. Rumours tell of a monastery deep in the Vast Swamp where Wastri himself resides, ruling over his minions like a mad tyrant surrounded by both amphibious and human servants as well as more unnatural things.

Most feared by all are the undead, the origins of which are a mystery for most. They are particular common in a specific part of the Vast Swamp as if they are drawn to it like moths to a light. Still, they can be encountered everywhere. Most of commons of all are corporeal undead: hungry ghouls and fearsome bog-mummies – all that remain of unwary travellers who drowned far from home and civilisation. With the undead come those who study them and the energy that empowers these vile creatures: necromancers and clerics of deities of death, decay and magic. Sometime ago the undead in the form of a pack of adventurers had become a real threat to the safety of Sunndi, but adventurers on the pay-role of Sunndi had put an end to this threat. Now the undead and their masters tend to remain within the borders of the Swamp.

Least known, but most friendly to the average traveller are the lizardfolk of the Cthaan tribe. By human standards these savage hunters are cruel and

unforgiving, willing to do anything for the survival of their tribe. Still, unlike the bullywugs and undead, they can be reasoned with and once a traveller manage to gain their trust and becomes part of their tribe, they are staunch unwavering allies whose friendship can be a great boon to any traveller in their homeland. The Cthaan are divided in different clans who live in separate villages spread over the northern parts of the swamp forming a buffer of some sort between Sunndi to the north and the bullywugs and undead to the south. While relations between the different clans as well as the Sunndians to the north are cordial at best, they seldom come to violent clashes. The constant threat of dangerous natural predators, human outlaws, bullywugs and undead unite them into a single group.

Game Mechanics

When running a scenario within the Vast Swamp it is advisable to be familiar with the swimming rules as well as the effects of the environment on combat. Swimming rules can be found on page 84 of the PHB (all water in the Vast Swamp is considered calm unless specifically mentioned otherwise). Also remember that most the area is at the very least lightly obstructed and lightly slippery, giving a +4 modifier of the DC of any tumbling and balance checks (and that tumbling is impossible in water deeper then one knee). Hence, running or charging requires a balance check DC 14. More rules on running encounters in swamps and in deeper water can be found in the DMG at page 88 and 92. Drowning rules can be found at the end of the DMG at page 304.

Special Rules: The Bogs of Aestophatus

The area this scenario plays near to is known as the bogs of Aestophatus, for the treacherous sinkholes that can be found in abundance in this area.

This area of the swamp seems to be imbued with a dark, almost sentient aura. The unseelie court, a group of evil fey, controls it, which are in turn governed by a being called Aestophatus. The Royal Warders, who look after the swamp, are aware of the court and avoid the area. The court seems to dislike the Wastrians and is confined to the swamp. So far it has never been a threat to Sunndi. Since the fey hate the bullywugs, up till recently their presence here has been low.

Whether it is the court's presence or some other presence is unknown, but the bogs have some specific conditions that are unique to it – it's area seems to be distorted in some way. It is especially easy to get lost here. Moreover, magic that deals with divination and distance is far less accurate. The changes affect all creatures except the native fey.

Divination spells, or spelllike or supernatural abilities, are unreliable beyond short range (25ft + 5ft/2 levels), indicating wrong directions, scrying wrong locations, or simply failing all together. Anything within short range can safely be divined.

The spell *commune with nature* is dangerous to cast: whoever casts it needs to make a Will save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds while being overwhelmed by the bogs sentience. Even if a creature makes the save, the spell does not reveal locations of creatures or structures.

Spells or spelllike or supernatural abilities that move creatures or items work unreliably over distances greater than medium range. A creature attempting such a spell never ends up on target. The deviation is 1d10x1d10% of the intended moving distance. (see 'Off Target' in the description of the teleport spell, PHB pg 293).

Spells that change a PCs way of movement – such as *fly* or *expeditious retreat* – are unaffected and work normally.

NEW CREATURES

BLOODBLOATER

CR 1

N Medium Ooze (aquatic, swarm of diminutive creatures)

Init +1; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Listen -5, Spot -5

Languages none

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

(+1 Dex)

hp 22 (2 HD)

Immune ooze immunities, swarm immunities, damage from all weapons, single target spells

Fort +6, **Ref** +1, **Will** -5

Weakness fire vulnerability

Speed 5; swim 30 ft.

