

The Secret of Zodal's Temple

A One-round Dungeons & Dragons Living Greyhawk Adventure
for the Duchy of Urnst

By Timothy Creese

Escorting a merchant wagon from Radigast City to Brotton wasn't supposed to be this difficult! An unnatural drought and heat wave played into some bad decisions, and now you find yourselves in the care of the healers in the Temple of Zodal. What troubles plague the County of Urnst? More importantly, what can your fellowship of adventurers do to help your beloved homeland? Appropriate for 1st and 2nd level characters.

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This is a RPGA Network adventure game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing the game (or this round of the game), but the actual playing time will be about three hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag 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 to keep track of who is playing which character.

Scoring the game for RPGA points: The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use:

1. **No-vote scoring:** The players write their names and 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 convention coordinator wants information as to how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. **Voting:** Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the best amongst them, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes. Multi-round adventures usually required advancing a smaller number of players than played the first round, so voting is required for multi-round adventures.

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.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

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 ***bold italics***. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

The Secret of Zodal's Temple

The Secret of Zodal's Temple is the first module in the Exposing Kyuss series of Living Greyhawk Regional adventures, set in the County of Urnst.

GM Information

Several generations ago, by human measure, a debased priest of Kyuss ordered his undead minions to build a structure. Though crude in design and inferior by today's standards, the structure nonetheless remained intact and unseen for centuries.

The evil priest built the crude temple into a vast pit, so that none should discover the building from afar. The temple and the land surrounding the building extending out 20 ft. were built beneath ground level, giving the site an appearance of a sunken barrow mound. The roof of the sunken building was just above the surface of the surrounding landslide.

To ensure that the structure would not be detected, the priest enshrouded the locale in illusion, creating the image of water surrounding the building. The roof of the structure took on the appearance of a marshy, bog-like island in the middle of a small lake. The illusionary reeds and willows of the lake swayed in the wind, and even swayed when there wasn't any wind (a queer sight that caused many to run in panic).

Alone and hidden from the eyes of those who would rally against him, the priest of Kyuss went about his work to create his god's greatest creation, the hideous, mindless undead known as the sons of Kyuss!

To create these new living dead, the priest of Kyuss needed several hundred corpses. For a year and a day, the evil cleric and his undead minions unearthed graves from throughout the land. This grave robbing was referred to as the Year of Restless Souls, and the County of Urnst still marks its memory by an annual celebration called Rest Easy.

Mostly observed in the southern realm of the County of Urnst, the celebration of Rest Easy is observed on the last day of Harvester, when the living take flowers to the gravesides of their lost loved ones.

With all the corpses needed for the years of animating the dead to come, the priest bade his undead minions to store the bodies. This was accomplished by digging out sections of dirt of the embankments surrounding the structure, and reburying the bodies in a catacomb-like style encircling the building.

The priest of Kyuss never completed his quest to create his abominations. For reasons unknown, the cleric disappeared after a handful of his Sons were created, and the structure went undiscovered since. The Great Rains of 433 CY flooded the space between Kyuss' temple and the surrounding land. The illusion of water eventually wore off, replaced by the very real floodwater.

The great philosophers of the realm argue that from any evil, good will emerge. Whether in the form of a rebellious son that frees the people from his tyrant father, or monies given to an orphanage from the discovery of a pirate's ill gotten treasure, good will eventually emerge from evil. It may take some time; perhaps several lifetimes, but good will emerge from evil.

In 505 CY, clerics of Zodal were looking for an out-of-the-way place to build their temple. Since the "queer lake with reeds that swayed without aid of wind" was well

know (and avoided) by the locals, the pilgrims of Zodal went there. The illusion was gone, replaced by a real moat surrounding an island (the top of the ancient priest's building) large enough to build a temple. The clerics of Zodal saw the natural moat and gave praise to their god for bringing them to such a protected place. In the event of future trouble, one need only raise the drawbridge, and the clerics would be safe within.

The Temple of Zodal was completed in 566 CY, and its clerics have been quietly aiding the wounded ever since. One of the first healed from an onslaught of a marauding band of Iuz's goblins was a young mage, Pram Eldor. Spared from death by Zodal's healing clerics, Pram Eldor spent the next several years becoming a battle mage for the County of Urnst, battling against the forces of Iuz. Critically wounded in a battle at the Charn Castles three years ago, Pram Eldor chanced a *teleport* spell to the Temple of Zodal. The magic was newly acquired, and the temple was but a memory, and Pram Eldor's spell teleported him 20 ft. below his intended target. Darkness engulfed the mage, and he knew his spell was in error. The mage conjured magical *light* and saw the ghastly works of the ancient priest, now dormant in the building beneath Zodal's Temple.

