

HIGI-10

GRAVE OCCURRENCE

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

Version 1

by Chris Tulach

You are summoned to Quaalsten to help the Rangers of the Vesse and the Church of Ehlonna unravel a startling mystery. Some of the peaceful beastmen living in the Vesse Forest have disappeared without warning, and the Rangers are too tasked with other duties to look into the matter themselves. Recommended for rangers and other forest-oriented PCs. For character levels 3-8. A Slow Rot, Part 2.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK and RPGA are registered trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. LIVING GREYHAWK is a trademark of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Scenario detail copyright 2001 by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This scenario is intended for tournament use only and may not be reproduced without approval of the RPGA Network.

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

PREPARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SCORING

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

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

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

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

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

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

DETERMINING AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

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

- 1) Determine the character level for each PC participating in the adventure.
 - 2) If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e., animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc.) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
- | CR | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1/4 and 1/6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 1/3 and 1/2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
- 3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure—round up.
 - 4) If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the

APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

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

- 1) Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- 2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.
- 3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Mialee, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to joint them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

If you are using a 591 CY adventure (campaign year 1) that uses the old Tiers, assume that the APL multiplied by 2 is the APL suitable for that encounter.

IS IT A FULL MOON?

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute: You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

Poor: You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

Common: You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

High: You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

Luxury: You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle Cost	Skill Modifier	
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor	43 sp	-1
Common	12 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Kelthisar, a necromancer living at the edge of the Vesve Forest, is a cruel man. He is wicked. He is without care. He revels in the pain of others. More than anything, though, Kelthisar is curious. He is interested in understanding how living things deal with different stimuli. Mostly, he enjoys finding the mental and physical breaking points of various beings. He tests his subjects from his lair, beneath the earth. Kelthisar conducts blasphemous tests that drain his subjects' will to live, and warp their minds into screaming insanities. Kelthisar had one problem, though - he needed more subjects for his experiments.

The insane necromancer knew that he couldn't simply abduct the good folk of the forest without people noticing. Once families and friends took note of their lost

human, elven, and other brethren, Kelthisar knew it wouldn't be long before they sent competent men and women such as the Rangers of the Vesve or the Knights of the High Forest to look for the missing. Then his experiments would be done, and he'd have to look somewhere else to begin again. He was truly in a bind.

Then, one day, a dark figure, a man of Baklunish decent, came to him with an offer. He said he could find ways to cull subjects from the beastmen that lived in the part of the forest near Kelthisar's home. No one would notice their loss, since the beastmen are naturally shy and have a very difficult time communicating with outsiders. Also, the mysterious man said he knew of ways around their resistance to magic, which is why Kelthisar never considered them in the first place. The Baklunish man required only one thing in trade - he needed elven corpses. Kelthisar knew that corpses would be much easier to overlook than living beings, so he agreed.

For many months now, the Baklunish man has been bringing abducted beastmen to Kelthisar's lair. In exchange, the necromancer has provided the strange man with elven bodies that he had his subjects dig up. So far, everything seemed to be working well. Kelthisar was able to continue his experiments with more vigor than ever, and considered the beastmen a challenge worthy of his efforts. The mysterious man has been so impressed with Kelthisar's progress, that he has referred a duergar smith named Nelgraad to aid him in some of his projects. He also gave a "curiosity" to him as a gift; a son of Kyuss that serves as a disposal for the "waste" generated from his terrible experiments.

Both of the men hadn't counted on one thing - the Rangers of the Vesve Forest. Elrenn Walthair, the Lord Marshal of the Vesve Forest, and leader of the Rangers, has taken a personal interest in maintaining a level of open communication with the beastmen tribes in the western and central Vesve. He has found out recently about the abductions, and has vowed to find out what's really going on. It has taken the Lord Marshal a long time to cultivate the relationship he has with the beastmen, and he does not want to risk having relations strained due to inaction on his part. However, his men have been spread very thin by the ever-growing humanoid threat in the area, and he only has enough people to either attempt to neutralize the threat, or find the missing beastmen. Thus, the characters have been requested to meet with him at the Hearth of the Unicorn's Heart (temple to Ehlonna); there, he intends to ask the heroes to search for the missing beastmen.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure begins with the heroes in the town of Quaalsten, located in the heart of the Vesve Forest. They have been summoned to the Hearth of the Unicorn's Heart to have a brief meeting with both Elrenn Walthair (Lord Marshal of the Vesve) and Aysin Thanemantle (High Lady of the Glen, high priestess at the temple). Both express their concerns over the situation, and

implore the PCs to help search for the abducted beastmen. They suggest starting with a woodsman a day's travel west (and out of the normal tribal area of the beastmen), who claims to have seen some of the creatures near his cottage.

If a character possesses the masterwork silver scythe called "Reaper's Foe", Alysin informs the hero with the item that Maegla the Dreamer (an old priestess of Ehlonna that still dwells at the temple) wishes to speak with him/her. Maegla passes along a cryptic riddle to the possessor of the weapon, and gives details on a vision of an ominous future.

Making to the woodsman's cottage, they find that the place has been ransacked, and the walls and floor are spattered with blood. A human head can be found; this is all that is left of the woodsman who saw something strange in the forest. From here, tracks lead away from the cottage and continue west.

After following the tracks for a while, or getting themselves lost, a lone beastman manages to approach the PCs. He is obviously beaten, tortured, and abused; he is also missing his left hand. He communicates only in Sylvan (as that is the only language he understands), and tells the heroes of the horrors he has been through. If asked, he agrees to lead them to the lair of Kelthisar.

After entering a hollowed-out tree, the heroes descend into Kelthisar's horrific complex. There, the heroes find many beastmen in cages, tortured, experimented upon, and abused. Almost all have their left hands cut off and replaced with some metal implement. Most of them are beyond help; they have been driven insane from the hell they've gone through. One of the rooms contains a prize beastman, a perfect physical specimen, which has been driven to violent insanity and has been physically altered (metal plates have been pounded into his skin).

The duergar Nelgraad is in a room preparing his latest implements for fixture onto a few more beastmen. The characters can fight him and interrogate him, or they can talk to him right at the outset. He informs the heroes of what he knows, and tells them that Kelthisar is out "walking the dogs" right now (the necromancer takes some of the broken, more feral beastmen and treats them as if they were animals). He also lets them know that there is something else here, behind the iron door, which should never be released.

Behind the iron door is Kelthisar's son of Kyuss; a crafty and very deadly undead creature. If the heroes open the door, they're in for a very difficult fight.

In addition to all of these terrible things, the PCs find the bodies of several elves, apparently awaiting transport away from the lair.

After setting some of the beastmen free, and deciding what to do about the ones that are beyond help, the heroes begin the journey back to Quaalsten (the necromancer is not to be found). However, on the next day, Kelthisar catches up with them, and attempts to slay them for foiling his operation and to keep the characters from exposing him to the forces of good.

If they are successful, they return to Quaalsten and are thanked by both the Rangers and the Church of Ehlonna for their aid to the beastmen, and to the Vesve Forest.

Note: The following information should be taken into account when judging the event.

- This event involves mature themes, such as torture, abuse, and unspeakable acts of evil. It is very important that the sensitivity of the players be taken into account when running this event. You do not have to be overly descriptive with the horrible things in the scenario; a more subtle touch can come in handy. This is particularly important if minors are playing the scenario. In any case, the evils that are depicted are done so for a reason - to show why heroes are needed, and what would happen if the PCs weren't around to help. At the end of the event, the players should feel a great sense of accomplishment, for their characters have ended a horrible ordeal for a peaceful people.
- This scenario counts as a Vesve scenario for purposes of PCs belonging to the Rangers of the Vesve meta-organization.
- At the beginning of the event, the judge should find out if any PCs possess the masterwork silver scythe, "Reaper's Foe", from *Grave Disturbance*. Note if there are any PCs that possess it, and whether or not they have been the sole owner of the item. If there is more than one PC that meets the criteria, pick one. There does not have to be a hero with the item; just note if there is (that character is approached by Maegla the Dreamer in Encounter 1).

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

It is cool Sunsebb morning in the Common Year 591. You and other adventurers find yourselves in the Hearth of the Unicorn's Heart, a temple devoted to Ehlonna, and the largest temple in Quaalsten; indeed, the largest place of worship for hundreds of miles in every direction. You have arrived at the forest community in the heart of the Vesve for different reasons. After staying for only a little while, you each received a summons that bore the seal of the High Lady of the Glen (the high priestess of the temple). The note requested your presence here soon after sunrise. After being invited inside, and feasting on a sumptuous breakfast, you wait in an antechamber for someone to arrive.

This is a good time for players to introduce their characters to one another. After everyone has described their character and introduced him or herself, proceed with the following:

A man well into his forties, with thick brown hair and a moustache enters the room. He is dressed in chainmail that shimmers in the light coming through the window, and wears a decorative blue sash over his shoulder. He places his spear in the corner of the room, nods to all of you, and clears the entryway. You see him subtly gesture for all of you to stand up.

This man is Elrenn Walthair (male human Rgr16; hp 160; Diplomacy +7), the Lord Marshal of the Vesve Forest. Rangers of the Vesve know him on sight (as he is their leader), and other heroes may have run into him before. He is motioning for the heroes to rise when Alysins Thanemantle (human female Clr12 [Ehlonna]; hp 78; Diplomacy +18) enters.

A few moments after the Lord Marshal enters, a human woman dressed in flowing robes of emerald green trimmed with gold enters. Upon her chest is a golden symbol of Ehlonna. She bears an elegant beauty, and her age is only just beginning to show on her face. She smiles as she enters, and motions for everyone to sit.

"Blessed is this day in the home of the Forest Mother, and blessed be all of her children. For those who know not, I am Alysins Thanemantle, the High Lady of the Glen. Lord Marshal Walthair asked that I attend this gathering as well; I am told he has some news that may concern my faithful and has a request of you." The Lord Marshal thanks the high priestess of Ehlonna, and begins to speak.

Alysins knows any worshippers from her temple by name, and addresses them as such. She also is interested in any other faithful of Ehlonna that do not worship at the temple. She remains quiet through Elrenn's discussion with the PCs, only talking when others address her. She chooses her words carefully, and speaks in an elegant manner.

Elrenn has the following information to relate to the PCs. He is polite and serious in his conversation with the heroes. He addresses the entire party, but focuses his attention on any Rangers of the Vesve, if they are present.

- Recently, I have learned that someone or something has been abducting beastmen from their home in the Vesve, north of here. The beastmen are generally shy, peaceful creatures that avoid contact with most humans and elves. It has taken me many years to earn their confidence, and I now may walk among them as though I were one of them.
- The beastmen have asked me for assistance in their problem. Unfortunately, many of my men are assigned to other tasks, and there are two missions here. We must both help defend the beastmen in their home, and find the ones that are missing.
- Since I am considered one of their friends, I am going to take a contingent of Rangers with me to help protect their part of the forest, and hopefully find whatever it is that is abducting them. What I need you to do is find out where the missing beastmen might be and if they are still alive. You can report back here when you've located them; if you can free them, all the better.
- **What are beastmen?** Beastmen are about human-sized, with two coats of fur, one olive, and one black, all over their bodies. They have faces that vaguely resemble a feline, and communicate in their own tongue, and by shifting their fur patterns. It is impossible to understand more than the very rudiments of their language. Luckily, many also

speak Sylvan, and a small few speak Elven. They are also highly magic-resistant, and worship no deity. Normally, they are quite evasive around most humans and elves, and they hate evil humanoids. They are good friends of mine and could be valuable allies against the evil that has crept down around here recently.

- **What are we to receive for helping you?** I give you my thanks in assisting. The Vesve needs heroes to guard and protect it; if you are not willing to help safeguard its people against evil, than I will find others who will.

- **The Vesve is so huge. Where do we begin?** One of my men has informed me that a woodsman named Tan Pegrin has recently seen some beastmen near his cottage on several nights. The beastmen aren't usually found that far south, so that is definitely unusual. He lives a little over a day's travel west of here. Perhaps you can start with him. I can provide you with directions and a map, and a description of Tan.

