WHITE BOX BOX QUESTS

MOANS OF DEAD

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MOANS OF DEAD

A Short Adventure for 2 to 6 First Level Characters

CREDITS

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Citizens of the small Village of Iceshire claim they can hear what they believe sounds like the moaning of dead humans from the snow capped Elrumir Woods north of their tiny civilization. And as the cycles of time pass, so does the closeness and number of the wailing increase. It is believed by the villagers that once benign Wizard Craedric, now a constantly cackling and screaming Liche, has plans to unleash a horde of undead upon the populace and throughout all of Winterlight Valley. Further ascertaining these fears is the Cleric of the Gray Pearl Moon's frequent Nightmares of "flesh rippers" eating the villagers by the darkness of a "soon to come" morning.

This adventure is part one of a three campaign (each a separate publication): Shadow of the Corpse Tree and Ascent to Heaven are acts 2 and 3 respectively. Moans of Dead is an Adventure for 2 to 6 Swords & Wizardry White Box characters at first level. After arriving at Iceshire, player's characters are hired by the Cleric of the Gray Pearl Moon to Quest to cease the wailing heard at night from the Elrumir Woods. However, before departure, the Liche attacks Iceshire with a small army of undead as they prepare to venture into the snow laden Woods from Iceshire's Hallowed Halls.

"Aiyeee! Flesh Rippers! They eat in the sunlight of the soon to come night! They feast on the Children of Bloodied Light!"

Erera Liliwan Cleric of the Gray Pearl Moon

ICESHIRE

The small Village of Iceshire, nestled south of the snow laden Elrumir Woods of Winterlight Valley, is home to dozens of human mystics that spend much of their time in deep meditation pondering verses of the Til-Gara, a holy book that details the wonders and mysteries of the Gray Pearl, a legendary relic which provides the villagers all their needs.

When not meditating, Iceshirians spend their time worshipping the Gray Pearl by chanting in the ancient language of the Aeyr Elves and dancing in front of the Hallowed Halls, a temple located southeast of the village that enshrines the Gray Pearl.

At nightfall, the villagers retreat to their manses, bar their doors and engage in sleeping meditation. Unfortunately, however, such privilege may soon be a thing of the past, as the moans of the dead are now heard from the woods.

A 3rd level, lawfully aligned, Cleric of the Grey Pearl Moon, Erera Liliwan, is a gnarled old believer in the faith of the Aeyr Elves Anr Pantheon (a group of gods associated with wisdom, nature, magic and the ability to manifest miracles with the use of the Gray Pearl). An Aeyr Elf herself, she is a descendant of the Clerics of the Anr Pantheon Bloodline (she is, however, unaware of this). She offers the player's characters 720 Gold Pieces to cease the wailing heard at night from the Elrumir Woods. She is certain it is the sounds of the undead, raised by an Insane Liche that hails from the Ashen Spire, a Tower of Bone located on the Cold Mountains that surround the Valley.

MISCELLANEOUS

As the Gray Pearl provides all of Iceshire their needs (food, water and clothing), the denizens of Iceshire have no need of farming or procuring foodstuffs in the traditional manner of hunting and fishing. If desired, the player's characters acquire can equipment before from Erera embarking on their Quest. Any nonmagical item found in the Swords & Wizardry White Box rulebook can be created by the Gray Pearl.

LOCATION #1 HALLOWED HALLS SHRINE

The Hallowed Halls is a large Temple wrought of ivory stones. It stands thirty two feet into the air and its intricate fine craftsmanship is and recognized to be that of the Aeyr Elves of antiquity. It is located aside the snowy Iceshire Fields that surround the southeastern walls of the Village. At the base of the building is the main gate into the temple. In the barren depths of the structure is the Gray Pearl, a shimmering pearl about the size of a human fist and blazing with white, brilliant light. It floats above a pool of icy, clear water set in a recess and spins slowly clockwise.

