

# **“Well” Water**

By Bryan and Dale Akkerman

**Adventure Name: “Well” Water**

**Suitable Character Levels: 1-3**

**Plot Summary:** As noted on page 13 of the Everquest Player’s Handbook, “Lake Neriuss is the primary reservoir for the dark elf city of Neriak, and therefore dark elves keep it secure. Underground aqueducts carry water from the lake to the city for everyday use.” A party of low-level adventurers are recruited in the Foreign Quarter of Neriak to investigate what has happened to the city’s water supply. The party must cross Nektulos Forest from east to west and reach the source of the city’s water, Lake Neriuss. The party will uncover a plot by halfling rangers of the Stormreapers Guild to poison this reservoir for Neriak.

**Full Plot Details: (outlined in chapter format)**

## **Chapter One: Neriak Foreign Quarter**

The party can consist of level one to three player characters. This may be an excellent place for a group with mixed races to initiate their play in Norrath. Obviously, a group containing paladins and good-aligned clerics would find it difficult to survive in evil Neriak, but almost any other combination of neutral- to evil-aligned characters could find plausible reasons for meeting in Neriak’s Foreign Quarter. The party may call Neriak home (Teir Dal, ogres, and trolls in particular). Some party members may be mercenaries looking for work. A bard, beastlord, cleric, druid, or shaman with a healing song or spell would be helpful but not essential.

For whatever reason the GM provides, the party members meet E’Trasta, a dark elf cleric in the Foreign Quarter. She informs the party of reports that several members of respected families in Neriak have recently taken ill. Using his divination skills, Perrir Zexus, leader of the Priests of Innoruuk, has determined that the city water is to blame. No one has been seriously injured yet, but the high cleric is worried that matters could get worse. In order to prevent general panic, he has authorized an expedition to Lake Neriuss to find the source of the contaminated water. E’Trasta is in charge, and is authorized to outfit the party with standard issue [as described in the character class starting packages (GM can adjust for level 2 or 3 player characters)], and the Dark Bargainers merchant guild will pay each character 25 gold pieces upon successful completion of the mission. The party will receive sufficient rations for a two-week trip. The group’s leader is also give a map to provide a general direction and route to Lake Neriuss.

If necessary, E’Trasta will accompany the party on this mission, although she prefers not to leave her temple duties if possible. If the player character group is in need of a healer, the GM may decide to send E’Trasta along to help the party.

## **Chapter Two: Nektulos Forest**

The shortest route from Neriak to the aqueduct entrances at Lake Neriuss is about 150 miles. [See map labeled “Northern Nektulos Forest.”] Assuming an average speed of 30 feet, the typical party will cover about 25 miles a day, not counting stoppages for random encounters. For the first five days, a well-marked and -maintained path is available, although it often requires a single-file formation between the narrow trees. It is left to the GM to calculate the actual distance the player characters cover each day. The party will usually travel for eight hours each day. While in Nektulos Forest roll each morning and evening for random encounters. If the party builds a campfire at night or fails to post a watch, roll twice each night for random encounters; otherwise, roll once. [An encounter occurs on a roll of 1 or 2 on 1d10.] On average, this would provide a total of five or six random encounters enroute to the lake. If the party has taken extensive injuries from previous random encounters, it is left to the GM’s discretion about further encounters.

The following tables may be used [roll 1d8], or the GM can invent his/her own encounters. [For parties of level two or three, the number of creatures encountered may be doubled, or even quadrupled.]

**NOTE:** The GM is reminded that first level characters, especially in the hands of new players, are fragile. Any time the party seems in over its head in Nektulos Forest, feel free to have a Stone Guardian or Neriak Dragoon appear on the scene to save the day.

1d8 Roll	Daytime Encounter	1d8 Roll	Nighttime Encounter
1	Bixie	1	Black Wolf
2	Black Wolf	2	Decaying Skeleton
3	Moss Snake	3	Pyre Beetle
4	Araneidae Spiderling	4	Deathfist Orc
5	Deathfist Pawn	5	Garter Snake
6	Leatherfoot Scout	6	Medium Araneidae
7	Pyre Beetle	7	Black Bear Cub
8	Neriak Dragoon*	8	Leatherfoot Scout

\*This encounter should serve to redirect the party if lost or off on a tangent; it is not meant as combat.