If the heroes accept the task, Elrenn says the following:

"I thank you for your assistance. It is good to know that there are heroes such as yourselves willing to aid the denizens of this great forest. My Rangers are spread out all over the forest, ever watchful for evil. It is unfortunate that such a situation has presented itself now; but with your help, we should be able to put an end to these abductions. Your taking of this task means much to me personally; I shall take steps to repay you upon your return. You may report back here when you are finished; a trusted scribe will take down your report if I have not yet returned. Otherwise, I will come to you."

The following only occurs if there is a PC that meets the qualifications listed below. Note if there is a PC with the masterwork scythe from *Grave Disturbance*. If they are the original owner (they did not receive it in trade), read the following. If there is more than one hero with an original scythe, choose one at random.

The High Lady of the Glen listens intently to your conversation with the Lord Marshal. As she rises to leave, she turns to you (the chosen PC) and says, "I have much to discuss now with Elrenn. You have much to discuss as well...with Maegla the Dreamer. You are to meet with her alone in this room; I will send for her. Your friends can wait out in the temple proper."

Alysins does not explain anything about Maegla, except to say, "All will be revealed soon enough, sapling." Both of them exit at this time, leaving the PCs a few minutes to talk among themselves.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE DREAMER SPEAKS

This encounter does not happen if no PC met the qualifications to meet Maegla. After about five minutes, Maegla the Dreamer (half-elf female Clr7/DivOr3; hp 50; Sense Motive +11, Scry +18) enters the room. Assuming the rest of the heroes exit, take the player of the chosen character aside and read the following:

An ancient half-elven woman, wearing simple robes of brown, shuffles in from the hallway. She motions for you to close the door, and looks up at you with bright green eyes upon a withered face framed by wisps of once-golden hair.

"I have dreamed of you, (insert PC's name here). You have a great task ahead of you. Come here, sit closer." She motions for you to come closer; her eyes sparkle and she smiles with a caring grin.

"You will face a great evil, soon. I have seen as much. The leaves whisper to me; they tell me they have a message for you. I have repeated over and over in my head so I would not forget, and now that you're here, I give it to you:

*"The Reaper's tool is his foe,
Use it to strike a telling blow
With this comes a tearing of your soul,
For what you reap is what you sow."*

Well, at least now that's off my mind. Keep it in yours, as I have kept it while waiting for you." Maegla looks deep within your eyes, as if she's searching for something. "Walk hand in hand with the Forest Maiden, and you shall not be lost." She smiles broadly as she struggles to stand.

If the hero helps her up, she imparts one additional piece of information to him/her:

As you help Maegla out of her seat, she whispers softly in your ear. "You are kind. Stay not long here, for in my dreams, this is a prison." Maegla shuffles out into the hallway.

If the hero asks her any questions, she simply smiles and says, "Not yet, not yet".

ENCOUNTER 2: TAN'S COTTAGE

The PCs can leave Quaalsten whenever they wish; since they have most of the day yet, they may want to leave as soon as possible. The judge should get a marching order and watch schedule from the heroes before they set out to the cottage. When the heroes are ready to set out, read the following:

The directions and map the Lord Marshal gave you make it easy to follow an otherwise difficult trail. You spend one night out among the trees; while it is very cool out, you are able to keep warm. The next day dawns bright, and you head the final few miles to the cottage of Tan Pegrin, the woodsman.

You reach the cottage about midday. In a small clearing lies a modest thatch and wood home. A garden lies along the path up to the house, and you can see several cords of wood stacked up in the backyard.

Have each PC make a Spot check (DC 15). If successful, they notice that the front door to the cottage is slightly ajar, and there's something spilled out in front of the door. If they approach, read the following:

As you get closer to the front door, you notice blood on the ground right by the door. The trail of blood continues through the yard to the west, and also seems to run under the door itself.

Checking the blood out reveals (Heal skill check, DC 12) that it has not yet fully dried, and it must be about a day or so old. If the PCs decide to follow the blood trail through the forest, it is easy to do (no check required). Characters that do so may make a Wilderness Lore or Search skill check (DC 10) to determine that a body was being dragged away from the cottage. Also, characters with the Track feat (on a successful Wilderness Lore skill check, DC 12) can determine that there were four creatures that passed through here. Another Track check (DC 15) reveals that one of the creatures was booted, and the other three were barefoot; two of the three barefoot creatures also walked on all fours from time to time.

Once the PCs get about 200 yards deep in the woods, though, the blood trail becomes more and more faint. They may continue to pick up the trail if they possess the Track feat. A Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 12) allows them to continue along the path. If they keep following, have them roll three Track checks (DC 12); each successful one allows them to follow for another mile. After the third mile, go to Encounter 3.

If the heroes decide to investigate inside the cottage, read the following:

Entering the small abode, you immediately notice that the contents of this place are smashed and broken. The tables, chairs, pots, and small personal effects lie in a broken mess all about the room.

If characters enter the one-room cottage, a Search check (DC 15) reveals a mangled, clawed-up head underneath a broken table. This is all that remains of Tan. The head itself is missing its eyes; they appear to have been clawed out. A Heal skill check (DC 7) alerts the character to the fact that the head was not severed with a weapon such as a sword or axe, but was rather gnawed off of the body.

A very close inspection of the head (Search skill check, DC 20) reveals strands of course black hair and fine olive hair in some of the wounds (particularly the neck). This is the same type of hair that beastmen possess.

If a character has access to *Speak with Dead*, the following information can be learned (note that there is not a full body, so only partial answers can be given):

- **Who or what killed you?** Teeth. Claws. So many of them.

- **What happened here?** Man and beast came in here. Bit me. Claws, too.
- **Who are you?** Tan.

That's really all Tan's head knows. There is nothing else of value, and no other clues inside the home. Once the characters are ready, they may attempt to follow the trail of blood off to the west.

If no one possesses the Track feat, then it is likely that the PCs are unwilling to proceed further. If they don't want to just blindly head out into the forest, then Encounter 3 comes to them after a while. Let them sweat it out for a few hours in game time, unless they're going to head back to Quaalsten.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE ONE WHO GOT AWAY

After following the trail for a while, or wandering about the forest for some time, read the following to the players:

Suddenly, something stirs in the brush ahead of you! Out of the foliage bursts a naked fur-covered humanoid, with a face not unlike a cat. It rushes toward you, limping, and falls to the ground near your feet. Its fur is dark, and matted with blood and dirt. You notice that the creature's left arm ends in a bloody, dirt-encrusted stump.

Obviously exhausted, the creature's ragged breathing slows a bit, and you can hear soft sounds from the ground where it lies. The creature is whimpering and crying. It looks up at you with a dirt-filled face, and a teary glistening in its eyes.

This is Marrgrawl, a male beastman who has escaped Kelthisar's wretched lair. He has been cut, bruised, battered, malnourished, and mistreated in many, many ways. His left arm was cut off yesterday by the necromancer; ever since then, he swore he would escape as soon as he could. Earlier today, the duergar Nelgraad was taking him to his workshop for his "fitting" (he was going to put an implement on his stump). The dwarf was distracted for a moment while bringing Marrgrawl to the workshop; the beastman broke free, and ran to the entrance. Since Kelthisar was away, and Nelgraad could not pursue, Marrgrawl escaped his horrid prison.

He's been running through the forest for a few hours now, hoping to find someone, anyone, to help him free members of his tribe. Thankfully, the heroes have come along at just the right time to aid him. Thankfully for the heroes, Marrgrawl speaks Sylvan in addition to his own language. He is very weary of those not of his part of the forest though, but he lets the party approach and touch him if they are obviously behaving in a peaceful manner (no drawing of weapons, threatening posture, etc.).

If the party moves to help him, he can relate much about his ordeal, and help the heroes decipher what is going on. Remember to portray Marrgrawl as a person who's very soul has been gripped by fear and terror, but who has enough resolve left to contain those feelings just

below the surface. Note that he also does not believe much in magic or gods (typical for beastmen), and has never seen other demihuman races - except for those that captured and tortured him. He can relate the following in Sylvan in a soft, growling tone:

- My name is Marrgrawl, and I am from the Tree Hunter tribe.
- I was with my brothers on a late hunt when the Night Walker came to me. He dresses in the night sky, and only comes when all is still in the forest. He told me to come with him, and I did. I do not know why.
- When he touched me, I felt a pain as if from a dagger or dart. The ground fell away, and I went to sleep.
- When I woke, I found myself by some great oaks in a part of the forest I had not seen before. The Night Walker was with another, a human (I think) that the others call the Hate Heart. One of the oaks was hollow inside, and they put me in a sack and pushed me down in it. I fell, and hit the ground hard, falling back into the sleep.
- I woke again to find myself with several others of my tribe. It was terrible. We were in cages, living in our own filth and sadness. They have all suffered greatly, and for only the pleasure of the Hate Heart. Many have been hurt badly, not fed, suffer from strange sickness, and are not as they once were. Many do not act as my people any longer; many act as the animals, and cannot speak to the rest of us.
- Almost all of them have had their peace hand (which beastmen call the left hand; the war hand is the right hand) cut off; many have had it replaced with things of metal, like weapons and tools. They are all in great pain.
- I knew I must escape as soon as I could, for the longer I remained, the more I would become like them - broken and hopeless. For some time I waited for a chance. I ate nothing, and drank that which I would not drink. Not long ago, the Hate Heart came to me in my cage. He brought the Small Forger, a short human, with him. The Small Forger took my arm with his axe of metal. They both laughed as I cried out in pain. All was dark again for a while.
- Then, some time later, the Small Forger pulled me out of my cage, and was to take me to his Room of Pain. The Hate Heart was gone. He was to put a metal thing on my arm, too. He was not aware of me for a moment, and so then I ran. I ran past my friends and family, out to the entrance. I climbed the inside of the tree, and made it out to the surface. I knew the Small Forger, and later, the Hate Heart himself, would try and find me. So I ran some more, for a while, until I saw you.
- Please, I beg of you, free my people. They are dying, both in the body and in their hearts. I cannot bear the thoughts of their suffering, and that I left them behind. This human, Hate Heart, cannot be like all humans. I have heard stories of those who

help my people, humans that are known among your kind as the ranger. If you have the ranger's heart, free them from the Hate Heart and end their suffering.

- I can show you the way back to the Hate Heart's lair. It is not far. I will take you there, and then go to warn my people of what has become of the missing. I do not think that the Hate Heart has yet returned; he is often gone for some time. Beware, his rage is horrible to behold.

Marrgrawl calls the mysterious Baklunish man the Night Walker, the necromancer the Hate Heart, and the duergar the Small Forger. He has been in the holding area (Room 2) and the landing (Room 1), and can provide more detailed descriptions of each. If he expounds upon certain details, make sure to describe them in the terms that a tribal forest creature would know. Marrgrawl is intelligent, but has not experienced much outside his environment.

If the characters scare him or threaten him, he attempts to flee as best he can. If he is driven off, the heroes can follow his tracks from where he came. It requires four Track skill checks (DC 15) to get back to the area where Marrgrawl emerged from the tree. If a Track skill check is failed, another one must be made to find their way back to the trail (DC 12). If that is failed, the heroes become lost, and most likely emerge somewhere near Quaalsten after losing a days' worth of travel. They can try again, but with a DC of 20 to pick up the trail. If they become lost again, skip ahead to Encounter 5, as they have a run-in with Kelthisar.

It's much easier to have Marrgrawl take the heroes to the lair. Whenever the heroes are ready, Marrgrawl takes them to Kelthisar's lair.

☛ **Marrgrawl, male beastman:** Medium-size Humanoid (beastman); HD 2d8+2; hp 11 (currently 1); Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d3 subdual, fist); SQ SR 20; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7*, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Spot +3. Beastmen receive a +2 racial bonus to both Hide and Move Silently checks. *In forests or overgrown areas, the Hide bonus improves to +8 (giving them Hide +13 in those surroundings); Alertness.