The Shrine is where the adventure begins. After speaking with Cleric Erera Liliwan, acquiring the GP for the Quest and any items that she may yield (the items are created by the Gray Pearl in an instant), the moaning of three Ghouls is heard from around the area of the main gate. As the player's characters become aware of the undead, the entrance behind the living dead collapses. The only exit now is the rear gate, behind the Shrine which leads to the cemetery outside the Hallowed Halls.

The Ghouls that enter the Hallowed Halls from the main gate are shambling and slow (Move: 4), however, when they are within five feet of an enemy, their speeds increase (Move: 12) for 2 turns.

GHOUL

Armor Class: 6 [13]

Hit Dice: 1 + 1

Attacks: claw (1d4 + paralysis) Special: immunities, paralysis

Move: 4 / 12 HDE/XP: 3/60

TACTICS

The Ghouls will shamble in, wailing, moaning and attack the nearest victims with their bloody, claw like hands. Erera will support the party with her healing magic but will not exit the temple and adventure with the player's characters. After the first three ghouls are downed, two more enter from the rear exit which accesses the cemetary.

TREASURE

If the player's characters take the time to search the ghouls after they have been killed, they will discover 10 gp, 13 sp and 12 cp collectively.

LOCATION #2 HALLOWED HALLS CEMETERY

A graveyard with dozens of ornately designed tombstones of Aeyr Elven antiquity yet chipped and weathered as a consequence of decades old aging. The sky is darkening, blotting out the sun, as grayish, black clouds gather overhead, rain is beginning to drizzle, and the moans of the dead and screaming villagers from the distance are heard throughout the cemetary. The soil before numerous tombstones is starting to part as pale white, bony hands begin to reach out from their earthy grave. Further south of the cemetary are the cliffs of the towering Cold Mountains.

The only way back to Iceshire (and ultimately through and into the Elrumir Woods) is by navigating outside and around the Western Wall of the Hallowed Halls which would bring the player's characters to outside of the main gate, the Courtyard, Location Number Three. However, as player's enter the cemetery, three Skeletons rise from their graves and the approach player's characters. fleshless hands outstretched accompanied by an eerie cackle that hails from the Ashen Spire from afar.

The Skeletons that rise from the graves in the cemetery are twisted, gnarled. They are animated by the power of the Mad Liche Mezogorah. It is his cackle that the player's characters here as he animates and observes from afar.

SKELETON

Armor Class: 8 [11]

Hit Dice: 1

Attacks: bony hands (1d6)

Special: none Move: 12

HDE/XP: 1/15

TACTICS

The Skeletons will wildly claw at any within their reach with their bony, pale white, fleshless hands. Erera will continue to support the party if the players' characters find themselves retreating to the rear exit of the temple. After the first three Skeletons are slain, two more will rise from their graves and attack the party.

TREASURE

If the player's characters take the time to search the Skeletons after they have been killed, they will discover a gold ring and 10 sp.

LOCATION #3 HALLOWED HALLS COURTYARD

The Hallowed Halls Courtyard is a structure of ancient Aeyr Elven design that has been worn down due to the frequent storms that ravaged Winterlight Valley over the last hundred years. Worn Ivory marbled tiles emblazoned with the gold letters of the Aeyr Elf alphabet serve as a floor for the courtyard and white, tall, partially destroyed pillars align the eastern and western sides. The rain has now intensified and snow is beginning to fall from the skies. From the immediate northern distance location of Iceshire) can be heard the scream of villagers and moans of dead.

Once the player characters enter the courtyard, three Bloodflesh Tentacles rip from the earth and attack as an earthquake rocks the immediate area. Ruined pillars crack, crumble and shatter to the ground. Marble tiles crack and splinter into the air as a powerful construct, the Mad Liche created from afar, threatens the player's characters toughness, fearsomeness and sanity. Although there are undead attacking villagers in the distant fields (location number four), the villagers nor the unliving will venture this far.