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +1

Atk Options Swarm (1d6+1 Strength damage)

Special Actions blood drain, distraction

Abilities Str 10, Dex 13, Con 22, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1

Skills Swim +8

SQ amphibious, ooze traits, swarm traits

Blood Drain (Su): On each turn that a bloodbloomer swarm deals at least 1 point of damage to a victim, it also drains blood and causes 1 point of Strength damage

Distraction (Ex): Any nonmindless creature vulnerable to the swarm's damage that begins its turn with a swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round; a DC 10 Fortitude save negates the effect. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a bloodbloomer swarm requires a DC 20 + spelllevel Concentration check. Using skills requiring patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check.

Swarm Traits (Ex): Not subject to critical hits or flanking. Immune to mind-affecting spells. Immune to single-target spells. Vulnerable to area effects. Does not threaten nearby squares.

BLOOD GOLEM OF HEXTOR

CR 8

LE Large construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages understands creator's orders

AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26

(-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 armor (+1 fullplate), +9 natural);

Without armor 17, touch 8, flat-footed 8

(-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 130 (10 HD); blood reservoir; DR 10/adamantine

Immune magic immunity, construct immunities

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

Weakness rust vulnerability

Speed 20 ft. (can't run) in fullplate (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.;

Melee 2x masterwork heavy flail +13 (1d10+6); or

Melee 2x slam +12 (1d8+6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +13

Atk Options whirlwind of death

Special Actions blood siphon

Combat Gear +1 fullplate, 2 masterwork heavy flails

Abilities Str 22, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ blood dependency, construct traits

Advancement 11-20 HD (Large); 21-30 HD (Huge)

APPENDIX 4: NEW RULES ITEMS

Blood Siphon (Su): A blood golem can suck the blood out of a helpless creature or a body that has died within the past hour, dealing Constitution damage at the rate of 1 point per full round. Every Constitution point lost in this fashion heals the golem 5 hit points. (The golem usually restores his hit points to maximum before filling its reservoirs so that it can remain at full strength). Both the golem and the victim must remain motionless.

Whirlwind of Death (Ex): A blood golem can spin its upper body and cause its flails to rotate at high speed. This ability allows it to attack all creatures within its reach as if it has the Whirlwind Attack feat. In the round after the golem performs this maneuver, it can take only a single attack or move action.

Blood Dependency (Ex): Because a blood golem constantly leaks its own fluid, it must absorb blood from other creatures to continue functioning. The golem loses 5 hitpoints per day. Regardless whether it is engaged in physical activity or merely stands motionless for the entire day. If the golem's armor is removed or destroyed, this loss increases to 10 hit points per day. If the golem reaches 0 hit points from blood leakage, it is destroyed, leaving only its armor.

Blood Reservoir (Ex): The reservoirs in the golem's armor hold blood equivalent to 20 points of Constitution, which is about as much as the capacity of two average human bodies. The golem normally draws 1 point of Constitution from the reservoir every day to sate its blood dependency. It can draw blood from its reservoir as a free action, and it often does so during combat.

Magic Armor (Ex): A blood golem is encased in a suit of full plate armor with an enhancement bonus of at least +1. If the golem is destroyed, the armor can be reused for another blood golem, but it does not resize to fit other creatures.

Magic Immunity (Ex): A blood golem is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. A *gentle repose* spell acts as a *slow* spell for 3 rounds with no saving throw. *Regenerate* restores 1 hit point of damage per caster level. *Horrid wilting* does half or one-quarter damage of the golem fails or succeeds on its saving throw, respectively.

Rust Vulnerability (Ex): A blood golem's armor is vulnerable to rust attacks, such as from a rust monster or the *rusting grasp* spell. If its armor is destroyed in this manner, the golem's AC drops and it makes slam attacks instead of flail attacks. Once its armor is gone, the golem loses its blood reservoir, and it loses hit points to blood leakage at the rate of 10 hit points per day instead of 5 per day.