Possessions: Nothing.

Personality Traits: Frightened, overwhelmed, cautious, resilient, dedicated.

ENCOUNTER 4: LAIR OF EVIL

Marrgrawl takes the heroes west about 4 miles, and stops near some very large oak trees. Read the following:

Marrgrawl manages to escort you further west, into an old growth area of the forest. After traveling through the thick brush for a few miles, you come upon a grove of thick oak trees, most of which appear ancient. Several of the trees look like they're dying, as smaller birches thrive underneath their decaying canopy.

Marrgrawl leads you to an oak tree, much like the others near it. He points, and says in Sylvan, "Here is where the Hate Heart lives. Down there are many of my people." The beastman pushes on the side of the oak; it swings inward, revealing a shaft and a ladder leading down the hollowed-out tree.

"I must go now, to warn them of what has happened. I am too weak to fight, and cannot run very far. I must leave now, before the Hate Heart returns. If you succeed in freeing those of my tribe, bring them back to the edge of our forest; it is only a small walk north from where I first saw you. We will know if you come. You are not like the Hate Heart; you have kindness in your ways. You are rangers. If more were like you, then my people might talk some more with the humans. I wish you only success in all things. Hunt well, friends." Marrgrawl melts in with the underbrush, heading north and west toward his home.

There are numerous tracks (no roll needed) around both this tree and another one close by. A Wilderness Lore skill check by those with the Track feat (DC 11) allows a successful tracker to determine that the tree Marrgrawl "opened" has far more activity.

YOU DON'T WANT TO GO DOWN THERE...

If someone pushes open the other tree, they see the skull symbol of Nerull (identified with a Knowledge (religion) skill check, DC 5) carved inside this hollowed-out tree. The five-foot wide shaft has no ladder; about 20 feet down, it ends in a wood floor. The shaft and wood floor are caked in dried blood. The wood floor has a one-way hinge that drops anything weighing more than 5 pounds into Room 5 (the Creature's Room - the place with the son of Kyuss). Pull the player aside, and proceed to that encounter. This is where the remains of failed experiments are discarded, to sate the undying creature's hunger. It is fed often.

INTO THE LAIR

If the PCs decide to climb down the ladder in the first hollowed-out tree, it is pitch black. Light sources need to be used to see anything, unless certain heroes possess darkvision. The seven-foot wide shaft continues down about 30 feet, and ends in a landing with a corridor leading further onward.

The lair itself is constructed of stone; the walls, floor and ceiling obviously worked by skilled hands. There is no light in the complex; the only light comes from the forge in Room 9, and the personal light sources the heroes bring with them. The ceiling is 15 feet high in all areas. In addition, all the doors in the complex share the following attributes (except for the iron door in Room 5):

Strong wooden door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; 20 hp; Break DC 23 (stuck), 25 (locked); Open Lock DC 20. All doors are closed and locked unless otherwise specified. All doors open inward.

The judge should consult the DM Map for the layout of the rooms of the lair. Remember that there are some

doors in the middle of the hallway areas. Also, when confronted by the doors in the lair, the judge should make a note of whether or not the heroes are bashing them, or picking the locks.

1. Landing

You reach the bottom of the staircase, and note that your feet touch upon stone. It is dry, and warmer down here than above. There is a sickening stench in the air, the smell of rotting meat, offal, vomit, and other unidentified putrescence. There is one corridor, wide enough for two across that continues away from the ladder, into the darkness.

There is nothing more of note here. When the PCs are ready to proceed, go to Room 2.

2. Holding Area

As you continue walking down the corridor, the smells intensify in a stomach-rolling malignance that is so palpable you can taste the filth. A large room is revealed at the edge of your light, and you can hear the sounds of caged creatures moving about, and low moans of pain and hopelessness.

Please take note of the sensitivity of the players when reading the description below.

When the PCs continue, read the following:

Entering the room, you can see over a dozen cages littered about the area, much too small for the beastmen that dwell within. The naked creatures lie twisted and broken in their tiny prisons; their matted hair coated with blood, dirt, and their own filth. They are all obviously malnourished, their bodies contorted in horrible ways from lack of food. All bear many cuts, bruises, and most do not have a left hand; only a dirty stump remains. On some, the stump has been replaced by a crude tool or weapon of some sort; there are festering wounds where the base of the metal meets the flesh.

As the creatures see you, some of them gather enough strength to raise their heads and look in your direction. The devastation and pain in their eyes is enough to make the hardest of hearts cry in abject sorrow. Most just gaze at you with sadness; some beat their heads and bodies against their cages; others weakly bellow and growl at your approach.

This horrid area is where most of the beastmen that are not being experimented upon in some way are kept. Kelthisar cares nothing for their suffering; only when it amuses him does he feed or water the beastmen. Usually, when he does feed them, it is with meat diseased by the son of Kyuss.

There are 14 cages scattered about this room; three beastmen are already dead in their cages. Of the 11 that remain, six are beyond any hope for recovery by normal means (their minds have been so shattered that they can never be a part of their tribe again, or they have succumbed to the ravages of Kyuss' Gift, or both). Of the five others that still retain their faculties (to a degree), only two (a male and a female, the ones that still have both their hands) can speak a language other than their own. Both of them speak Sylvan, and can communicate

with the heroes. None of the beastmen initiates any conversation; they all think that the Hate Heart has sent more of his kind to help him torture them. From observation, heroes can determine the following:

- All of the beastmen are adults of both sexes (Kelthisar wanted healthy subjects in their prime for his experiments).
- Their cages are so small that they cannot stand nor stretch their bodies out. They must sit hunched over or curled up in a ball. It is painfully obvious that no one cleans these cages. Each cage has a poorly constructed lock (break DC 13, Open Lock DC 15).
- All of the dead beastmen, and three of the live ones, appear to be rotting. (*They are infected by Kyuss' Gift. It is a supernatural disease that is normally spread by sons of Kyuss. Kelthisar managed to disease some meat with the horrid infection, and studies his work as the creatures waste away.*)
- A Heal skill check (DC 25) or Knowledge (undead) check (DC 20) identifies the disease as one akin to mummy rot, but spread by undead known as sons of Kyuss. The character also knows that the disease both wastes away the body and the mind, and is impossible to cure without magic. Others cannot catch the disease through contact with a living being. This, of course, is a valuable clue for the PCs for what lies beyond.
- A Heal skill check (DC 20) allows a hero to pick out those beastmen that, while mistreated and malnourished, may have some of their faculties remaining. The rest are beyond recovery by any means short of magical.
- Several of the beastmen have weapons attached to where their left arm used to be; others have tools. Most of the tools seem to be for digging or excavating (shovels, picks, etc.), and could double as weapons.
- The beastmen recoil in fear (if they have the strength to do so) if a PC attempts to touch or come very close to them. The hero may still touch them, but they convulse violently if this is done.

Unless the heroes use either spells (such as *tongues*) or speak in the Sylvan language, the beastmen do not respond in any way to the heroes. If a hero speaks in a language that Jerrna (the female that knows Sylvan) or Naggrom (the male that also knows Sylvan) understands, then they can learn the following from either or both:

- Who are you that speak the language of the forest? You cannot be with the Hate Heart; he would never speak in that tongue. Are you rangers that have come to free us? (*They are obviously overjoyed if the heroes confirm this; they immediately tell the others in their language, and tears of hope begin to well in their eyes*)
- We have been here some time, but most have suffered long. There are some others of our tribe still here; they can be found past this room. You

have given us back hope, when we had thought all was lost.

- Some of our people here are not as they once were; we fear the suffering they have felt has changed them. If we are released, we will bring them back to our forest, and perhaps in time, they will be one again.
- The Hate Heart is not here now, but the Small Forger is. Both are evil. The Hate Heart keeps dead elves in there (*points to a wall where the secret door is located*); he sometimes takes them away, probably back to the surface. Some of my tribe tell me he brings more back there sometimes. The room is hidden. (*Points to a wall where the secret door is located*)
- (*The two beastmen confer with others there*) There is a room of pain beyond these walls; it is there the Hate Heart cuts and hurts us. That place is most frightening to us. Another room is a pit, where only blackness is found; no sounds, no food, no light. Yet another is filled with many objects; it is there that the Small Forger pounds his metal into the peace arms of my people. What else is here, we do not know.
- Some of my people are with the Hate Heart now. He has changed them into animals; they look like us still, but act as the wolf does. They are not worth saving. They have become evil like him.
- Set us free, and we will try to climb the hollow tree to the surface. We may need your help with some of our tribe, though. Please, if you have food or water, give some to those that are most in need.

At this point, the heroes most likely free the beastmen, and can help them to the surface. Jerrna and Naggrom help tend to their fellows as best they can. They hug the others as they are being released, and cradle the bodies of the dead in their arms before moving on. The judge should remember that the beastmen are typically an intelligent, peaceful people that have been ripped from their homes and placed in the worst of hells. The freeing of the beastmen should be very emotional for both the captives and the heroes, as the beastmen look to one another for strength, and grieve over the state of the dead and dying.

Searching the rancid area reveals a secret door in the southeastern corner of the room (Search check DC 20, or 10 if the beastmen pointed it out). After pushing in a stone, the door slides open into Room 3.

The door in the east wall is closed and locked. It leads out into a corridor that has a T-junction, and continues onward.

3. Storage Area

When the characters open the secret door, read the following:

The stone slides away to reveal a closet-sized storage area. The decaying remains of four elves, obviously long dead, are stacked like firewood in the center of the room. Flies buzz about here,

and maggots can be seen squirming through various wounds and orifices on the bodies.

A closer examination of the elves reveals that they are all adults; two are male and two are female. A Heal skill check (DC 15) gives a gauge on how long the bodies have been dead - well over a few years. Nothing distinguishing is found on the bodies. The room contains nothing else of note.

4. Torture Room

The door to this room is, like all the other doors here, closed and locked. Once opened, read the following:

Beyond the door, you see a large stone table set in the middle of the room. Manacles lay atop the table; the chains run down along the side and into the stone floor. Stains of blood and other humors spatter the walls and the floor. Several blotches appear to be fresh.

Along the northern wall are several wicked-looking implements, all of which bear cruel edges, hooks, or teeth. They have been used, some recently. Against the southeast corner of what can only be a torture chamber stands a large iron door. A large lock is upon it, and there is some writing on the wall above in an often-unused script.

As you take in all this, you feel a momentary fearful panic that quickly vanishes.

If there are paladins of 2nd level or higher in the party, inform them that they do not feel the fearful panic (as they are immune to fear).

The writing on the wall carved in the stone above the door is in the harsh Infernal script (for those that understand one of the languages in that script) and is the Abyssal language. Reading it requires either the Abyssal language itself, spells, or a Decipher Script skill check (DC 20). It reads:

Open not this door, for it will have your soul.

Beyond the door is the son of Kyuss. Paladins and others that attempt to *detect evil* sense a moderate evil aura beyond the door. The door opens inward, and thankfully cannot be opened from inside the next room. The door has the following statistics:

❏ **Iron door:** 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; 60 hp; Break DC 28 (stuck), 28 (locked); Open Lock DC 25. The lock itself can be bashed off; it has Hardness 10 and 10 hp.

There is nothing else of note in this room. If the PCs find a way to open the door, proceed to Room 5.

5. You Opened the Door?!

Having made your way past the iron door, you enter the only rough-hewn chamber you've seen in this place. A sense of dread wells up within you, as you look around the room to see many coffins standing straight up against the four walls of this place. Above you, there is a shaft leading upward.

The son of Kyuss is hiding in one of the 13 old elven coffins in the room. As the PCs enter, choose a coffin that contains the creature. Wait just a little while for the PCs to drop their guard a bit and begin looking about. Paladins and others with *detect evil* are able to easily pinpoint the coffin; if they are not aware of which coffin the son of Kyuss is found in, then have each player roll a Spot skill check (DC 12) for their character. If they fail, they are surprised. If they are aware of which coffin the evil emanation is coming from, then go straight to initiative. Read the following when the son of Kyuss attacks:

Out of one of the coffins bursts a rotted-out corpse! As it moves to attack, you notice the sickly green worms that crawl through its wretched skin. This is not an ordinary zombie!