The Bloodflesh Tentacles rise seventy two feet from the earth and are twisted and bloody. It is connected to a massive, twisted construct of dead flesh, muscle and bone that lurks deep beneath the temple.

BLOODFLESH TENTACLE

Armor Class: 7 [12]

Hit Dice: 2

Attacks: tentacle (1d4)

Special: none Move: 12

HDE/XP: 3/60

TACTICS

The Bloodflesh Tentacle attacks with snaps and twists of its spiny body the thickness of an average man. When all three tentacles are slain, they are pulled back into the earth. There is then a light quake as four more erupt from the torn earth, whipping and twisting about, lashing wildly at the player's characters.

TREASURE

If the player's characters take the time to search the ground after they have slain the Bloodflesh Tentacles, they will discover a silver ring and 14 cp.

LOCATION #4 FIELDS OF ICESHIRE OUTER VILLAGE

A half mile long expanse of sleet, and snow laden grasslands littered with the ruins of Aeyr Elf Villa's. The storm encompassed Winterlight that has Valley has intensified. Fierce, freezing, rain and hail laden winds beat upon the player's characters as they traverse the fields. The path that cuts through the grasslands leads to the Village of Iceshire's South Gate. Some villagers can be seen running towards the player's characters, bloodied and crying for help. Others are suddenly pounced upon by a different variety of Ghoul the Liche has animated; these run fast, wild and their number totals at five.

Once the player's characters begin the trek through the Fields of Iceshire, Screaming Dead will attack, running from the North, beyond the Walls of the Village of Iceshire and quickly into the Iceshire Fields. As they run at the player's characters, they quickly slash with claw like hands and bite with bloody mouths, killing running villagers quickly. Some leap into the air and land, wildly slashing and bashing with dead fists other terrorized Iceshirians. Four then close in on the player's characters with wild fury.

The Screaming Dead are a variety of Ghoul that is much faster and hardier than the usual type. Like other undead, they are immune to charm and sleep spells. They also possess a paralyzing touch like the classic Ghoul.

SCREAMING DEAD

Armor Class: 6 [13]

Hit Dice: 2

Attacks: claw (1d6 + paralysis) Special: immunities, paralysis

Move: 16

HDE/XP: 3/60

TACTICS

The Screaming Dead will run towards the player's characters and fleeing villagers, screaming, and attack with their bloody, claw like hands. They are incredibly fast when battling their enemies and when running after them. They are also adept at leaping triple their height and length in an instant second.

TREASURE

If the player's characters take the time to search the Screaming Dead after they have been killed, they will discover 12 gp, and 22 sp collectively.

LOCATION #5 VILLAGE OF ICESHIRE SOUTH GATE

The South Gate is a portcullis that was partially destroyed by the onslaught of the undead the Mad Liche unleashed. Its strong grating has been ripped asunder and now flesh bit strewn iron bars litter the blood encrusted snowy ground. Dead arms, legs and twitching, still moaning heads are scattered about the gateway. Some villagers thrash around in their death throes, gargling blood and chunks of internal neck bone, meat and blood. Some undead writhe and extend a bloodied, handless arm but quickly succumb to their final death, their long hunger from the rise after the first satiated by deaths mercy.

As the player's characters approach the South Gate, the moans of dead about the village begin to increase. From afar shamble four ghouls through the South Gate and from behind the players arise two Deadface Villagers that have succumbed to the power of the Ghouls bite. They slowly stand, some missing a limb (this is the referee's discretion) and others crying and still pleading for help as they shamble forward (perhaps the referee can opt to make the player's think they aren't really dead before the Dead Villager moves in for the kill).

The Deadface Villager is a variety of Ghoul that is the offspring of the Liche's Animate Dead spell and a freshly made corpse. These undead have no memory of who they were and are now mindless, flesh eating zombies.