NEW FEATS

Improved Toughness [general]

You are significantly tougher than normal

Prerequisite: Base Fortitude bonus +2

Benefit: You gain a number of hit points equal to your current hit dice. Each time you gain a Hit Die (such as by gaining a level), you gain 1 additional hit point. If you lose a Hit Die (such as by losing a level), you lose 1 hit point permanently.

Source: *Libris Mortis* pg 25

Improved Turn Resistance [monstrous]

You have a better than normal chance to resist turning.

Prerequisite: Undead type

Benefits: You are less easily affected by clerics or paladins than you normally would be (see Turn or Rebuke Undead, page 159 of the Player's Handbook). When resolving a turn, rebuke, command, or bolster attempt, add +4 to your character level (monster Hit Dice plus class levels) to determine your Hit Dice for turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts.

For example, a 4 HD wight with this feat is treated as an 8 HD undead for the purpose of turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts, even though it is a 4 HD creature for any other purpose. A vampire that already has a +4 turn resistance adds an additional +4 with this feat, for a total of 8.

Source: Libris Mortis pg 25

Breath	17	1d6 Con	
Mist of Nour	Inhaled DC 25	1d8 Con/ 1d8 Con	7,000 gp

Source: Book of Ultimate Darkness, pg 4

NEW SPELLS

Lightfoot

Transmutation

Level: Assassin 1, ranger 1

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Range: personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round

You mutter the words of the short spell and dive down the hallway, dancing between the armed guards and out the gate.

You provoke no attacks of opportunity when moving.

Source: Spell Compendium pg 132

NEW ITEMS

Crane, Portable

This small crane can be broken down into several parts for easy transportation. It must be assembled and bolted into place to be used effectively. There are different "strengths" available for purchase – the equivalent of a person with Str 22 (lift/drag 1,040 lb.), 24 (lift/drag 1,400 lb.) or 28 (lift/drag 2,400 lb.).

Source: Arms and Equipment Guide pg 21

Hacksaw

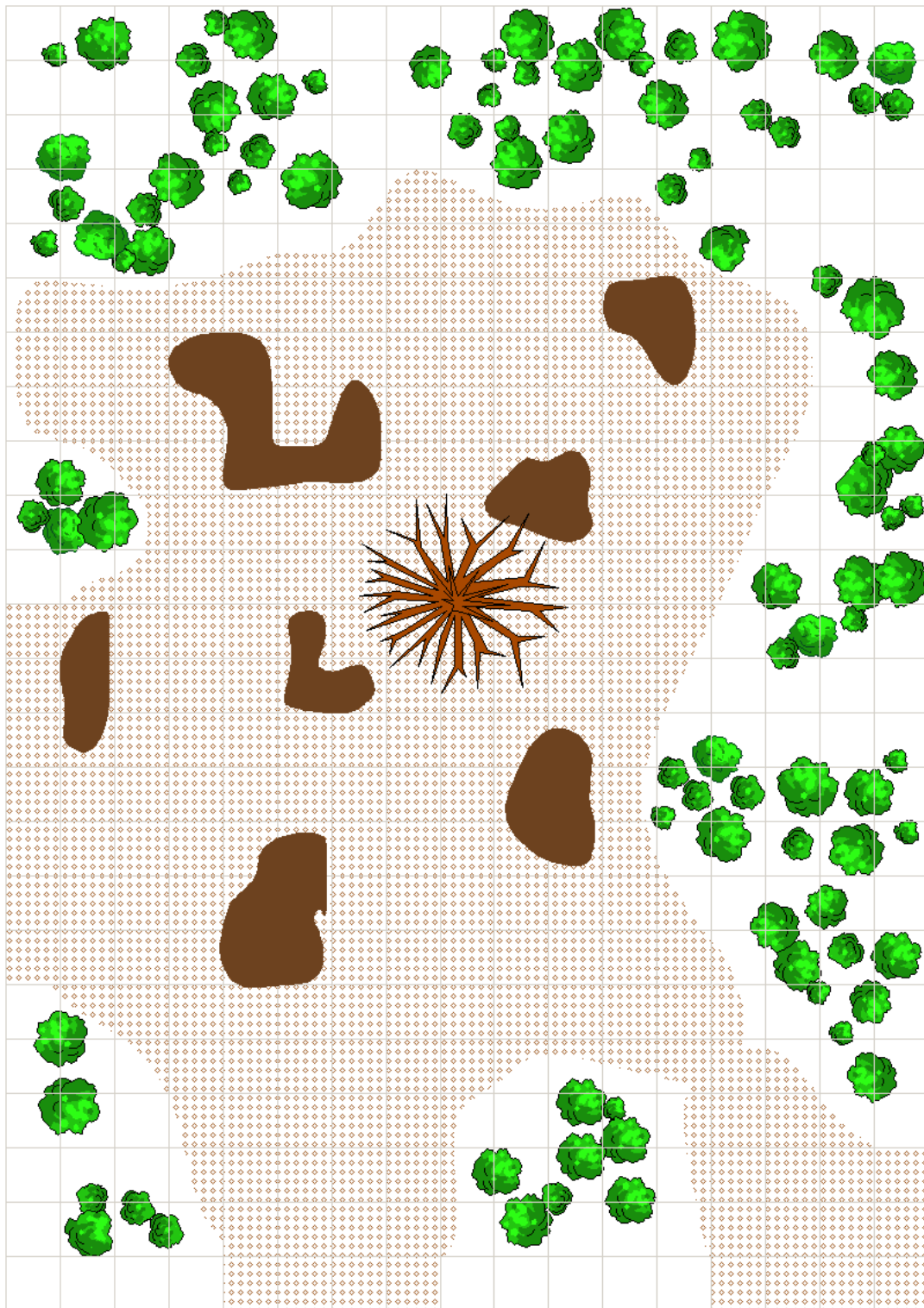
This blade is designed to cut through thin metal. It ignores the hardness of any normal metal objects (excluding exotic materials like mithral or adamantite) that it is cutting, but deals only 1 point of damage per 2 rounds of sawing. A common blade lasts for 20 rounds, while a superior blade for 40 rounds.