A second spell successfully teleported Pram Eldor up to the surface, and into the divine healing of Zodal's clerics. Pram Eldor made two mistakes in the weeks that followed. As he lay healing, he decided the good clerics of Zodal needn't be worried about the secret structure on which they built their temple. Pram Eldor was powerful, and had powerful friends. He would ensure the secret tomb would be dealt with and eradicated! That decision was Pram Eldor's first mistake.

His second mistake was to tell his adventuring fellowship of his discovery after he had recovered. The fellowship's mighty warrior, Durac, was a mercenary hired on years ago by the original fellowship. Durac quickly gained the respect and trust of the fellowship, but Durac was actually a spy and servant of Iuz.

Learning of this wellspring of evil waiting to be tapped, Durac finally betrayed his fellowship as he murdered each in their sleep. Durac fled across the Artonsamay River to Wraithkeep. Therein, dark forces planned a way to magically teleport a cleric of Kyuss into the secret chamber, without alerting the priests of Zodal. A dark cleric of Kyuss was finally discovered, and has recently been magically transported to the temple. His job is to animate the dead and ready them to attack the Temple of Zodal.

Evil clerics have daily said their dark benedictions to fell lords, praying for a plague of heat and draught in the region near Brotton. The center of this strange weather is the Temple of Zodal, where the moat has completely evaporated. The cleric of Kyuss below continues his scheming and reanimating, waiting patiently to unleash his minions on the world.

This adventure starts with the character characters recovering in the Temple of Zodal. They were employed by merchants to guard wagons of wares from Radigast City to Brotton. The excessive heat forced the merchants

to travel at night, and a pack of orcs attacked! The battle that ensued was costly to both sides. Although the adventuring party was beaten down, all but two of the orcs perished. Two clerics of Zodal happened upon the battle, and felled one of the two remaining orcs. The other orc escaped.

Fearing a reinforced attack, the clerics quickly collected the badly injured merchants and their guards. The wounded were transported via the merchant's wagons to the Temple of Zodal last night. The story begins on Starday, the 8th day of Goodmonth. Starday is the first day of the week.

The party has to overcome obstacles and battle their way past undead creatures while they explore the ruins of an ancient temple. The party will find clues that will lead to future adventures.

Character Introduction

It is Starday, the 8th day of Goodmonth. A new week has begun, but all you know is pain and darkness.

Sunday, the 9th day of Goodmonth comes and goes without your knowledge.

Moonday, the 10th day of Goodmonth also passes as you lie near death.

Godsday, the 11th day of Goodmonth passes, and the night sky is pitch black as both moons – Luna and Celene – have reached their new moon phase, and you are still oblivious to your surroundings.

Waterday, the 12th day of Goodmonth dawns, and you awaken to the smells of heavy incense. As your head clears, you find yourself in a clean bed and that your many wounds are freshly dressed and bandaged.

All about you are similar beds, each containing various peoples recovering from wounds. Some are still asleep, while others are groggily looking about.

Characters might want to know what wounds they suffer from. Have the characters roll against the below chart to determine their wounds. Each character should make one roll for each level of his or her character.

01 – 05	Throat wound.
06 – 15	Facial wound.
16 – 25	Head wound
26 – 40	Chest wound
41 – 70	Upper Abdomen wound.
71 – 75	Lower Abdomen wound.
76 – 85	Leg and Abdomen wounds.
86 – 90	Arm and Chest wounds.
91 – 95	Neck and Chest wounds.
96 – 00	Head and Neck wounds.

The orcs attacked with a volley of arrows and hurled spears. They then rushed the party with swords and daggers. What weapons caused which wounds is up to the Dungeon Master.

A woman approaches, and checks on your bandages. "Be still," she instructs. "Not many have recovered from such a

battle. In fact, we were not sure you would last through the week.”

“I am Beltha Yoro, priestess of Zodal, the god of mercy, hope, and benevolence. It was his will that brought you here, as our clerics happened upon you during your battle with orcs. You are safe, and healing within our temple.”

All characters are in pain, and are too weak from their near death experience to get out of bed.