### Chapter 3: Lake Neriuss

Once the party arrives along the east shore of Lake Neriuss, the well heads for the aqueducts are obvious. There are a total of four circular well heads, all about ten feet in diameter. The heads are covered by locked, metal crosshatch grates, with the open squares formed by the iron bars of the grates about four inches on a side. The bars are steel (hardness 10, 30 hit points). The water pours rapidly into the grates making it difficult to reach down (Balance check, DC 15) and either break the iron grates or open the locks (Pick Lock, DC 30) on the grates. As soon as the party concentrates on the gratings, the GM should secretly make a Spot check for each party character (opposed by the Leatherfoot scouts' Hide checks) and a Listen check [-2 penalty due to the noise of the gurgling water through the well heads] (opposed by the scouts' Sneak checks). The Leatherfoot scouts pop up out of reeds about 150 feet from the party.

**Tactics:** The scouts have camped here for immediate access to the wellheads. They will move to positions about 50 feet from each other and 80 feet from the party members at their normal movement rates. [See map labeled "Ambush at Wellheads."] Roll each round to determine if any of the scouts are detected. If still undetected when they reach their final positions, the scouts fire their arrows at the biggest party member. They continue with ranged attacks until the party members close to melee range. At that point, the scouts drop their bows and use the Quick Draw feat to attack with handaxes. Whenever reduced to less than five hit points, the scout attempts to flee. If the party is overwhelmed and attempts to flee, the scouts do not pursue them.

If the party is successful in killing or driving off the halfling scouts, a Search check (DC 10) of the halfling campsite or bodies reveals empty glass vials. A Trade Skill check (Alchemy or Make Poison, DC 10) will reveal the vials to be of Neriak design and origin. If the party members lack these skills or fail the check, allow one of the vials to contain a few drops of the poison, which if tasted, causes the taster to fall to the ground unconscious for 30 minutes [no permanent harm]. If E'Trasta has accompanied the party, she will want to show the vials to her mentor, Perrir Zexus. A search of the area surrounding the well heads reveals evidence of dark elven camps, but the remains are all old (Wilderness Lore check, DC 12). There are no signs of struggle, and no Tier Dal corpses in the area.

**GM Note:** The party members may rightfully wonder about the halflings' behavior and why the wellheads are unguarded. The answer to both questions rests with Neriak political intrigue. The Priests Of Innoruuk, who discovered the plot to poison the water supply, are allied with the dark elven king of Neriak, Tearis Thex. The merchant's guild of Neriak, the Dark Bargainers, are also allied with King Thex for obvious financial reasons. However, the Guild of the Ebon Mask (Tier Dal thieves' guild) supports the disloyal dark

elven queen, Cristianos Thex, who seeks to overthrow her husband, the King. Queen Thex' operatives have bribed the Dread Guards to leave the well heads unguarded, while simultaneously using the Deathfist Orcs as intermediaries to the halfling Stormreapers. Through the Deathfist Orcs, the Tier Dal rogues are providing poison to the halflings to taint the Neriak water supply. The halflings have grudgingly allied with the orcs against what they see as their mutual enemy, the Tier Dal. The halflings do not know the true source of the poisons they receive from the orcs. At the time the party shows up at the well heads, the halflings are actually waiting for their next shipment of poison from the orcs; hence, the reluctance of the halflings to pursue the party.

After the party fights the Leatherfoot Scout party, the GM should continue to roll for random encounters as before the fight. The same table of random encounters can be used, modified for the actual level of the party.

**(A) If the party defeated the Leatherfoot Scouts:** the party has several choices at this point. They may decide to push south or north around Lake Neriuss in an attempt to find any other halfling war parties. Despite their bravery, there is no quest completion award, as the party has not secured the well heads. The GM can decide to allow such exploration, or may frighten the party off with a few higher-level monsters or enemies.