At this time, all of the PCs must make a Will save (DC 16) or be affected by the son's *fear*, cast at the 7th level of ability.

"REAPER'S FOE" PC

If there is a hero that has talked to Maegla, and has brought "Reaper's Foe" with them here, they are immune to the son's *fear* effect. In addition, read the player of the character the following, just before their initiative:

As you prepare for battle, you hear a voice in your head, like the whispering of the trees on a warm summer breeze. "What you reap is what you sow." The voice fades as quickly as it arrived.

If the hero thinks to use the scythe, the first hit made on the son of Kyuss automatically is a critical hit (for x4 damage). The son takes the full damage, and the PC takes half of the rolled damage (round down). **Make a note on the PC's log sheet that states, "Reaper's Foe used".**

APL 4 (EL 5)

☛ **Son of Kyuss:** CR 5; Medium-size Undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 29; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 9, flat-footed 11); Atks +6 melee (1d6+4 and disease, slam); SA Fear aura, Kyuss' Gift, create spawn; SQ Undead, regeneration 5, turn resistance +2; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 9, Con -, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +3, Jump +8, Move Silently +3, Spot +6; Toughness.

Fear Aura (Su): Sons of Kyuss are shrouded in a zone of *fear*. Creatures who enter this area (or if the son brings the area to the creature) must succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or be affected as though by a *fear* spell cast by a 7th-level sorcerer. A creature that makes this save is immune to all *fear* auras from sons of Kyuss for 24 hours.

Kyuss' Gift (Su): Supernatural disease - slam, Fortitude save (DC 12), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 temporary Constitution/1d4 temporary Wisdom. Unlike normal diseases, this disease continues until the victim reaches 0 Constitution (and dies) or receives a *cure disease* spell or similar magic (see "Disease" in Chapter 3: Running the Game in the DUNGEON MASTER's Guide). The

disease causes a rotting of the flesh and dementia. A diseased victim gets only half the benefits of natural and magical healing (divide all healing by two).

Create Spawn (Ex): Sons of Kyuss create more of their own kind with the green worms crawling through their bodies. Each round that a son is in melee combat, one of the worms leaps from its host to land on the son's opponent (make an attack roll using the son's slam attack value). The worm has AC 10 and 1 hit point. During this time, the worm can be killed by the touch of iron or by any sort of attack that a son could not regenerate. On the son's next turn, the worm burrows into the flesh of its target, making its way toward the brain and causing 1 hit point of damage per round until it reaches the brain 1d4+1 rounds later. When inside a victim, the worm can be destroyed by *remove curse* or *remove disease* (or spells that duplicate these effects); *dispel evil* or *neutralize poison* delays its progress for 1d6 minutes. These spells affect multiple worms within the same victim. Worms cannot survive outside of a host for more than 1 round.

Once the worm reaches the victim's brain, it inflicts 1d2 points of temporary Intelligence damage per round until it is destroyed or the victim reaches 0 Intelligence, at which point the host dies and rises as a son of Kyuss 1d6+4 rounds later. Small, Medium-size, and Large creatures become sons of Kyuss as described above; smaller creatures quickly putrefy, larger creatures become normal zombies. Spawn (and spawned zombies) are not under the control of their parent but usually follow after whatever created them.

Any creature who touches a son with an unarmed strike or other natural weapon is immediately attacked by 1d4 worms.

Regeneration (Ex): A son regenerates 5 points of damage each round. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, a son collapses but continues to regenerate, rising 1d4 rounds later to fight again. Only fire, electricity, holy water, or the touch of holy or blessed weapons keeps it from rising in such a manner (these attacks may be applied while the creature remains fallen or be the cause of its fall).

Curative Transformation: A *remove curse*, *remove disease*, or more powerful versions of these spells transforms a son of Kyuss into a normal zombie. Touching a son in this manner does not draw additional attacks from worms because the spell's power kills any that try.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

APL 6 (EL 7)

Same as APL 2, except for the following:

☛ **Son of Kyuss:** CR 7; HD 6d12+3; hp 42; Atks +7 melee (1d6+4 and disease, slam); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +5.

Skills: Hide +4, Move Silently +4.

APL 8 (EL 9)

Same as APL 2, except for the following:

➤ **Son of Kyuss:** CR 9; HD 8d12+3; hp 55; Atks +9 melee (1d6+4 and disease, slam); SV Will +6.

Skills: Hide +5, Move Silently +5. Feats: Power Attack.

Tactics: The son, having long been only fed the bits and pieces of Kelthisar's leftover experiments, wants nothing more than to corrupt another living being into its own image. It attempts to attack wizards and other heroes it perceives as being weak in melee combat; it attempts to avoid fighters. **Do not forget that the son of Kyuss has turn resistance +2; it is only turned/rebuked if the roll indicates 2 HD higher than it actually is.**

The shaft leads back up to the other hallowed-out tree; it is impossible to open from below, unless broken (Hardness 5, hp 10). The coffins are of elven design; a Craft (woodworking) or Profession (carpenter) skill check (DC 15) show the work to be decades old.

6. Sensory Deprivation Room

Once the characters open up this door, read the following:

This room appears empty, except for the large wooden circle lying on the floor in the center of the room. The circle is attached to the floor in several places by latches.

As you enter the room, you notice your footsteps make no noise. Trying to speak produces the same result - no sound. The room seems to be silenced in some fashion.

This is the area where Kelthisar conducts his sensory deprivation experiments. He has had the area put under the effects of a *silence* spell that lasts for many months. He typically puts beastmen in the pit underneath the wooden cap, and deprives them of food, water, sights, sounds, and physical contact for his own sick pleasures. The latches are easy to unhinge; inside, a single beastman is found.

Read the following if the PCs open up the wooden cover:

Underneath the wooden circle is a foul pit of stone. Excrement covers the bottom. In one corner lay an emaciated, filth-encrusted beastman; he is curled up, and his head is buried in his hands. He does not move at all.

PCs that investigate the body of the beastman find him to be dead. Further investigation (Search check, DC 10) reveals that there is a large bloody mark on the wall of the pit next to the beastman. The beastman's head also bears signs of blood. A successful Heal skill check (DC 10) can determine that the beastman beat his head against the wall, until he killed himself by fracturing his skull.

There is nothing else of note here in this horrible place.

7. Laboratory

Once the heroes unlock and open the door here, read the following:

Behind this door is a laboratory of sorts. Flasks, glass vials, ceramic mortars, and other items useful in experimentation lie on a long wooden table in the center of the room. In the northeast corner of the laboratory are large chunks of unworked metal - iron from the looks of it. Shelves full of glass containers line the western wall. A table made of stone is set into the ground in the southeast corner of the room, near you. Manacles hang from the wall above the table.

If the heroes search the table (no roll required), they find a book, written in Abyssal. It is titled (also in Abyssal), "Notes on the Beastman: A Mental and Physical Study". Inside, the book details in a rather objective and clinical fashion, the horrid experiments conducted on the creatures: disease experimentation, physical exhaustion, sensory deprivation, torture, emotional abuse, and many other terrible deeds (some of which are so disgusting and horrific as to be unspeakable). It appears that the writer has figured out that the creatures possess intelligence, but dismisses them as stupid, simple beings. The writer does admit to being fascinated with the fact that the creatures are highly magic-resistant; he considers it a challenge to manipulate them in non-magical ways. The name of the blasphemous creature that wrote the book is also revealed - Kelthisar. The necromancer also mentions that he has found a convenient use (he doesn't specifically say what) for the severed hands of the beastmen, and has found a place for them in his quarters. In addition, Kelthisar writes about the son of Kyuss, and that he has found a means to infect food and water with its disease. He has managed to "trap" the disease (and several others) in a liquid form, dangerous only when ingested. The implications of this are dreadful; if Kelthisar desired, he could infect food and water supplies of entire communities.

The shelves contain the diseased fruits of some of his labors. On the shelves are numerous glass flasks filled with liquid, each of which has a parchment label on them. The labels are all written in Abyssal, and have the names of different diseases upon them: blinding sickness, cackle fever, mindfire, and Kyuss' Gift. There are four flasks of each, except Kyuss' Gift (there are six of those). The glass jars can be broken without fear of infection. Of course, if a character should foolishly drink any of the liquids, he/she is infected with the disease listed on the flask (consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, pages 74-75 for the effects of the disease). Each flask radiates a faint magical aura if checked with *detect magic*, and the school can be determined with a successful Spellcraft check (DC 18) - it is necromancy.

The large chunks of unworked ore are indeed iron; they are what the duergar forges into the various implements to fit over the beastmen's left hands. The stone table is where the Nelgraad conducts the "fittings". The wall near the stone table bears stains of blood, and

many scratches from the struggles of the beastmen that were brought here.

8. "Pets" Room

If the heroes are listening at the door of this room, a successful Listen check (DC 13) alerts the listener to the sounds of chains moving about. Listening more closely (DC 20), the sounds of feet padding on the ground, pacing back and forth.

When the PCs open the door, read the following:

On the far wall of this mostly empty stone room, on a long chain attached to the floor, is what appears to be a horribly altered beastman. It seems as though the beastman is wearing some sort of armor; then you realize, to your revulsion, that iron plates have been riveted directly into his flesh. His right arm has a bladelike gauntlet attached, and his left hand has been replaced with terribly long metal claws, each roughly the length of a short sword. The creature cringes upon seeing you, huddling itself in a corner of the room.

This beastman is one of Kelthisar's "finest" projects. Many months ago, Kelthisar received a beastman in fine physical condition, much tougher and stronger than the rest. He decided to make this particular beastman the first of his war creatures that he could use to fight for him. After spending many, many months with the creature, torturing and twisting his body and soul, the beastman finally gave himself over to the necromancer. Kelthisar had Nelgraad construct a kind of armor for him, and give him terrible claw-like weaponry. The creature now is insane and evil, only following the commands of Kelthisar.

APL 4 (EL3)

➤ **Altered beastman Ftr2:** CR 3; Medium-size Humanoid (beastman); HD 2d8+6 + 2d10+6; hp 37; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 16); Atks +5 melee (1d8+4/19-20, left claw) and +5 melee (1d6+2/19-20, right claw); SQ SR 20; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5*, Jump +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spot +2. Beastmen receive a +2 racial bonus to both Hide and Move Silently checks. *In forests or overgrown areas, the Hide bonus improves to +8 (giving them Hide +13 in those surroundings); Alertness, Ambidexterity, Combat Reflexes, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Possessions: Nothing; everything has been riveted to the creature's skin.

APL 6 (EL 5)

➤ **Altered beastman, Ftr4:** CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (beastman); HD 2d8+8 + 4d10+16; hp 61; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 12, flat-footed 17); Atks +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20, left claw) and +8 melee (1d6+2/19-20, right claw); SQ SR 20; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5*, Jump +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spot +2. Beastmen receive a +2 racial bonus to both Hide and Move Silently checks. *In forests or overgrown areas, the Hide bonus improves to +8 (giving them Hide +13 in those surroundings); Alertness, Ambidexterity, Combat Reflexes, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (claws).

Possessions: Nothing; everything has been riveted to the creature's skin.

APL 8 (EL 7)

Altered beastman, Ftr6: CR 7; Medium-size Humanoid (beastman); HD 2d8+8 + 6d10+24; hp 81; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 18); Atks +11/+6 melee (1d8+7/19-20, left claw) and +11 melee (1d6+4/19-20, right claw); SQ SR 20; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5*, Jump +8, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spot +2. Beastmen receive a +2 racial bonus to both Hide and Move Silently checks. *In forests or overgrown areas, the Hide bonus improves to +8 (giving them Hide +13 in those surroundings); Alertness, Ambidexterity, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (claws), Weapon Specialization (claws).