Earthday, the 13th of Goodmonth begins with a layman changing your bandages.

“I have broth and bread if you feel you can keep it down. You have weakened from your wounds, and eating will help speed the healing process.”

“Your wounds are healing nicely, but I ask that you remain in bed for yet another day.”

Freeday, the 14th of Goodmonth is the last day of the Flanaess week, and is normally a day of rest.

The layman changing your bandages this morning addresses you. “Feel free to get up and move about. We ask that you remain on the temple grounds. Beyond our protective moat are dangers too numerous. We also ask you to respect our beliefs by not arming yourselves while on temple grounds.”

Beltha Yoro, human female C5; Medium Humanoid (5 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 5d8; hp 30 (+3 Toughness); Init +0; Spd 30; AC 10; Atks N/A; SA spells; SQ nil; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +7.

Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14

Skills: Heal +10 (extra +2 due to Herbalist), Knowledge (Religion) +8, Profession (Herbalist) +8, Spellcraft +8, Diplomacy +1. Feats: Toughness, and Brew Potion.

Spells (5/4+/3+/2+): Note: All spells have been cast for the day.

Temple Laymen (4), human males Com1; Medium Humanoids (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk N/A; AL NG; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +1.

Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Heal +2; Profession (Healer) +2.

Beltha runs the temple of Zodal, which is more like a hospital than a center of worship. See Map 2 for details of the temple of Zodal.

If asked Beltha or the laymen will tell the party the following:

- The healing process is taking longer than usual these days. Wounds that would normally heal from Beltha's divine spells fester and reopen. Only their mundane healing skills have restored the current victims.
- Patients in this area of the temple complain that they can't sleep well at night. There must be rats that have burrowed beneath the temple, because clawing noises are heard at night...

ENCOUNTER 1A: UP AND ABOUT

(Zodal's Temple Room 1)

As you each regain your strength, you gingerly explore your surroundings. This portion of the temple looks more akin to a hospital than any temple you've ever encountered.

Provide Character Map 1 (Zodal's Temple).

A quick count reveals thirty beds. Some of them are occupied with wounded people. Four laymen take the role of nurses, and tend the temple's patients.

There are eleven other patients in bed. Each is listed below, and will accept any additional healing or comfort any party member offers. Because of their injuries, no stats, skills, feats, or any other personal information is detailed for these patients. The characters don't need to talk to all of the wounded – just the ones who are awake (GM option).

Ithon Merryweather, human male, Merchant. Ithon and his cousin Pelum hired the party to protect their wagons to Brotton. He is still unconscious from the ambush of the orcs, and looks like he might not recover from his wounds.

Pelum Merryweather, human male, Merchant. Pelum and his cousin Ithon hired the party to protect their wagons to Brotton. He is still unconscious from the ambush of the orcs. He looks like he will survive from his wounds, but he lost his left leg from the knee down.

Zhulothas – Son of Zekkor, human male, Farmer. Almost fully recovered from wounds suffered while defending his home and family from a looting orc. His modest farm is on the outskirts of Brotton. He sustained a nasty cut from the orc's blade while he drove off the creature with a pitchfork.

Yoral Bretintorin, human male, Child. This six-year-old boy was run over by a speeding chariot outside of Brotton. “Mama always said to look both ways b'fore crossin' the street, but I was chasin' aft'r my dog, Lucky.”

Andowin Blademaker, human male, F4. The sole survivor of an adventuring party hired to slay ghastly ghouls near one of the Charn Castles along the banks of the Artonsamay River. He is in a deep melancholy for he has lost his left eye from the claws of a ghoul.

Xalan Shadowman, human male, T4. Fell from a rooftop while spying on a foreign ambassador in Radigast City. He has suffered two broken legs, and a broken left arm. He is a member of the Aerie in Radigast City, and will provide instructions to get into the thieves' guild for any helpful rogue.

Caldor the White, human male, C3. Recovering from multiple attacks from undead. He was a C9 before assaulting a hoard of assembled undead. Caldor dropped his magical mace in the battle, and refuses to divulge the where about of the undead hoard for fear someone else will claim his mace. He doesn't even mention the mace.

Lady Iana, human female, M5. Recovering from a mighty blow from a flail of a troll. The blow came at the conclusion of a powerful spell that caused it to go awry. She was swallowed in darkness, and awoke here. If the party heals her, she will teach a single mage the *hold portal* spell.