DEADFACE VILLAGER

Armor Class: 6 [13]

Hit Dice: 2

Attacks: claw (1d4 + rot) Special: immunities, rot

Move: 9

HDE/XP: 3/60

TACTICS

The Deadface Villagers will shamble towards their victims, screaming. They attack with flailing, bloody hands. If they held in their hands any weapons whilst dying they are adept at using it. Any touch requires a saving throw or the victim will rot into a corpse in 1D6 days unless a Cure Disease spell is cast.

TREASURE

If the player's characters take the time to search the Dead Villagers after they have been killed, they will discover 12 sp and 16 cp collectively.

LOCATION #6 VILLAGE OF ICESHIRE CELALDOR SQUARE

Celaldor Square is immediately beyond the South Gate. It is here where villagers gathered, every morning, to discuss their revelations on subject matter writ in the Til-Gara that they have studied over the cycles. Villagers also trade items they have fabricated with the use of the Gray Pearl. Everything from food, clothing, knickknacks, and arts and crafts are shared amongst each other. Now the Village Center is in ruins. Corpses of Ghouls and Dead Villagers litter the square. Numerous manses outlining the center are in ruins, corpses hanging out of windows.

As the player's characters enter the Village of Iceshire, three Deadface Villagers slain face down in a pool of their own blood, rise to kill and eat. Suddenly, there are sounds of a terrible. guttural large, undead roar as humanoid, red demonic hands each the size of a horse emerge from beneath the cobblestoned street and tear their way into the light of the now darkened day. The hands seem to talk without a mouth, screaming foul epithets of the referees design, yet also is the entire body of the Ripneck not truly there.

The Ripneck Deadgripper is a variety of undead that is the pairing of the Liche's necromancy, and demonology, with the addition of a spell that warps the Liche's creations where he deems. The hands are those of a dead demon.

RIPNECK DEADGRIPPER

Armor Class: 7 [12] Hit Dice: 2 + 4 Attacks: claw (1d6)

Special: none Move: 12

HDE/XP: 3/60

TACTICS

This undead demon is simply a pair of massive hands without arms attached to it. When created, they spawn beneath the soil and claw to the surface. They can move by crawling on their fingers but each hand must stay within nine feet of each other. Dead Grippers attack by punching and clawing with their rotten nails.

TREASURE

If the player's characters take the time to search the Deadface Villagers after they and the Ripneck have been killed, they will discover 32 gp collectively.

LOCATION #7 VILLAGE OF ICESHIRE NIERRAM BRIDGE

Nierram Bridge is a large bridge, north of Celaldor Square, which spans over the Tinand River and links the South and North residential districts of Iceshire. Arms and legs can be seen bobbing in the waters of the river and the occasional moaning head glides by. During the onslaught of Mezogorah's undead army, the center of the bridge collapsed. The only way across the bridge is a ten foot leap as the arc is now non-existent. The only path north before the player's character is that of the bridge as the ruins of manses litters and blocks every other possible route in the immediate vicinity.

As the player's characters approach the bridge, three Ghouls rise from the bloody waters (some headless, others missing limbs) as well as four Dead Heads leaping into the air, bouncing on their rotten skulls to and fro, trying to bite members of the party. If the players decide to cross the river by walking in the water, partially immersed, they must make a saving throw or acquire a rot disease that will turn the player's characters into a corpse in 1D6 days unless a Cure Disease spell is cast.

The Dead Head is a rotten, moaning, head without a body attached to it. When alone they are motionless, however, when they are within five feet of an enemy, they can leap (Move: 12) up to 12 feet across and into the air.

DEAD HEAD

Armor Class: 5 [14]

Hit Dice: 1

Attacks: bite (1d4) Special: poison Move: 0 / 12 HDE/XP: 3/60

TACTICS

This variety of undead is one of Liche Mezogorah's masterpieces. They spawn into existence when a Ghoul is severed of its head. Moments later, the head takes on a life of its own and can leap at its enemies and attempt to bite them to death. Their jaws are more powerful than the average human and their teeth are poisonous and sharp.