Possessions: Nothing; everything has been riveted to the creature's skin.

Tactics: The beastman, upon seeing the heroes enter, pretends to be a miserable wretch like the others. He is on a long chain (15 feet) attached to one of his legs, and waits for the party to free him. Freeing the creature requires an Open Lock skill check, DC 25. Alternatively, the chain can be broken. It has 10 hp and a Hardness of 8. The creature waits patiently to be freed; it is then when he attacks. If the heroes do not free him, and attack, he fights back if possible (e.g., within reach of the heroes); otherwise, he uses the full defense action in an attempt to save his life.

The room itself is fairly clean of waste and refuse, unlike some of the other areas in the complex. A few bones lie scattered about, most likely the beastmen's last few meals. This is where Kelthisar keeps his "pet" beastmen; those that he has managed to corrupt, and that now serve him. There are enough leg manacles for four creatures here, yet only one is present. The other three are Kelthisar's "dogs", beastmen that have reverted to a feral state, and that Kelthisar takes out on patrol to cause mayhem and fear.

9. Nelgraad's Living Quarters and the Soulstealer Forge

Nelgraad, the duergar smith that is employed by Kelthisar, is in his quarters when the heroes arrive. Depending on how the heroes have proceeded through the lair, he may or may not be aware of the presence of the party. Use the following table to determine whether or not Nelgraad knows someone else is here:

Situation

Listen DC

Bashing down door in Room 2	15
Bashing down door at north hallway intersection	15
Bashing down door at south hallway intersection	5
Bashing down door to his room	Auto
Picking lock on the door in his room	18
Opening the door to his room quietly	Move Silently

If Nelgraad has the time, he dons his breastplate armor and fetches his large steel shield, preparing himself for battle. He goes *invisible* and *enlarges*, and readies an action if he hears the PCs approaching his room (opposed Listen/Move Silently rolls, +5 to Nelgraad's DC as he's listening through his door).

Read the following to the players when the heroes open the door (alter the text if Nelgraad is visible):

The room before you flickers in the flames of a forge oven that you can see directly across from door. The northern half of the room looks like a blacksmith's work area; there is a workbench, a couple of stools, various smithing tools, a water trough, and an anvil. A wicked-looking hook implement is atop the workbench. The southern half of the room is a relatively simple, but comfortable-looking, living area. It is complete with a dresser, desk, bed, and chair.

No matter where you look, however, your eyes pull back to the sight of the forge. The oven itself is framed in the blackened steel visage of a cackling fiend from the depths of the Abyss itself; its mouth burns with a yellowish flame. Words in a harsh script are etched into the forehead of the fiendish frame. Surprisingly, no smoke fills the room, and it is a comfortable temperature.

THE SOULSTEALER FORGE

The forge is a specially made magic item for Nelgraad to conduct his work underground. It is known as a *soulstealer forge*. It burns completely clean, and is very hot (perfect for whatever metal is placed inside the "mouth"), yet gives off no heat. In order for the *soulstealer forge* to function in this manner, it must be fed the souls of still-living creatures. Once a week, it must consume the soul of a sentient living creature in order to continue to function. It ceases functioning until it receives the creature. Suffice to say, Kelthisar and Nelgraad have found enough souls to keep it fed well.

The *soulstealer forge* radiates a strong evil aura (if *detect evil* is used), and a strong magical aura (if *detect magic* is used). After a *detect magic* has been cast, the caster may make a Spellcraft skill check (DC 20) to determine that both transmutation and necromancy schools are present on the forge. *Dispel magic* (dispel check is DC 21) renders the forge inoperable for 1d4 rounds. *Remove curse* renders the forge inoperable for one day. *Dispel evil* renders the forge inoperable for one year. The only way to destroy the forge is by casting *dispel magic* (dispel check is DC 21) followed by *dispel evil*. The forge goes dark, and wispy, ephemeral forms fly out of its mouth (the souls that are now free).

The words on the forge are in Abyssal. The phrase says:

Consume this soul.

This is the command phrase to activate the forge. For one minute after the command phrase is spoken, the forge's soul-stealing power activates. The flames turn a deep blood red. If a very foolish PC decides to stick an appendage or their whole body in the forge, they are targeted with a *destruction* spell (save DC 23). If they save, the hero still takes 10d6 points of damage from unholy fire. If the command word is not spoken, a hero sticking an appendage in the forge is burned for 2d6 points of fire damage.

NELGRAAD THE DUERGAR

If Nelgraad is surprised by the heroes (or has little time to prepare), he is sitting next to his workbench, fiddling with the hook implement he has recently created. He is not wearing armor, and has only his dwarven waraxe and ring of shield to defend him. Read the following to the PCs upon their entrance:

A gray-skinned dwarf, with brown work clothing and a smith's apron, gets up from his seat by the workbench. He has an axe by his side, and grits his crooked yellow teeth at you as you enter. "What in the name 'o Hades is this? Who're you? Whaddya want?"

In this instance, he is much more willing to talk to the PCs, and negotiate a way in which he can be let go. He is more than willing to share some information, in exchange for his freedom. Nelgraad can tell the heroes the following:

- Name's Nelgraad. I've been workin' here for some time now. The man pays me good. Didn't know what I was doin' by coming here, though. If I could leave now, I would. (*This is a lie - Nelgraad enjoys his work, and can leave at any time.*)
- Yeah, this man's a real wicked sort. Has me put all kindsa nasty things on those beasties he has out there. All in all, it's pretty disgusting work. (*This is a lie, of sorts - Nelgraad enjoys his work, and shares Kelthisar's propensity for evil.*)
- I just wish I could go home an' see my family again. Feels like I'm in a prison here. If only I could escape... (*Once again, he is lying.*)
- The man's name is Kelthisar. He's a wizard that likes experimentin' on those beasties out in the main room. He told me once he likes the fact that he has to think without usin' spells and such on 'em. He's been doin' it for many, many months now. (*The truth.*)
- Gets the things from a spooky-lookin' friend of his. Don't know his name, but he looks a lot like them people from Ket. (*The truth; the mysterious man is Baklunish.*)
- He trades him dead elves. Heh. Heh, heh. Oh, no offense there. (*The truth.*)
- I'll tell ya one thing; whatever you do, don't open that iron door in his torture chamber. I don't

know what's behind there, but it sure is nasty. The man feeds it parts o' them beasties that die. He got the thing from the Ketite. (*The truth.*)

- Just let me go and I'll never see ya again. I want no part o' this evil scheme. (*Another lie.*)

If the heroes appear to be threatening, Nelgraad uses his spell-like ability to go *invisible*, and attempts escape. If that is not possible, he fights.

APL 4 (EL 6)

Nelgraad, male duergar Exp2/Ftr3/Rog1: Medium-size Humanoid (dwarf); HD 3d6+9 + 3d10+9; hp 52; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (15 ft. when wearing armor); AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10) or 18 (touch 11, flat-footed 17); Atks +8 melee (1d10+3/x3, dwarven waraxe); SA Sneak attack +1d6, spell-like abilities; SQ Duergar immunities, spell-like abilities; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8. 4 ft., 4 in. tall.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +4, Craft (armorsmithing) +10, Craft (blacksmithing) +10, Craft (weaponsmithing) +12, Hide +3, Move Silently +7, Listen +5, Search +4, Spot +5; Alertness, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Craft (weaponsmithing)), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

Duergar Traits (Ex): These are in addition to the basic dwarf traits, except where noted here.

- +4 racial bonus to Move Silently checks.
- Immune to paralysis, phantasms, and magical or alchemical poisons (but not normal poisons).
- *Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day—*enlarge* and *invisibility* as a wizard twice the duergar's level (minimum 3rd level); these affect only the duergar and whatever it carries.
- Darkvision up to 120 feet.
- *Light Sensitivity (Ex)*—Duergar suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to attack rolls, saves, and checks in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Ring of shield, dwarven waraxe, breastplate armor, large steel shield.

Personality Traits: Rude, shifty, dishonest, hard working.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Nelgraad, male duergar Exp2/Ftr4/Rog2: Medium-size Humanoid (dwarf); HD 4d6+16 + 4d10+16; hp 76; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (15 ft. when wearing armor); AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10) or 18 (touch 11, flat-footed 17); Atks +10/+5 melee (1d10+5/x3, dwarven waraxe); SA Sneak attack +1d6, spell-like abilities; SQ Duergar immunities, evasion, spell-like abilities; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8. 4 ft., 4 in. tall.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +5, Craft (armorsmithing) +12, Craft (blacksmithing) +12, Craft (weaponsmithing) +14, Hide +4, Move Silently +8, Listen +6, Search +5, Spot +6; Alertness, Cleave, Exotic Weapon

Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Craft (weaponsmithing)), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Duergar Traits (Ex): These are in addition to the basic dwarf traits, except where noted here.

- +4 racial bonus to Move Silently checks.
- Immune to paralysis, phantasms, and magical or alchemical poisons (but not normal poisons).
- *Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day—*enlarge* and *invisibility* as a wizard twice the duergar's level (minimum 3rd level); these affect only the duergar and whatever it carries.
- Darkvision up to 120 feet.
- *Light Sensitivity (Ex)*—Duergar suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to attack rolls, saves, and checks in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Equipment: Ring of shield, dwarven waraxe, breastplate armor, large steel shield.

Personality Traits: Rude, shifty, dishonest, hard working.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Nelgraad, male duergar Exp2/Ftr5/Rog3: Medium-size Humanoid (dwarf); HD 5d6+20 + 5d10+20; hp 94; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (15 ft. when wearing armor); AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10) or 18 (touch 11, flat-footed 17); Atks +12/+7 melee (1d10+5/19-20/x3, dwarven waraxe); SA Sneak attack +2d6, spell-like abilities; SQ Duergar immunities, evasion, spell-like abilities, uncanny dodge (retains Dex bonus to AC when flat-footed); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8. 4 ft., 4 in., tall.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +6, Craft (armorsmithing) +14, Craft (blacksmithing) +14, Craft (weaponsmithing) +16, Hide +5, Move Silently +9, Listen +7, Search +6, Spot +7; Alertness, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Improved Critical (dwarven waraxe), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Craft (weaponsmithing)), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Duergar Traits (Ex): These are in addition to the basic dwarf traits, except where noted here.

- +4 racial bonus to Move Silently checks.
- Immune to paralysis, phantasms, and magical or alchemical poisons (but not normal poisons).
- *Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day—*enlarge* and *invisibility* as a wizard twice the duergar's level (minimum 3rd level); these affect only the duergar and whatever it carries.
- Darkvision up to 120 feet.
- *Light Sensitivity (Ex)*—Duergar suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to attack rolls, saves, and checks in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Equipment: Ring of shield, dwarven waraxe, breastplate armor, large steel shield.

Personality Traits: Rude, shift, dishonest, hard working.

Tactics: If Nelgraad hears the party bashing down doors in the lair, he stops his work and puts on his armor. He then casts *invisibility* on himself. When the PCs begin to approach the door, Nelgraad takes the time to activate his *ring of shield* (providing him a +7 cover bonus to his AC), and (if there's still time) casts *enlarge* on himself (giving him a +2 enlargement bonus to Strength). He then waits by the door for the heroes to enter, most likely making his first attack under the cover of *invisibility* (and getting his sneak attack in as well). In **APL 6 and 8**, if possible, Nelgraad shouts out the command phrase to the *soulstealer* forge during combat, and attempts to bull rush a hero into the oven. He is willing to surrender and talk if overpowerd or low on hit points.

In either case, once Nelgraad has been dealt with, the heroes can search his room. Under his bed (DC 10 Search skill check) is a small wooden box. The box is both locked and trapped. If someone attempts to pick the lock (Open Locks, DC 30), a poison needle shoots out at the hero.

ALL APL (EL 5)

⚡**Poison Needle Trap:** CR 5; +10 ranged (1, plus deathblade poison); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 22). *Note:* Deathblade poison is an injury poison that deals 1d6/2d6 (initial/secondary) Con damage. The Fortitude save to resist is DC 20.