Trelin Tanilthas, human male, F2. First Mate of the doomed ship, the Two Moons, Trelin suffers from wounds received while combating a pirate ship on the Nyr Dyv. The Two Moons closed in on a pirate ship, but learned too late that the pirates vastly outnumbered the marines! Many a brave sailor died on the deck of the Two Moons, and Trelin would have too. The pirates scuttled the Two Moons, and the semi-conscious First Mate clung to a wooden crate as the ship went down. Blackness overtook him, and he awoke here.

Holdoria Dreperd, human female, F2. Recovering from wounds inflicted while combating orcs near Brotton, Holdoria took an arrow in the stomach. She would have died instantly, but her group of adventurers included Krynnen the Good – cleric of St. Cuthbart. A quick healing prayer kept Holdoria alive, but darkness overtook her when Krynnen removed the arrow. When she awoke, Holdoria was here.

GrungGlosh, half-orc male, F1. The victim of an attack from a crazed farmer. GrungGlosh was traveling to Brotton in an attempt to rid himself of the rotten ways of his orcish clan. Desperate for food, he braved taking some vegetables from a small farm. Suddenly, a mad man came running at him with a pitchfork! GrungGlosh drew his blade in self-defense, and struck out at the man only after receiving a painful stab of the farmer's pitchfork. GrungGlosh held back his strength because he knew he surely would have killed the crazed farmer – and the half-orc didn't want that.

ENCOUNTER 1B: UP AND ABOUT

(Zodal's Temple Room 2)

You stand in the entryway of Zodal's Temple. This wide stone room has two huge wooden wheels on opposite walls flanking the drawbridge. The wheels are wrapped with linked chain. A mechanical hand crank is located on the left wall, and is geared with the wheels. The hand crank is used to operate the drawbridge.

ENCOUNTER 1C: UP AND ABOUT

(Zodal's Temple Room 3)

This extremely long room serves as the kitchen. Shelves hold various foodstuffs, as well as rare herbs for mixing healing salves. Barrels of water line one wall.

A wooden table and a few chairs occupy the northern area of the room. It is here that the clerical staff and any patients capable of walking come to dine.

The southern area of the kitchen contains several chests and cabinets to store the gear of patients.

ENCOUNTER 1D: UP AND ABOUT

(Zodal's Temple Room 4)

This room is the private chamber of Beltha Yoro. To the left are a bed, chest, and wardrobe containing the cleric's vestments.

There is a desk and chair in right side of the room. Behind the desk is a large bookshelf. Numerous volumes of healing records and documents are on hand.

ENCOUNTER 1E: UP AND ABOUT

(Zodal's Temple Rooms 5)

Each of these four separate rooms is the private quarters of the laymen. Each room contains a bed, chest, and wardrobe.

ENCOUNTER 1F: UP AND ABOUT

(Zodal's Temple Room 6)

Outside of the temple is the privy. A well-worn pathway leads from the drawbridge to the outhouse.

ENCOUNTER 2: INTO THE DARKNESS

After the characters have interacted with the other patients of the temple, they'll eventually stroll about the premises. When they near the drawbridge, proceed with the following:

Sleep has been hard to come by, as the sounds of nesting rats can be heard in the walls and beneath the floorboards.

Almost completely healed, your group has spent the last two days gingerly walking around the temple grounds, waiting for the merchants to recover. You are still employed to see their wagons to Brotton, and receive payment.

On occasion, you've crossed the drawbridge to visit the cemetery of those whom the healers were too late to help. Any further exploration is too risky, as foul creatures attack anything encountered in the sweltering heat wave.

The main entrance to the temple is a drawbridge spanning a moat. Due to the heatwave and drought, the moat water has all but evaporated, leaving scattered pools of mud on the moat floor.

Tell the characters that they are returning from an afternoon trip to the cemetery. Randomly choose a PC to notice the outline of a concealed door that is exposed due to the evaporated water.

Apparently the temple of Zodal was built on top of some long-forgotten structure. There is an outline of a door in the dried mud wall almost directly beneath the drawbridge. The bottom of the door is at the moat's floor.

Suddenly, the door pushes open. A skeletal form emerges from the door. Turning its undead skull toward you, it begins climbing the 30 ft. moat wall toward you as the echoes of distant thunder roll from gathering rain clouds...