Source: Arms and Equipment Guide pg 23

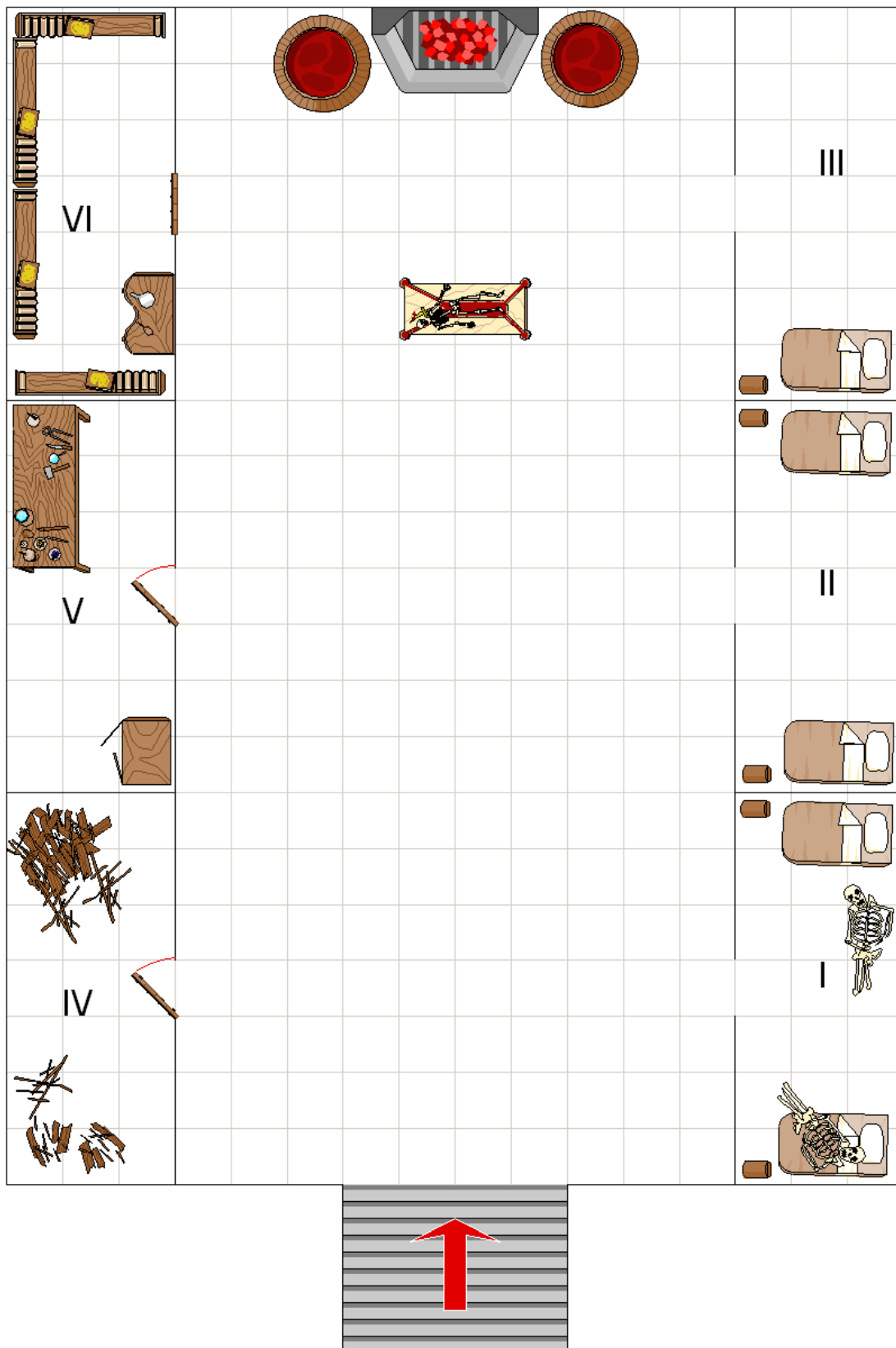
New Inhaled Poisons

Poison	Type	Damage	Price
Ishentav	Inhaled DC 13	1d6 Str / 1d6 Str	500 gp
Urthyank	Inhaled DC 19	1d6 Str / 1d6 Str	2,000 gp
Basilisk	Inhaled DC	1d6 Con/ 1d6 Con	2,500 gp

ENCOUNTER 5: THE BOGS



ENCOUNTER 7: THE BUNKER



PLAYER HANDOUT I



PLAYER HANDOUT II

My friend,

I am sending you the funds through these men. You can trust them – they are faithful that are fully behind us. It was hard to obtain it, so be careful. I do not desire to draw attention until we have proven this project right!

I voice my concerns here that I heard stories that you are using foul magics, and this worries me. Sacrifices need be made, I am aware of that. Success may call for unorthodox approaches..

But I hope you can keep me and others ignorant of the means of how you achieve perfection! I need not know – I do not wish to know – and I surely do not desire to have my underlings doubt our motives! If doubt arises, they might inform my superiors, and they would surely shut us down.

As to the ‘little problems’ our fiend runs into, I am sure you can work that out. These funds should be enough. Finish it with haste. Then, we can step forward and destroy the Wastri invaders, and claim the credit for its defeat in the name of the Great Tyrant. No longer shall the Sunndi folk bow to anarchy, but it shall learn the true rule! And, of course, your aid shall not be left unrewarded – once we have crushed the enemy, we will bring order to the chaos!

Your faithful guide,

Arnassos.

PLAYER HANDOUT II

Here are the documents you asked for. This is the last batch I sent. As usual, destroy anything I sent you once used - I have no need for things getting public. You fool around too much already.

Let me be clear. I do not enjoy to be bothered over and over about your needs for more assistance. I have better things to do than support you with the darkest of rites in our library. The head master demands more of my attention, and if he finds out what I plot due to your dumb demands, I have to shut this down.

I cannot spend more time on this. If you fail to build what is required, maybe I have to set someone else on the task? She is getting impatient with me, and I am getting fed up with you.

I also don't care what Arnassos says. That dumb priest is merely a cog in the works. Let him think that we are working for his tyrant god's glory. Soon it won't matter.

And get rid of that pesky blacksmith when he is done. He is a liability.