TREASURE

If the player's characters take the time to search the Dead Villagers after they and the Dead Heads have been killed, they will discover 42 sp collectively.

LOCATION #8 VILLAGE OF ICESHIRE NORTH GATE

The North Gate is a large portcullis identical in design to the South. And as likeness in its wrought, so to in its decorative like gore of bits and chunks of undead flesh, the aftermath of the carnage of the Mad Liche's small horde unleashed upon the populace of the Village of Iceshire. Bodies lay strewn about, twitching and writhing, desperately moaning and pleading for living flesh to eat. Directly north is the shadowy Elrumir Woods and within can be heard the snap of brush and tree twigs as ghouls retreat deep into the forest enclosure, moaning and still screaming for flesh.

This area of the Village of Iceshire is devoid of any life or unlife. The cries of villagers can be heard in the distance as well as the chill like cries of the ravaging ghouls the Mad Liche reanimated. As the player's characters approach the Northern Gate, the cries of Erera Liliwan are heard as she is slain south of the party's location (near Nierram Bridge) by ravenous Ghouls. She is then suddenly seen standing and leaping across the bridge as the sky blackens, screaming wildly and attacking the party!

The Bloodied Cleric is Erera Liliwan after she has died and succumbed to the curse of the undead. She is now missing most of her jaw and blood drenches her ivory white gown. She has no memory of who she once was.

BLOODIED CLERIC

Armor Class: 5 [14]

Hit Dice: 3 + 4

Attacks: bite (1d6 + 1)

Special: immunities, paralysis

Move: 10

HDE/XP: 4/280

TACTICS

The Bloodied Cleric is another of the Liche's creations, a plan he has had in the works for quite some time. Desiring Erera to service him, he also yearns for her blood and plans to have her travel to his tower to procure it. Suffusing her with power, she has her attack the party with bloodied hands and heavy blows.

TREASURE

If the player's characters take the time to search the Bloodied Cleric after she has been killed, they will discover the Gray Pearl affixed to a gray chain.

AFTERMATH

After defeating the Bloodied Cleric, the mania that has consumed the Village of Iceshire ceases. All remaining undead of any and every variety cease their moaning, fall to the ground lifeless and are of the living dead no longer. However, there are the sounds of injured villagers crying out for help, abounding.

The weather is easing off as well, the hail has ceased and the snowfall and drizzle of rain is subsiding. North of the Northern Gate are the Elrumir Woodlands (a location explored in the second publication of this trilogy of adventures) and the sounds of the undead the villagers have been hearing can be heard barely. Given a moment of analysis, any can ascertain that these moans are fading away (the undead are retreating as commanded by the Liche Mezogorah after he observes the players character's battle prowess from his tower and fathoming their might against his small army).

Those villagers that have survived, herald the player's characters as heroes. Some emerge from locked Manses and approach the party to praise and give thanks. Others gift the players with 72 gp, 42 sp and 93 cp collectively.

With the Cleric of the Gray Pearl Moon dead, the villagers have been dealt a crippling blow to their meaning of life. She was the leader of the small band of cultists that settled in Winterlight Valley and founded what was once a peaceful village: Iceshire. With the Gray Pearl Moon that adorned Erera's neck, coupled with her detailed knowledge of the incantations of the Aeyr Elves, she was capable of creating anything desired. Now dead, the villagers turn to the player's characters for leadership as the Gray Pearl is now in the party's possession.

THE GRAY PEARL

The Gray Pearl is acquired from the dead body of that which was once Erera Liliwan. The Villagers will not demand the player return it as the Til-Gara tells that the one who finds it, rightly possesses it. They will however, decree the player's character as the new leader of the Gray Pearl Moon cult.

The Gray Pearl is capable of creating any item imaginable. However, one must possess the incantation which manifests imagination. Unfortunately, this was known only to Erera Liliwan and no other.

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