Skeleton: Medium Undead (6 ft.tall); HD 1d12; hp 6; Initiative +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atks +0/+0 melee (two claws 1d4); SA nil; SQ half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, cold immunity; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2

Str 10, Dx 12, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 11

Feats: Improved Initiative

Skeletons are the animated bones of the dead. They are mindless automatons who obey the orders of their evil masters. Pinpoints of red light smolder in the black emptiness of their eye sockets. They attack until destroyed, for that is what they were created to do.

Beltha will ask the party members to don their armor and arm themselves in order to explore the doorway that loosened the animated skeleton. If the party refuses to investigate the doorway, inform them that the price for their healing is far more than they can afford, and to tackle this task for the clerics of Zodal would repay their debt.

NOTE: Characters are healed from their wounds from the orc ambush, but their scars and joints continue to ache (there's no game effect for this, but be sure to remind the characters of it).

Beltha leads you to a storage area in the kitchen that contains a variety of clothing, armors, weapons, and gear. You immediately recognize your personal belongings. "Take only those items that belong to you."

Characters will have to get to the bottom of the dried-up moat. Although the walls are steep, they are sun-dried and have numerous natural handholds. Climb skill checks gain a +5 bonus. If any character happens to fall, they'll land in softened mud at the bottom. No damage will be inflicted, but they'll be covered in thick, smelly mud.

The open door allows enough light to reveal a dusty room that could be several hundred or several thousand years old. Strange runes are written around the edge of the doorway. Apparently, some ancient magic has prevented this structure beneath Zodal's Temple from flooding.

The dark gray rain clouds so badly needed in this region roll in at an incredible speed. As you stand at this doorway into the unknown, sheets of rain begin to fall...

Thick dust has settled on the floor, and the obvious tracks of the skeleton easily show the creature's trail

through an archway leading deeper into the unknown darkness.

This ancient chamber is more circular than square, and the only other exit is the archway. Sounds of chanting echo to you. What could survive down here for all these years...?

The corridor beyond the archway runs some twenty or so feet before turning left. A slight reflection of firelight can be seen on the walls at the hallway's turn.

Half way down the corridor is a 10 ft. wide by 5 ft. long floor trap designed to collapse into a pit when enough weight is set upon it. This is why the skeleton passed without setting off the trap.

Trapdoor pit: 10 ft. deep (1d6); Reflex save to avoid (DC 20); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 20).

Unless the trap is detected, lead party member will set off the trap, and fall 10 ft. down into the pit (suffering 1d6 points of damage). Either the loud crashing of this trap or the sounds of the advancing party will alert the cleric in the next encounter.

The bottom of the pit contains the remains of a long forgotten warrior. Many years ago, he came to destroy the cleric of Kyuss. Unfortunately, he fell into the trap and died. The recent energies have animated his skeleton. His sword is magical and still has an unblemished blade. The skeleton will also use its old rusty shield.

Skeleton: Medium Undead (6 ft.tall); HD 1d12; hp 6; Initiative +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atks +0/+0 melee (two claws 1d4); SA nil; SQ half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, cold immunity; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2

Str 10, Dx 12, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 11

Feats: Improved Initiative

Equipment: The skeleton's shield is worthless, and will break away completely after absorbing a hit or two. The creature's sword, however, is magical (see the Treasure Summary)

ENCOUNTER 3: ZOMBIES!

Continuing down the hallway, the corridor turns left and opens into a circular room at least twice the size of the room you initially entered.

A single torch lights the room's far end. Its flame provides just enough light to reveal a middle-aged man behind a line of zombies!

"KILL THE INTRUDERS! KILL THEM ALL MY GHOULISH ARMY! KILL THEM IN THE NAME OF KYUSS!"

The man then bolts through a dark archway leaving you to become food for his horde of living dead.

Zombies (6), CR 0.5; Medium Undead (6 ft. tall); HD 2d12; hp 10; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (-1 Dex, +2

natural); Atks: +2 melee (1d6+1, buffet); SA Partial Action; SQ Undead immunities, cold immunity; AL N; SV Fort 0, Ref -1, Will +3

Str 13, Dex 8, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 11

Feats: Toughness

Zombies are corpses reanimated through dark and sinister magic. These mindless automatons shamble about, doing the bidding of their creator without fear or hesitation. Drawn from their graves, half-decayed and partially consumed by worms, they wear the tattered remains of their burial clothes. A heavy, rank odor of death hangs heavy in the air around them.