The party may decide to stand guard at the well heads. If so, first a party of three or four Deathfist orcs shows up with the latest shipment of poison vials. A few days later, another trio of halfling scouts comes to relieve their allies. After a week, the party is reached by members of the Neriak priesthood, including E'Trasta, if she is not already with the party. This rescue party relieves the adventurers, and this adventure is over. A similar result occurs if the party decides to return to Neriak with the evidence they have gathered. In either case, award the party members 1,000 XP for completing their quest successfully.

**(B) If the party was defeated by the Leatherfoot Scouts:** if the party was completely destroyed, the GM can ask the players to roll up new characters, or can have a party of Neriak priests sent as a rescue mission resurrect the group. In either case there is no quest completion award. If some or all of the party members escaped the halfling ambush, the same options exist as described in (A). The remaining party members should receive a partial mission completion award of 250 XP; the GM can decide whether or not to send a rescue mission to raise any dead party members.

## The Next Chapter

Completion of this adventure opens a panoply of future adventures for the party members. They may choose to more fully investigate the origins of the political intrigue in Neriak (who is supplying poison to the Deathfist Orcs, which Dread Guards committed dereliction of duty, who is bribing the Guards). The party may launch an assault on the Deathfist Orc camp in Nektulos Forest. The player characters may decide to move against other halfling missions. The GM may suggest through the Priests of Innoruuk that the party should enter and explore the underground aqueducts for other potential saboteurs. Lastly, the group may decide to switch sides and join the plot to overthrow King Thex. (There are some evil party members, after all!) Good luck!

### NPC Stats:

**E'Trasta: (Clr 2):** Medium-Size Humanoid (female Dark Elf); CR 2; HD 1d8+8 (15hp); Initiative +1 (Dex); Speed 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 Dex, +3 Studded Leather, +2 Large Steel Shield); Attack: heavy mace [delay 5] +2 melee; Damage: heavy mace 1d8+1 [x2]; SQ Ultravision; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +2, Refl +1, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 10; Skills: Channeling +5, Diplomacy +5, Heal +8, Meditation +7, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +7; Feat: Combat Casting; Alignment: Orderly Evil; Faction: Priests of Innoruuk.

**Leatherfoot Scouts (3): Rng 2;** Small Humanoid (Halfling); CR 2; HD 1d10+10 (15 hp); Initiative +4 (Dex); Speed 20 ft.; AC 18 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +3 studded leather armor [-1 armor check penalty]), Attacks: +6 rusty handaxe [delay 5] or rusty dagger [delay 5] +6 melee, or shortbow [hickory/hemp, delay 5, 60 ft.] +7 ranged; Damage: handaxe 1d6+3 [x3] or dagger 1d3+3 [19-20/x2], or shortbow 1d6 [x3]; SQ Infravision,

Cold and Fire Resistance (3); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +3, Refl +6, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8; Skills: Animal Empathy +0, Hide +13, Listen +6, Sense Heading +6, Sneak +10; Spot +6; Taunt +4, Wilderness Lore +6; Feats: Quick Draw, Track; Alignment: Neutral; Faction: Stormreapers.

**Neriak Dragoon:** War 15; Medium-Size Humanoid (Dark Elf); CR 15; HD 14d12+40 (131 hp); Initiative +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); AC 17 (+1 Dex, banded armor +6, (-6 armor check penalty)); Attacks: 2 Combine longswords [delay 4 with double attack feat] +15/+15/+11/+7/+3 melee, or shortbow [hickory/hemp, delay 5, 60 ft.]; Damage: Combine longsword 1d8+7 [17-20/x2, improved critical feat], or shortbow 1d6 [x3]; SQ Ultravision, Berserking; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +11, Refl +7, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8; Skills: Climb +17, Intimidate +9, Jump +14, Knowledge (Local) [Cross-class] +6, Ride +10, Swim +14, Taunt +19; Feats: Dual Wield, Double Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword), Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Parry, Combat Reflexes, Iron Will; Alignment: Orderly Evil; Faction: Dread Guards.