Inside the box are 20 platinum paladins and 50 golden wheatsheafs. These coins are minted in Furyondy.

Treasure from Nelgraad's body and room:

- Nelgraad's standard gear. It can be sold for half of the purchase price listed in the *Player's Handbook*.
- *Ring of shield*. This plain iron ring, when activated, functions as the shield spell, cast at 1st level. The ring functions once per day.
- 20 pp, 50 gp.

10. Kelthisar's Quarters

The door to Kelthisar's room is both locked and trapped. The door is standard for the lair, but the lock is of good quality (DC 30, Open Lock check). Attempting to open the lock without disarming the trap electrifies a 15' long, 10' wide section of the floor, starting at the door, going back into the hallway.

APL 4 (EL 2)

⚡**Electrified Floor Trap:** CR 4; 15-foot long section of the floor (1d10); Reflex save (DC 14) for half damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

APL 6 (EL 3)

⚡**Electrified Floor Trap:** CR 4; 15-foot long section of the floor (2d10); Reflex save (DC 14) for half damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

APL 8 (EL 4)

⚡**Electrified Floor Trap:** CR 4; 15-foot long section of the floor (3d10); Reflex save (DC 14) for half damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

After the PCs bypass or set off the trap, read them the following:

This room lies in stark contrast to the rest of the complex; it is lavish, almost decadent. Points of magical flame illuminate the room in a flickering warm glow. The room is a comfortable temperature, perhaps a bit on the warm side for some of you. In one far corner stands a lavish desk made of an unknown wood; an oak-carved bookstand, with no book resting upon its squat surface, sits atop it. The other corner is a mountain of red and gold tasseled pillows and a wonderfully comfortable-looking bed, complete with gold and red silken sheets, a canopy, and intricate carvings on the posts. A large ornate rug, in red and gold patterns, completes the décor in the middle of the room.

This is Kelthisar's quarters. Various spots along the wall are lit with *continual flame*. Characters may make a Craft (weaving) roll (DC 10) to realize that the rug, pillows, and bed are of Ketite make. The 10-foot radius rug, however, is an illusion concealing a pit full of crawling claws. If a character walks over the rug, have the PC make a Reflex save (DC 16). If the roll is failed, his companions seem him fall through the floor. If a hero falls in, read the following:

You hit the ground of the stone pit hard. As you catch your wind, you notice tiny shapes moving toward you in the darkness. They are severed fur-covered hands, and they're scuttling toward you!

APL 4 (EL 3)

⚡**Illusionary Pit:** CR 1; 10' radius rug, 10' deep (1d6 falling damage); Reflex save (DC 16) to avoid falling; Search (DC 25); no Disable Device possible; dispel check (DC 17); interacting with rug (touching it to Search, etc.) gives a Will save (DC 16) to disbelieve illusion.

🐞**Crawling Claw (6):** CR 3; Diminutive Construct; HD 1d10; hp 7, 6, 5 (x3), 4; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+4 size, +1 natural); Atks +4 melee (1, claw); Face/Reach 1 ft. by 1 ft./0 ft.; SA Smite fallen; SQ Construct, immunities, SR 10; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -3; Str 10, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 5, Cha 5.

Smite Fallen (Ex): Crawling claws inflict double damage against prone opponents.

Immunities (Ex): Lacking eyes, crawling claws are immune to gaze attacks.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject

to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

APL 6 (EL 5)

Same as APL 2, except for the following:

➤ **Crawling Claw** (12): CR 5; hp 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5 (x3), 4, 3, 2, 1.

APL 8 (EL 7)

Same as APL 2, except for the following:

➤ **Crawling Claw** (24): CR 7; hp 10 (x2), 9 (x2), 8 (x2), 7 (x2), 6 (x2), 5 (x6), 4 (x2), 3 (x2), 2 (x2), 1 (x2).

Tactics: The crawling claws immediately swarm around the hero; if they win initiative, they catch the hero on the ground and can use their smite fallen ability. Eight crawling claws can enter the same space as the hero (and need to in order to attack the character); remember, they don't have reach, so the PC does get attacks of opportunity when they enter his area (unless initiative dictates otherwise). If the hero loses initiative, the Combat Reflexes feat still allows for attacks of opportunity while the claws swarm the PC. The other crawling claws (if there are more) wait for an opening to attack; when one of their number falls, they move in.

Also, remember crawling claws are *not* undead. Turn attempts do not function against them.

The pillows and sheets are valuable; an Appraise skill check (DC 15) gives an estimate of 75 golden solars for the fine items. The bookstand normally holds Kelthisar's spellbook; it is now empty. There is nothing else of note in the desk or around the room.

Treasure from Kelthisar's room:

- Several pillows and silk sheets of Ketite make. They are collectively worth 75 gp.

ENCOUNTER 5: KELTHISAR'S REVENGE

This encounter can occur anywhere, but ideally it should happen as the heroes are headed back to Quaalsten to report their horrible findings. They need to spend one night in the wilderness (or in the horrible, evil lair - their choice) before heading back. This gives them a chance to rest up, and prepare spells anew. If they decide to press on, let them know that they're tired, and should rest. If they insist, run the encounter normally; after all, they've been warned.

Kelthisar returns to his lair in the morning; and has his "dogs" track down the people that destroyed his "beautiful work". He catches up to the heroes in early afternoon. Read the following at an appropriate time (ideally as they're headed back through the woods to Quaalsten); it may need to be modified due to location

and time (for example, if the heroes decide to rest in Kelthisar's lair, he encounters them right after they've gotten up and prepared spells):

As you are walking along the trail back to Quaalsten, thankful that you were able to end the horrible atrocities being committed in the foul lair beneath the earth, you notice movement in the brush up ahead. Out of the foliage bursts three creatures on all fours - to your horror, you realize they're beastmen. The pitiful, naked beings have a crazed, feral look in their eyes; the beastmen growl and froth at the mouth. All of them have their left hand replaced with a wicked-looking claw, and they have iron collars with chains attached to them. Holding the three chains is a very tall man dressed in black and silver robes; from under his heavy cowl you can see a pale, pock-marked face.

"So you are the insolent wretches that ruined my enlightening work. For this, you must all die!" He lets slip from his grasp the chains holding back the miserable things.

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Feral beastmen** (3): Medium-size Humanoid (beastmen); HD 2d8+2; hp 11 (each); Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d6, claw); SQ Scent, SR 20; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7*, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Spot +3. Beastmen receive a +2 racial bonus to both Hide and Move Silently checks. *In forests or overgrown areas, the Hide bonus improves to +8 (giving them Hide +13 in those surroundings); Alertness.

Scent (Ex): These particular beastmen have been reduced to feral animals, and have developed the scent trait. See the *Monster Manual*, page 10 for details on this quality.

➤ **Kelthisar, male human Wiz(Nec)6:** Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 6d4+6; hp 25; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atks +3 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells; SQ Spells; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 8. 6 ft., 4 in. tall.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +14, Concentration +10, Heal +5, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Profession (torturer) +10, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +14. Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy).

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, bedroll, backpack with provisions, spellbook, coinpurse containing 36 golden wheatseafs (Furyondyan gp), and 19 silver sheridans (Furyondyan sp).

Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0—daze (x2), disrupt undead, ray of frost (x2); 1st—cause fear, ~~mage armor~~, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd—ghoul touch, mirror image, scare (x2), web; 3rd—fireball, empowered magic missile, empowered ray of enfeeblement, vampiric touch.

Personality Traits: Insane, diabolical, black-hearted, wicked.

APL 3 (EL 8)

Same as APL 2, except for the following:

➤ **Feral beastmen** (3): hp 11, 13, 16.

➤ **Kelthisar, male human Wiz(Nec)8**: Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 8d4+8; hp 33; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 *mage armor*); Atks +4 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells; SQ Spells; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 8. 6 ft., 4 in. tall.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +16, Concentration +12, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Profession (torturer) +12, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +16; Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy).

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, bedroll, backpack with provisions, spellbook, coinpurse containing 36 golden wheatseafs (Furyondyan gp) and 19 silver sheridans (Furyondyan sp).

Spells Prepared (5/6/5/5/4; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0—daze (x2), disrupt undead, ray of frost (x2); 1st—cause fear, ~~mage armor~~, magic missile (x2), ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd—ghoul touch, mirror image, scare, spectral hand, web; 3rd—fireball, fly, empowered magic missile, empowered ray of enfeeblement, vampiric touch; 4th—confusion, enervation, Evard's black tentacles, minor globe of invulnerability.

Personality Traits: Insane, diabolical, black-hearted, wicked.

APL 4 (EL 10)

Same as APL 2, except for the following:

➤ **Feral beastmen** (3): hp 13, 16, 19.

➤ **Kelthisar, male human Wiz(Nec)10**: Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 10d4+10; hp 39; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atks +5 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells; SQ Spells; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 8. 6 ft., 4 in. tall.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +18, Concentration +14, Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Profession (torturer) +14, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +18; Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy).

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, bedroll, backpack with provisions, spellbook, coinpurse containing 36 golden wheatseafs (Furyondyan gp) and 19 silver sheridans (Furyondyan sp).

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/5/5/4; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0—daze (x2), disrupt undead, ray of frost (x2); 1st—~~mage armor~~, magic missile (x2), ray of enfeeblement (x2), shield;

2nd—ghoul touch, Melf's acid arrow, mirror image, spectral hand, web (x2); 3rd—fireball, fly, empowered ray of enfeeblement, haste, vampiric touch; 4th—enervation, Evard's black tentacles, maximized magic missile, minor globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer; 5th—cloudkill, quickened magic missile, shadow evocation, spiritwall*.

* This spell is found in *Tome and Blood* (page 96), and is reprinted in the appendix of this scenario.

Personality Traits: Insane, diabolical, black-hearted, wicked.

Tactics: The beastmen run up to the weakest-looking character (most likely a wizard or sorcerer), and gang up on him/her. Kelthisar goes straight for the kill, utilizing his most damaging spells as soon as possible. He casts fly at the higher tiers to get some distance on the PCs; he also casts haste at APL 4 to get multiple spells off in a round. He finishes an injured fighter off with his meta-magiced magic missile spells (empowered at the lower tiers, maximized at APL 4). Kelthisar knows that his beastmen have spell resistance, and he's not averse to dropping a fireball right in the middle of them. In Kelthisar's mind, if the beastmen die, there will just be others to replace them. After all, to him, the beastmen are just animals to be used.

If Kelthisar is defeated and not killed, he reveals nothing to the heroes. He simply curses at them and swears he'll get his revenge in the afterlife.

The beastmen are totally beyond recovery, except by magical means. If subdued, the heroes might be able to bring them back to Quaalsten; the Hearth of the Unicorn's Heart may be able to tend to their wounds, both physical and mental.

Treasure off of Kelthisar's body:

- Kelthisar's standard gear. It can be sold for half of the purchase price listed in the *Player's Handbook*.
- Kelthisar's spellbook. This item is described in detail in the Treasure Summary at the end of the scenario.
- 36 gp, 19 sp.

CONCLUSION: BACK TO QUAALSTEN

After the battle, the heroes can head back to Quaalsten. An audience can be had (after a bit of waiting) with Alysia Thanemantle and the second-in-command of the Rangers (known as the Chief Forest Captain), **Almeric Wilstone** (half-elf male Rgr9). The heroes are told that the Lord Marshal is still away, but should return in a few days. Both listen carefully to the story the heroes present. At the end of it all, Alysia speaks:

"What you have done is a great service to the people of this forest. The beastmen are creatures that seek to only live in harmony with their environment; you have given them back to their

home, and stopped a horrible crime being committed unto them. Ehlonna looks kindly upon you for helping the creatures of the Vesve, her most blessed wood in all the lands. As she looks upon you with kindness, so do I. I commend you as heroes, and protectors of the forest folk. Know that should you have need of anything from my church, my clergy shall attempt to honor your request, if possible. Go now, blessed of the Unicorn Maiden; go in harmony and peace."