SA: *Partial Action*—Zombies have poor reflexes and can perform only partial actions. Thus they can move or attack, but not both in the same round.

SQ: *Undead Immunity*—Immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralyzation, stunning, disease, and necromantic effects. Not subject to critical hits, sneak attacks, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to anything requiring a Fort save.

ENCOUNTER 4: PRIEST OF KYUSS

Having defeated (or bypassed) the zombies, you leave from the only other exit in this ancient room. The man that commanded the zombies fled this way just moments ago, and now you're on his trail.

You hear echoed whispers of an evil prayer being invoked ahead in the darkness. Even more eerie are the sounds of skeletal creatures advancing upon you in that same darkness.

The magical darkness only lasts for 3 rounds before its duration runs out. The cleric had cast when he heard the party members coming down the dried moat some time ago. The magical darkness is centered 20' inside the entrance of this room – for a 20' radius area of effect.

Skeleton (6): Medium Undead (6 ft.tall); HD 1d12; hp 6; Initiative +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atks +0/+0 melee (two claws 1d4); SA nil; SQ half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, cold immunity; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 11

Feats: Improved Initiative

Cleric of Kyuss, male human Clr5, CR 5; Medium Humanoid (5 ft. 11 in. tall); HD 5d8; hp 32 (+3 hp Toughness); Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30; AC: 12 (+2 Dex); Atks: +3 melee (1d6 (crit 20), mace); SA spells, death touch (see pg 162 in *Player's Handbook*; SQ cast evil spells at +1 caster level; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +9

Str 10, Dex 15, Con 9, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14

Skills: Knowledge (Religion) +8, Knowledge (Necromancy) +8, Profession (Herbalist) +8, Spellcraft +8, Diplomacy +1. Feats: Toughness, Iron Will, and Lightning Reflexes

Equipment: Death shroud clothing, gold ring, and a mace forged of cold steel.

Spells (5/4+/3+/2+): Note: Boldfaced spells have already been cast for the day. 0 lvl—**create water**, guidance, **mending x2**, **purify food and drink**, resistance; 1st lvl—**curse x2**, **curse water**, doom, cause fear (Death); 2nd lvl—**death knell**, **gentle repose**, desecrate (Evil); 3rd lvl—**animate dead x2**, **animate dead** (Death).

The cleric wears a ring of Kyuss. This ring is a common symbol among the clergy of Kyuss, allowing priests to be known immediately among each other.

The defeated man possesses a most odd gold ring. Its pattern is highly detailed, and has been seen by (GM pick two characters at the table). *You don't remember exactly who had identical rings like these, but you've seen them in Radigast City.*

All about this dark room are humanoid remains in varying stages of preparation for animation.

One area of the room is void of any dust. Characters may make a Track check (DC 15) to conclude that bodies are being magically transported to this area, and are dragged to the pit for reanimation.

The center of this circular room has a three-foot deep vat with a corpse in it. The vat is rimmed with the same type of strange runes that you found around the door to this ancient temple.

At the head of the vat are a few items on the floor that you would assume to be material components to perform such a gruesome ritual. These items include a vial of water (probably unholy), a vial of blood, a ceremonial dagger, and an old black book. The dagger has a dull blade of gold with a red silk woven handle.

The book, and the vial of unholy water radiate evil. Even if there is no character in the party to detect evil, let the characters know both of these items tempt the characters to finish what the evil cleric had started...

The characters should figure out that they need to destroy both the book and the unholy water.

Also in this room, but away from the animation pit, are a table with a rolled parchment, a bottle of ink, and a quill. Some foodstuffs and wine are also on the table.

A bed is near the table, and a corpse occupies one side. A depression in the bed's mattress would indicate this evil cleric slept along side of the remains he would eventually animate...

The scroll contains a journal of the cleric is partially written in Draconic. Characters with the Decipher Script skill can make a check at DC30 to be able to decipher the part of the journal written in an ancient script.

The following Draconic entries are detailed for any character able to read it:

"The first day of Goodmonth. Just as Durac had reported, a teleport spell has safely delivered me to a secret temple of Kyuss beneath the Zodal temple. The ignorant healers know nothing of our temple, upon which they built their structure."

"The third day of Goodmonth. I received more bodies and another score of zombies through Jar-Kantor's teleport anchor. I

believe I have more than enough bodies to finish the rituals that will bring unholy life back into these corpses."