#### Monster Stats:

**Bixie:** Small Fey; CR 1; HD 1d6 (3 hp); Initiative +4 (Dex); Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 16 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +1 natural); Attack: rusty dagger [delay 5] +5 melee, or shortbow [hickory/hemp, delay 5, 60 ft.] +6 ranged; Damage: dagger 1d3-2 [19-20/x2], or shortbow 1d6 [x3]; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +0, Refl +6, Will +4; Str 7, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 16; Skills: Bluff +7, Channeling +4, Escape Artist +8, Heal +6, Hide +12, Listen +8, Ride +8, Search +9, Sense Motive +6, Sneak +8, Spot +8, Trade Skill (any one) +7; Feats: Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Finesse (dagger), Weapon Focus (shortbow); Alignment: Neutral Good; Faction: Stone Hive Bixies.

**Black Wolf:** Medium-Size Animal; CR 1; HD 2d8+4 (13 hp); Initiative +2 (Dex); Speed 50 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural); Attack: bite +3 melee; Damage: bite 1d6+1; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Trip; SQ Scent; Saves: Fort +5, Refl +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6; Skills: Hide +3, Listen +6, Sneak +4, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +1\*; Feat: Weapon Finesse (bite); Alignment: Neutral. [\*Wolves receive a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.]

**Moss Snake:** Tiny Animal; CR 1/3; HD ¼ d8 (1 hp); Initiative +3 (Dex); Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural); Attack: bite +5 melee; Damage: bite poison (Fort save DC 11, 1d6 initial and secondary temporary Con damage); SA Poison; SQ Scent; Face/Reach: 2 ½ ft. by 2 ½ ft./0 ft.; Saves: Fort +2, Refl +5, Will +1; Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2; Skills: Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +18, Listen +8, Spot +8; Feat: Weapon Finesse (bite); Alignment: Neutral.

**Araneidae Spiderling:** Small Vermin; CR ½; HD 1d8 (4 hp); Initiative +3 (Dex); Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 14 (+1 size, +3 Dex); Attack: bite +4 melee; Damage: bite 1d4-2 and poison (Fort save DC 11, 1d3 initial and secondary temporary Str damage); SA Poison; SQ Vermin; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +2, Refl +3, Will +0; Str 7, Dex 17, Con 10, Int--, Wis 10, Cha 2; Skills: Climb +10, Hide +14, Jump +8, Spot +15; Feat: Weapon Finesse (bite); Alignment: Neutral.

**Deathfist Pawn:** Medium-Size Humanoid (Orc); CR ½; HD 1d8+1 (5 hp); Initiative: +0 (Dex); Speed: 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 natural, +3 hide); Attack: rusty short sword [delay 5] +2 melee; Damage: short sword 1d6+2 [19-20/x2]; SQ Ultravision; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +3, Refl +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8; Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5; Feat: Alertness; Alignment: Discordant Neutral; Faction: Deathfist Orcs.

**Leatherfoot Scout:** Rng 2; Small Humanoid (Halfling); CR 2; HD 1d10+10 (15 hp); Initiative +4 (Dex); Speed 20 ft.; AC 18 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +3 studded leather armor [-1 armor check penalty]), Attacks: +6 rusty handaxe [delay 5] or rusty dagger [delay 5] +6 melee, or shortbow [hickory/hemp, delay 5, 60 ft.] +7 ranged; Damage: handaxe 1d6+3 [x3] or dagger 1d3+3 [19-20/x2], or shortbow 1d6 [x3]; SQ Infravision, Cold and Fire Resistance (3); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +3, Refl +6, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 18,

Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8; Skills: Animal Empathy +0, Hide +13, Listen +6, Sense Heading +6, Sneak +10; Spot +6; Taunt +4, Wilderness Lore +6; Feats: Quick Draw, Track; AL Neutral; Faction: Stormreapers.