Each PC is awarded one Influence Point in the Church of Ehlonna for their actions. The only exception to this is characters belonging to the Helping Hands, an order of divine spellcasters within the Church. They do not receive the Influence Point, as it is expected of them to protect the weak and seek out the lost.

In addition, Almeric Wilstone hands the PCs two bottles. He explains that these are gifts from the Rangers of the Vesve for aiding the beastmen. Almeric calls them masking perfume, and tells the heroes that they may prove invaluable should they desire to use stealth in enemy territory. Helping Hands of Ehlonna may not take these gifts either, as they have sworn not to receive any sort of payment for helping protect the innocent or finding those lost within the great forest.

MARRGRAWL'S GIFT

A few days later, Elrenn returns to Quaalsten. He bears a special gift from Marrgrawl, for the hero that managed to communicate with him and treat him with the most kindness. **Pick one PC that was able to speak with Marrgrawl, and that was very kind to him. If there was no one that qualifies, then this encounter does not occur. Take the player of the character aside, and read the following to him/her:**

You were summoned to a private meeting with Elrenn Walthair at his home in town. Obviously, it must be important, for not anyone gets invited to his house for dinner.

After a fine meal and small talk, Elrenn listens to your gruesome tale of terror. He is greatly relieved to hear of your triumph, and cannot express in words the pride he feels in you and your group for handling the matter as he would. Upon finishing your story, Elrenn produces an intricately worked necklace made of some type of vine. A delicately carved wooden charm, in the shape of a unicorn, hangs from it. While studying the necklace in his hands, the Lord Marshal speaks to you.

"I managed to speak with Marrgrawl, a beastman who thinks highly of you. Marrgrawl spoke of you to his tribe, and they were impressed with your kindness. Only I was able to walk among the Woodshaper Tribe before now; however, their chief gave this to me to give you the same privilege. This is as great an honor as an outsider can receive from their tribe; and I am proud to give it to you." Elrenn hands you the necklace, and smiles broadly. "Now go, beastman-friend, go and continue the fight against evil in our sacred forest. May cold iron avail you!"

The hero receives the Favor of Marrgrawl. Helping Hands are eligible for this favor. If a PC belongs to the Rangers of the Vesve, and receives this gift, contact the Highfolk

Triad meta-organization director, Andrea Paulinski (washuu@execpc.com).

DEALING WITH CAPTURED NPCS

If the heroes manage to capture Nelgraad or Kelthisar, the Rangers of the Vesve take them into custody. At dawn on the following day, they are hung and beheaded for their heinous crimes against the people of the forest.

THE PLOT THICKENS

After all of this, read the players the following, omitting details that they did not learn:

You have managed to foil a sick and twisted necromancer's dream, and have averted a potential diplomatic crisis with the beastmen, who surely would have drawn themselves further away from humanity had Kelthisar continued his plans.

Yet still the mysterious Baklunish man, who seems to be a propagator of much of these evil doings, eludes your grasp. He apparently has need of elven corpses, and has a great affinity for the undead. This man must be found and whatever plan he has stopped, or you can be certain that the citizens of Highfolk, the farmers of the Highvale, and the forest folk of the Vesve will be in a grave situation in times to come.

Treasure from the conclusion:

- Influence Point in Church of Ehlonna. Each PC (except Helping Hands) receives one.
- 2 bottles of masking perfume (originally appeared in *Dragon* #279). This alchemical formula helps to mask the natural scent of anyone wearing it for up to 3 hours. Creatures with the Scent quality can't detect the wearer by scent until he is within 5 feet. Masking perfume also eliminates the tracking bonus the creature normally gains to track the character (see the *Monster Manual* for details). A small bottle contains five applications of masking perfume (each enough for one Medium-size character or two Small-size characters).
- Favor of Marrgrawl. You have befriended an important member of the Woodshaper Tribe, a clan of beastmen living in the Vesve Forest. Marrgrawl has given you an intricately worked vine necklace, upon which dangles a delicate wood charm of a unicorn rampant. Whenever you wear this necklace, you may pass through beastmen lands without any danger, and all beastmen react more positively to you. The beastmen of the Woodshaper Tribe are always friendly toward you.

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent

character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter 3

Communicating with Marrgrawl in a positive manner 25 xp

Encounter 4

Freeing all of the beastman in the holding area 200 xp

Defeating the son of Kyuss 100 xp

or

Avoiding the son of Kyuss 50 xp

Gleaning information from Kelthisar's note book 25 xp

Talking/interrogating Nelgraad 75 xp

or

Defeating Nelgraad without interrogating him 50 xp

Avoiding/bypassing the poison needle trap 15 xp

Avoiding/bypassing the electrified floor trap 15 xp

Avoiding/defeating the crawling claw trap 20 xp

Encounter 5

Defeating Kelthisar 200 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award 0-75 xp

Total possible experience 750 xp

TREASURE SUMMARY

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

- The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g. armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
- Animals, followers, monsters, henchman, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
- Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items that are worth

more than 500 gp, that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. Alternatively, or if the character cannot afford the fine, the character may be incarcerated for a period of time dependant on the region and value of the theft. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief, such as Infamy. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter 4

- *Ring of shield* (Value 500 gp, Uses 1/day, Tradable? Yes, Rarity Unusual, Weight 1/10 lb.): This plain iron ring, when activated, functions as the *shield* spell, cast at 1st level. The ring functions once per day.
- 20 pp, 50 gp from Nelgraad's locked box.
- 75 gp if Kelthisar's fine pillows and sheets are sold.

Encounter 5

- Kelthisar's spellbook (Value 600 gp, Tradable? Yes, Rarity Unusual, Weight 8 lbs.): This spellbook once belonged to a vile necromancer named Kelthisar. It is bound in the bright green hide of a carrion crawler, and is oily to the touch. The pages of the book are made of the skin of an undetermined creature.

Preparing a spell from this spellbook requires a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level). This check must be made every time a spell from this book is prepared. Spells can be copied from this book as per the normal procedures in the *Player's Handbook* and the *LIVING GREYHAWK* campaign. The spellbook contains the following spells:

- 0 level - *Detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *ray of frost*, and *read magic*.
- 1st level - *Cause fear*, *chill touch*, *comprehend languages*, *detect undead*, *grease*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*, and *shocking grasp*.
- 2nd level - *Ghoul touch*, *mirror image*, *scare*, *spectral hand*, and *web*.
- 3rd level - *Create crawling claw*, *summon monster III*, and *vampiric touch*.

Create Crawling Claw

Transmutation [Evil]

Level: Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: Severed left hands within a 5-foot-radius circle
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes

You may create a number of crawling claws up to twice your caster level. The hands to be transformed must all be within a 5-foot-radius circle. To begin the spell, you must cast *magic circle against good* around yourself and the claws. The *magic circle* need not endure throughout the *create crawling claw* spell's 1-hour casting time; simply initiating the spell inside the circle is good enough. Once created, the crawling claws will be under your direct telepathic command, so long as your instructions are very simple and you are within 100 feet. If you leave that area, you must give the crawling claws simple standing orders beforehand.

Creating a crawling claw out of someone's hand does not preclude the use of a *resurrection* spell to bring that person back to life. Stories are told of adventurers who were resurrected and later attacked by their own left hands.

Material Components: Clippings from a ghoul's fingernails, and a ring that someone else lost.

LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Use: This spell may not be cast by good-aligned spellcasters. Any crawling claws that are created disappear at the end of the scenario in which they were brought into being. The PC must obtain severed left hands of creatures in the same scenario that they intend to cast *create crawling claw* (unused severed left hands gathered for this purpose also disappear at the end of the scenario in which they are found). In addition, before this spell is cast for the first time, the PC must obtain the material components listed in the spell description. When a material component is obtained, the judge should make a note of it on the PC's log sheet. Unlike the other spells in this spellbook, you must have the certificate for this spell in order to have your PC cast it. The crawling claw statistic block is on pages 29-30 of the *Monsters of Faerun*, or you may obtain a copy of the statistic block from the appendix of this scenario.

- 39 gp, 19 sp in Kelthisar's coinpurse.

Conclusion

- Influence Point in Church of Ehlonna. Each PC (except Helping Hands) receives one.
- 2 bottles of masking perfume (Value 100 gp each, Uses See text, Tradable? Yes, Rarity Common, Weight 1 lb. each): This alchemical formula helps to mask the natural scent of anyone wearing it for up to 3 hours. Creatures with the Scent quality can't detect the wearer by scent until he is within 5 feet. Masking perfume also eliminates the tracking bonus the creature normally gains to track the character (see the *Monster Manual* for details). A small bottle contains five applications of masking

perfume (each enough for one Medium-size character or two Small-size characters). This item originally appeared in *Dragon* #279. (Two separate certificates.)

- Favor of Marrgrawl (Value 5 gp, Tradable? No, Rarity Unusual, Weight 1 lb): You have befriended an important member of the Woodshaper Tribe, a clan of beastmen living in the Vesve Forest. Marrgrawl has given you an intricately worked vine necklace, upon which dangles a delicate wood charm of a unicorn rampant. Whenever you wear this necklace, you may pass through beastmen lands without any danger, and all beastmen react more positively to you. The beastmen of the Woodshaper Tribe are always friendly toward you.

APPENDIX A: BEASTMAN STATISTICS

BEASTMAN

Medium-Size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 2d8+2 (11 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

Attacks: Halfspear +1 melee; or dart +3 ranged

Damage: Halfspear 1d6; or dart 1d4 and poison

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison

Special Qualities: SR 20

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills: Hide +7*, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Spot +2

Feats: Alertness

Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm forests

Organization: Solitary, pair, band (5-8), or party (11-20)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: By character class



Beastmen are akin to short, slender humanoids, and have a fine coat of green or olive fur. Underneath the exterior coat of fur lies a coarse black fur that instinctively moves about, to provide him with superior camouflage while hunting in the forest.

Beastmen speak their own language, which uses speech, gestures, and changes on the patterns of their fur. It is thus impossible for an outsider to duplicate anything more than the rudiments of their language. More intelligent beastmen sometimes speak Common, Sylvan, or Elven.

Most beastmen encountered are warriors; the information in the statistics block is for one of 1st level. (See page 39 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* for more about the warrior class.)

COMBAT

Beastmen try to avoid combat when possible, but if pressed, they are very effective combatants. They use their natural surroundings to their advantage, and coordinate their attacks to take down the biggest threats first.

Poison (Ex): Beastmen typically coat a few darts with Medium-size spider venom, Fortitude save (DC 14); initial damage 1d4 temporary Strength, secondary damage 1d6 temporary Strength.

Skills: Beastmen receive a +2 racial bonus to both Hide and Move Silently checks. *In forests or overgrown areas, the racial Hide bonus improves to +8.

BEASTMAN CHARACTERS

A beastman's favored class is ranger, although leaders tend toward either fighters or rangers. Beastmen apparently worship no deity of their own, and are unlikely to become clerics. Their disbelief in magic ensures that there are almost no sorcerers or wizards among their people.

Note: This monster was adapted from AD&D 2nd Edition rules.

APPENDIX B: SON OF KYUSS STATISTICS

SON OF KYUSS

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 4d12+3 (29 hp)

Initiative: -1 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 11 (-1 Dex, +2 natural)

Attacks: Slam +6 melee

Damage: Slam 1d6+4 and disease

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Kyuss' Gift, create spawn

Special Qualities: Undead, regeneration 5, turn resistance +2

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +4

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 9, Con -, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 14

Skills: Hide +3, Jump +8, Move Silently +3, Spot +6

Feats: Toughness

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Shamble (1-3) or horde (1-3 plus 1-6 huge or larger zombies)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 5-6 HD (Small); 5-8 HD (Medium-size); 5-10 HD (Large)



Sons of Kyuss are a disgusting form of cursed undead created by a powerful evil cleric named Kyuss, who has since been rewarded for his service to a dark deity and has achieved a small portion of divinity. They can appear anywhere, but are known to be found more frequently in the Amedio Jungle, where Kyuss spent some time decades ago. Completely mad and working without apparent reason, the sons of Kyuss wander caverns, crypts, and sometimes even the open countryside in search of victims.