"The tenth day of Goodmonth. The rituals for reanimation proceed slowly – yet a number of the living dead now populate this secret temple of Kyuss. The idiots above me in Zodal's temple don't even know I'm here."

"The sixteenth of Goodmonth (today). The chosen are now in place. Those in Radigast City only await my attack to go forward with our plans..."

ENCOUNTER 5: OUT OF THE FRYING PAN, AND INTO THE FIRE!

The moment the black book is handled, a clap of thunder splits the silence! In the thunder's echo, a low moaning sound is heard!

"THE BOOK! THE BOOK! WE MUST RECOVER THE BOOK..."

All the corpses that were to be animated begin to stir. There are about 40 corpses in this room alone. They also choke out the words of their evil deity!

"The book! The book! We must recover the book..."

These creatures are in the process of instant animation will get to their feet in three rounds. During the next two rounds, their movement is 10. Movement increases by 10 each round thereafter until their full speed of 30 is reached. Characters should realize the need to escape this tomb of the living dead!

The characters should escape with the book. The unholy water can simply be emptied.

Skeleton (10): Medium Undead (6 ft.tall); HD 1d12; hp 6; Initiative +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atks +0/+0 melee (two claws 1d4); SA nil; SQ half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, cold immunity; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2

Str 10, Dx 12, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 11
Feats: Improved Initiative

Zombies (30), CR 0.5; Medium Undead (6 ft. tall); HD 2d12; hp 10; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (-1 Dex, +2 natural); Atks: +2 melee (1d6+1, buffet); SA Partial Action; SQ Undead immunities, cold immunity; AL N; SV Fort 0, Ref -1, Will +3

Str 13, Dx 8, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 11
Feats: Toughness

SA: *Partial Action*—Zombies have poor reflexes and can perform only partial actions. Thus they can move or attack, but not both in the same round.

SQ: *Undead Immunity*—Immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralyzation, stunning, disease, and necromantic effects. Not subject to critical hits, sneak attacks, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to anything requiring a Fort save.

The characters will have to scramble up the moat walls. Two things should play into the excitement:

- 1) With the drenching rain, the once dried rocky walls are slick with mud. Let the character climb 10' up, then slide 5' back down, etc., etc. The hoardes of undead should be on their heels!
- 2) The moat walls once served the clerics of Kyuss as catacombs. Skeletal arms will reach out, and scores more of the Kyuss army will begin pulling themselves out from the walls. They will fall into the moat, and begin climbing for the party!

The characters will have to destroy the evil black book. Pouring holy water upon will vanquish the evil, but the book remains – seemingly unchanged. Give the impression nothing has happened to the book. In reality, the evil of the book has been rebuked. The book remains, but the evil is gone. Give the characters the impression that the book should have dissolved into nothingness – but it hasn't.

Some characters should begin raising the drawbridge. This is a very slow process accomplished by a single hand crank. The army of living dead will certainly be on the bridge before it can be raised. Allow characters with above average Strength and Constitution to make better-than-average speed.

ENCOUNTER 6: ETERNAL PEACE

The hand crank of the old drawbridge snaps under its sudden furious use.

The low groans of "THE BOOK! THE BOOK..." and the rush of rain fills your ears. The hoardes of living dead eventually stop their advance upon the temple. The evil of the book was apparently destroyed, because the zombies and skeletons begin to fall in their tracks.

The undead on the bridge begin to fall into the muddy moat. Others collapse where they stand. All about, the animated dead of Kyuss lose their magical essence – all except one... Still approaching the temple of Zodal a terrifying creature, a mummified corpse with dull green eyes!

It begins to shamle up to the drawbridge, then begins to walk over to get to you. It opens its mouth to reveal writhing green worms inside its jaws. Those same green worms infest its eye sockets.

Son of Kyuss, CR 5; Medium Undead (6 ft. tall); HD 4d12+3; hp 27; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (-1 Dex, +2

natural); Atks +6 melee (1d6+4, slam); SA 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: Hide +3, Jump +8, Move Silently +3, Spot +6.

Feats: Toughness

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

Fast Healing (Ex): A son heals 5 points of damage each round. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, a son collapses but continues to heal, 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).

Create Spawn (Su): 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 son created them.

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

Curative Transformation (Ex): 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.

CONCLUSION

Your wounds many, your spirits nearly broken, you take a deserved rest in the sacred halls of the Temple of Zodal. The merchants are healing nicely now that you have vanquished the growing evil.