**Pyre Beetle:** Small Vermin; CR 1/3; HD 1d8 (4 hp); Initiative +0; Speed 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +5 natural); Attack: bite +1 melee; Damage: bite 2d4; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ Vermin; Saves: Fort +2, Refl +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 11, Int--, Wis 10, Cha 7; Skills: Climb +4, Listen +3, Spot +3; Alignment: Neutral.

**Decaying Skeleton:** Medium-Size Undead; CR 1/3; HD 1d12 (6 hp); Initiative +1 (Dex); Speed 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural); Attacks: 2 claws [delay 5] +1 melee or rusty short sword [delay 5] +1 melee; Damage: claw 1d4+1 [x2] or short sword 1d6+1[19-20/x2]; SQ Immunities (cold; half damage from slashing and piercing weapons), Infravision, See Invisible, Undead; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +0, Refl +1, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 12, Con--, Int--, Wis 10, Cha 11; Skills: Listen +2, Spot +2; Alignment: Neutral.

**Deathfist Orc:** Medium-Size Humanoid (Orc); CR 2; HD 3d8+6 (19 hp); Initiative: +1 (Dex); Speed: 30 ft.; AC: 16 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +3 hide); Attack: rusty broad sword [delay 6] +6 melee; Damage: broad sword 1d10+4 [x2]; SQ Ultravision; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8; Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5, Taunt +2; Feats: Alertness, Power Attack; Alignment: Discordant Evil; Faction: Deathfist Orcs.

**Garter Snake** (constrictor): Small Animal; CR 1; HD 2d8+2 (11 hp); Initiative +3 (Dex); Speed 20 ft.; climb 20 ft.; swim 20 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural); Attack: bite +5 melee; Damage: bite 1d3+3 [x2]; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +3, Refl +4, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2; Skills: Balance +10, Climb +14, Hide +11, Listen +9, Spot +9; Alignment: Neutral.

**Medium Araneidae:** Medium-Size Vermin; CR 1; HD 2d8+2 (11 hp); Initiative +3 (Dex); Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural); Attack: bite +4 melee; Damage: bite 1d6 [x2] and poison (Fort save DC 14, 1d4 initial and secondary temporary Str damage); SA Poison; SQ Vermin; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +4, Refl +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int--, Wis 10, Cha 2; Skills: Climb +12, Hide +10, Jump +8, Spot +15; Feat: Weapon Finesse (bite); Alignment: Neutral.

**Black Bear Cub:** Medium-Size Animal; CR 2; HD 3d8+6 (19 hp); Initiative +1 (Dex); Speed 40 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Attacks: 2 claws [delay 5] +6 melee, bite [delay 5] +1 melee; Damage: claw 1d4+4 [x2], bite 1d6+2 [x2]; SQ Scent; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Saves: Fort +5, Refl +4, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6; Skills: Climb +6, Listen +4, Spot +7, Swim +8; Alignment: Neutral.

### Experience Awards:

As discussed in chapter three, successful completion of the adventure awards the player characters 500 XP each. Partial completion as noted in the same chapter reduces the award to 250 XP. Awards for successful completion of random encounters varies with the Challenge Rating of the monster and the party's average level.

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Lake  
Neriuss

Wellheads

End of Path

Lavastorm  
Mountains

Neriak

Nektulos  
Forest

N

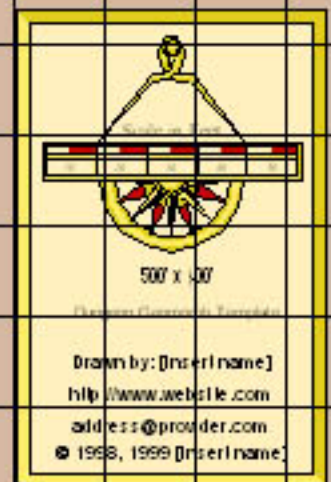
W

E

S

each square is 10 miles on a side

Northern Nektulos Forest





# Lake Neriuss

**Initial Position  
of PC Party  
at the Wellheads**



**Initial Position  
of the Three  
Halfling Rangers**



**Final Position  
of the Rangers**



**N**



**Ambush at Wellheads**

**each square is 10 feet on a side**