Sons of Kyuss look very much like well-rotted zombies. It is only once they are within 20 feet that writhing green worms can be seen crawling in and out of their skull orifices. They are usually clad in rotted clothing, although a rare few wear pieces of armor that have not yet decayed enough to fall off.

A 16th or higher level cleric may use the *create greater undead* spell to create new sons of Kyuss. Doing so requires maggots from the corpse of a leper in addition to the normal material components for the spell.

COMBAT

Sons of Kyuss never travel more than three together, splitting into multiple smaller groups if creating spawn causes them to exceed this number. Occasionally a larger creature falls to their curse and follows after them as a normal zombie. Unlike zombies, sons of Kyuss are not limited to taking partial actions only in a round, but they are intelligent enough to pretend to have restricted movement until they are ready to attack. They normally use their fear aura to scatter their victims, chasing them down singly until all have been caught.

Fear Aura (Su): Sons of Kyuss are shrouded in a zone of *fear*. Creatures who enter this area (or if the son brings the area to the creature) must succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or be affected as though by a *fear* spell cast by a 7th-level sorcerer. A creature that makes this save is immune to all *fear* auras from sons of Kyuss for 24 hours.

Kyuss' Gift (Su): Supernatural disease - slam, Fortitude save (DC 12), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 temporary Constitution/1d4 temporary Wisdom. Unlike normal diseases, this disease continues until the victim reaches 0 Constitution (and dies) or receives a *cure disease* spell or similar magic (see "Disease" in Chapter 3: Running the Game in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The disease causes a rotting of the flesh and dementia. A diseased victim gets only half the benefits of natural and magical healing (divide all healing by two).

Create Spawn (Ex): Sons of Kyuss create more of their own kind with the green worms crawling through their bodies. Each round that a son is in melee combat, one of the worms leaps from its host to land on the son's opponent (make an attack roll using the son's slam attack value). The worm has AC 10 and 1 hit point. During this time, the worm can be killed by the touch of iron or by any sort of attack that a son could not regenerate. On the son's next turn, the worm burrows into the flesh of its target, making its way toward the brain and causing 1 hit point of damage per round until it reaches the brain 1d4+1 rounds later. When inside a victim, the worm can be destroyed by *remove curse* or *remove*

disease (or spells that duplicate these effects); *dispel evil* or *neutralize poison* delays its progress for 10d6 minutes. These spells affect multiple worms within the same victim. Worms cannot survive outside of a host for more than 1 round.

Once the worm reaches the victim's brain, it inflicts 1d2 points of temporary Intelligence damage per round until it is destroyed or the victim reaches 0 Intelligence, at which point the host dies and rises as a son of Kyuss 1d6+4 rounds later. Small, Medium-size, and Large creatures become sons of Kyuss as described above; smaller creatures quickly putrefy, larger creatures become normal zombies. Spawn (and spawned zombies) are not under the control of their parent but usually follow after whatever created them.

Any creature that touches a son with an unarmed strike or other natural weapon is immediately attacked by 1d4 worms.

Regeneration (Ex): A son regenerates 5 points of damage each round. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, a son collapses but continues to regenerate, rising 1d4 rounds later to fight again. Only fire, electricity, holy water, or the touch of holy or blessed weapons keeps it from rising in such a manner (these attacks may be applied while the creature remains fallen or be the cause of its fall).

Curative Transformation: A *remove curse*, *remove disease*, or more powerful versions of these spells transforms a son of Kyuss into a normal zombie. Touching a son in this manner does not draw additional attacks from worms because the spell's power kills any that try.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Note: This monster is reproduced from Living Greyhawk Journal #1.

APPENDIX C: CRAWLING CLAW STATISTICS

CRAWLING CLAW

Diminutive Construct**Hit Dice:** 1d10 (5 hp)**Initiative:** +0**Speed:** 20 ft.**AC:** 15 (+4 size, +1 natural)**Attacks:** Claw +4 melee**Damage:** Claw 1**Face/Reach:** 1 ft. by 1 ft./0 ft.**Special Attacks:** Smite fallen**Special Qualities:** Construct, immunities, SR 10**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -3**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 5, Cha 5**Climate/Terrain:** Any land and underground**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or applause (4-24)**Challenge Rating:** 1/3**Treasure:** None**Alignment:** Always neutral**Advancement:** -

Adventurers kill these miniature menaces by the dozen, all the while praying, "Let this never be me."

Crawling claws are the amputated left hands of Medium-size humanoids, given artificial life by arcane magic. Their only advantages over undead and other larger magical servitors is that they are easy to smuggle or hide and that, for most necromancers, the material to construct them is near at hand.

Crawling claws propel themselves by walking on their fingers or through aberrant spasms that can propel them through the air up to 6 feet high. They magically "see" and "hear" as if they had the sensory organs of the humanoid they used to belong to, but their senses are dull. They are generally too stupid to be assigned unsupervised tasks more complicated than guard duty.

COMBAT

Crawling claws attack in swarms, taking advantage of their small size to gang up on a single opponent rather than trying to fight all foes at the same time.

Smite Fallen (Ex): Crawling claws inflict double damage against prone opponents.

Immunities (Ex): Lacking eyes, crawling claws are immune to gaze attacks.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Note: This monster is reproduced from Monsters of Faerun.

APPENDIX D: *SPIRITWALL* SPELL

Spiritwall

Necromancy

Level: Sor/Wiz 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Effect: Wall whose area is up to one 10-ft. square/level or a sphere or hemisphere with a radius of up to 1 ft./level

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

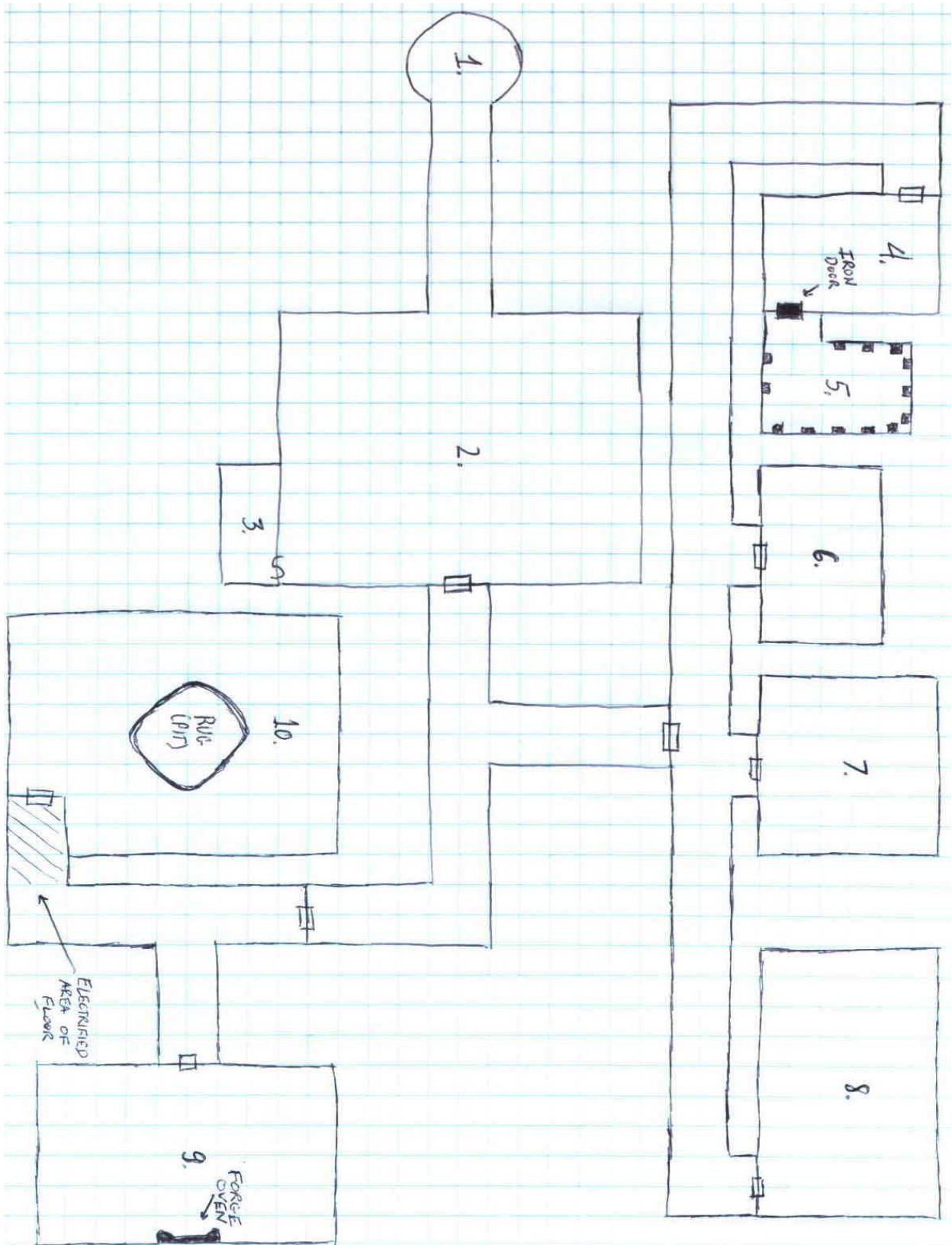
This spell creates an immobile, swirling mass of greenish-white forms that look like tortured spirits. One side of the wall, selected by you, emits a low groaning that causes creatures within a 60-foot spread to make a Will save or flee in panic for 1d4 rounds (this is a sonic fear effect).

The barrier is semimaterial and opaque, providing total concealment. It blocks magical effects and provides nine-tenths cover against physical attacks. Creatures can easily move through a *spiritwall*, but at a cost. A living creature that merely touches the wall takes 1d10 points of damage as its life force is disrupted. A living creature that actually passes through the wall takes 1d10 points of damage, as above, and must make a successful Fortitude save or receive one negative level.

Material Component: A clear, faceted gemstone.

This spell is reproduced from Tome and Blood.

DM MAP (1 SQUARE = 5 FEET)



ENLISTING THE ICONIC

☛ **Tordek, male dwarf Ftr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d10+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atks +4 melee (1d10+2/x3, dwarven waraxe), or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Jump +0; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, scale mail, large wooden shield, dwarven waraxe, shortbow, quiver with 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack and flint and steel.

☛ **Miale, female elf Wizr:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atks +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or –6 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) and –10 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Elven traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Knowledge (arcane) +6, Listen +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3; Scribe Scroll (virtual), Toughness.

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—daze, ray of frost, read magic; 1st—mage armor, sleep.

Spellbook: 0—all of them; 1st—charm person, mage armor, magic missile, sleep, summon monster I.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, quarterstaff, shortbow, quiver of 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, 10 candles, map case, 3 pages parchment, ink and pen, spell pouch, spellbook.

☛ **Lidda, female halfling Rogr:** CR 1; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow), or +1 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, dagger); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Halfling traits; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +11, Jump +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +7, Search +6, Spot +4, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +1; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Explorer's outfit, leather armor, shortsword, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, dagger, Backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, thieves' tools hooded lantern, 3 pints of lantern oil.

☛ **Jozan, male human Clr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1, heavy mace), or –1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Turn Undead 4/day 2d6+2; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref –1; Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +6, Listen +4, Knowledge (religion) +0, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (3/2+1; base DC 12 + spell level); 0—detect poison, guidance, read magic; 1st—bless, protection from evil*, shield of faith.

* Domain spell; Deity: Pelor; Domains: Good (good spells cast at +1 caster level) and Healing (healing spells cast at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Cleric's vestments, scale mail, large wooden shield, heavy mace, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, backpack with waterskin, 1 day of trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, wooden holy symbol (sun disk of Pelor), 3 torches.