Days pass, and the rains finally subside. In its wake, the rains have flooded the ruins of the ancient site of Kyuss. The moat is once again filled with water, but remains several feet below its normal water line.

As the merchants are making final preparation to depart, Beltha Yoro asks to see your fellowship in her private chambers. “Before you go, I want you to know the dangers that await you. I have spent the days trying to understand these writings that are the evil cleric’s journal.”

“Through prayerful spells, and careful concentration, I have uncovered a plot that the Clerics of Kyuss intend to control these lands. I could not learn their names, but some influential people in Urnst have already pledged themselves to Kyuss.”

“I must ask that you take the next step in this battle against Kyuss. This book must be delivered to Dennen

Astralstaff of the County's Wizards Guild. Dennen is the only one I trust, and he is currently away and won't be back for five months. Dennen is the liaison between our Wizards Guild and the Wizards Guilds of other kingdoms. Unfortunately, Dennen is currently abroad on business with neighboring nations."

"Please return in the month of Readyng, when Luna is full.

Dennen is expected back at that time. Hopefully, by then I will have made significant progress in translating these codes."

"Until then, adventurers, go forth and hone your skills. I foresee an active part in the struggles against Kyuss in your futures. Go now, and take with you the respect and gratitude of the Temple of Zodal. I'll see you in Readyng..."

With Beltha's foreboding precognition, you depart the Temple of Zodal. Ithon and Pelum Merryweather have recovered quickly after you've thwarted the Kyuss cleric's evil nest.

Upon reaching Brotton, Ithon offers to either pay you each 20 gold coins, or 30 gold worth of his merchandise.

THE END

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 1: Up and About

Discretionary role-playing 0-100 xp

Encounter 2: Into the Darkness

Defeating the Skeleton at drawbridge 10 xp

Defeating the Skeleton in trap 10 xp

Encounter 3: Zombies!

Defeating the Zombies 40 xp

Encounter 4: Priest of Kyuss

Defeating the Skeletons and Cleric 100 xp

Encounter 5: Out of the Frying Pan

Discretionary in character actions 0-40 xp

Encounter 6: Eternal Peace

Son of Kyuss 60 xp

Destroying the Evil Book 140 xp

Total Possible Experience: 500 xp

Treasury Summary

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

1. 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.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, 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.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than [insert campaign value] 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. 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 2:

+1 *Enchanted Longsword* (Value 2,315 gp, Weight 4 lb, Unusual): The edges of this blade gleam with a sharpness like no other. Its handle is wrapped in soft leather, and the pommel ends in the likeness of Oerth's two moons, Luna and Celene. These areas are somewhat hollowed out, as if stones or gems were meant to be inserted.

The full powers of this sword are beyond your ability to discover. Through adventuring, and your willingness to evolve this ancient weapon, its true nature will be revealed. Keep track of each time this weapon scores a hit on a die roll of a natural 20, and/or each time this weapon deals maximum damage. The GM must certify each occurrence on the grid below. Once a single character has been responsible for 20 such occurrences, the owner should contact the County of Urnst Triad, and the sword will reveal a new power (a new certificate will be issued). This represents a "bonding" with the weapon, and

requires an expenditure of 4 time units and 1,000 xp. Once bonded, the weapon cannot be traded.

If additional space is needed (as in the case of a traded weapon) use the back of this certificate.

Enchanted Longsword Bonding History

(20 lines of this)

Wielder: _____ Date _____ of _____ Perfect
Hit/Maximum Damage: _____ DM _____ Signature:
_____ DM RPGA#: _____

Encounter 4:

Ring of Kyuss (Value 125 gp): This gold ring is uniquely designed by artisans in service to Kyuss, an evil god of unknown origin who oversees the creation and mastery of undead. Any wearer of this style of ring will recognize another wearer as a worshipper of Kyuss. In cultic lore, those who wear the ring without true dedication to Kyuss are to be murdered painfully and fed to wild dogs. The ring is not magical.

Ceremonial Dagger (Value 100 gp): This dagger has a dull blade of gold with a woven handle of red silk.

Conclusion:

Coin Payment from merchants: 20 gp

Merchandise Payment from merchants: 30 gp

Influence Point: County of Urnst Clergy of Zodal: This Influence Point will be redeemable in future scenarios. The clergy of Zodal in the County of Urnst remembers what you did for them, and is willing to do you a favor in the future.

Zodal's Temple

