

KEO1-07

DEATH MARCH

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]

Keoland Regional Adventure

Version 1

by Joe Russell

Rumors of a disease have spread around Salinmoor leaving everyone on edge. With no way to escape your own demise, you leave on what may be your final journey to save yourselves from a horrible death. This adventure is for characters level 1-6.

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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 and half hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put 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 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.

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, Miale, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to join 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 Tier multiplied by 2 is the APL suitable for that encounter.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

A plague has begun to spread in Keoland. For the first two weeks the infected person looks and acts normal but is also highly contagious. Then the symptoms of the disease begin to show. The person gets severe alternating periods of fever sweats and chills, enters into a delirious state of mind, and vomits blood. The person can last up to a week in this stage of the disease before they succumb. Very few have the ability to survive the last week of the disease, but if they do they are immune to it there after.

The plague started in the Viscounty of Salinmoor. It first appeared in some of the outlying villagers and Bale Keep and then in Seaton. By the time anyone knew what was happening, the disease had started to spread to the other provinces of Keoland. Runners were sent out to the outlying settlements and provinces warning of the disease, but the plague got there before them. Southern parts of the duchy of Gradsul and the northeast section of the Hool Marsh Protectorate are showing signs of the plague. The word has spread throughout the land that a plague has come to Keoland and people have begun boarding themselves inside their holes or fleeing to the countryside to escape. The priests have been consulted but nothing seems to work. Something about the plague makes it resistant to magic.

Holphin, the nephew of Duke Cedrian III, arrived in Seaton about a week before the disease started on the behalf of his uncle to get Viscount Cronin Seconforth III promise to come to the Council of Lords this year. By the time Viscount Cronin realizes what is happening in Seaton, the plague has been ravaging the surrounding area for nearly a month (the first signs showing in the later half) and Seaton itself for about one week. Holphin sees the disease as an opportunity to further his own political career by organizing efforts to stop the plague from spreading even further.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs while in Gradsul have heard about a disease affecting the some of the outposts in the area.

Encounter 1: While the PCs are walking through the market area, a man is being stoned. At this time the PCs get infected with the plague, when (if) they go to help him. When a city watch squad questions them, the PCs are immediately quarantined away from everyone else.

Encounter 2: Later that afternoon, an official from the government stops by and tells them why they have been locked up and what will be required of them, namely to find a cure for this disease. They are sent to Seaton, the capital of Salinmoor, where the first signs of the disease appeared. The PCs are also going to be watched at a distance by a squad of archers and spell casters. They have orders to kill the PCs if they start to show the signs of the disease or if they try to go anywhere except the Hool Marsh.

Encounter 3: On the trip south from Gradsul towards Seaton, the PCs will come across several brigands on the road seeing the plague as an excellent time to relieve fleeing wealthy merchants of their belongings. Inadvertently the PCs might infect the brigands and/or the merchant they are saving.

Encounter 4: At the edge of Seaton, they meet with Holphin who has been organizing parties to try and find the cure for the disease. He sees the PCs as the perfect party to be sent into the marsh, as they might already have been infected.

Encounter 5: In the marsh, the PCs have to navigate the natural barriers and hazards, including any creature seeing the PCs as food. Eventually they will come across a cabin in the marsh and they will find a witch living there. Using glamour spells, Vituln looks like she did as a young woman. She gives some clues about the cure to the plague, and interacts freely with the PCs as she gave herself the antidote already.

Encounter 6: Vituln will lead the PCs deeper into the marsh the next day, but to a monster den instead of to the berries, and then flee.

Encounter 7: If and when the PCs come after her, she will taunt them, saying that the cure they seek will not help everyone. In exchange for her life, she will show the PCs the berries to cure them.

Encounter 8: Bale Keep will be the first place they come across on the way back to Seaton, where they will be stopped at the gates as the infected people are put outside of town in quarantined areas to try to control the disease. They will find out that word has been left that the Great Druidess Reynard Yargrove will be waiting for news of the disease at her place in the Dreadwood, and anyone finding the cure should seek her out through the elves.

Encounter 9: There, Reynard will realize that the berries will not be enough for those infected beyond the host. The PCs will need to find some green death moss and combine it with the juices from the berries to use in a broth that will aide the victims of the plague to recover. Reynard will tell them to go speak with the satyrs who live in the Dreadwood.

Encounter 10: After finding the Green Death Moss and negotiating with the satyrs, who know where to find the moss, the PCs return to Reynard. The druidess will use her magic on the berries to make them grow into full

size plants ready to be picked, there by ensuring they will be enough for everyone.

Conclusion: Holphin thanks the PCs for their service and spreads the word about how he organized the search for the cure of the plague, which seemed to have been caused by the witch, Vituln, from the Hool Marsh. (That is if the PCs survived and reported everything that happened to them in the marsh.)

Possible Outcomes:

- The PCs manage to get the berries from Vituln and the moss from the satyrs. With Reynard help, a cure is made and is distributed throughout the infected lands saving the PCs and everyone else.
- The PCs get the berries but fail to get the moss from the satyrs. Reynard has to send another group to bargain with the satyrs. In the mean time many more people have died of the plague possibly even some of the PCs.
- The PCs fail to get the berries from Vituln by one way or the other. By the time the cure is located, the death of thousands of Keoland citizens would be on their hands. Possibly even some of the PCs would have succumbed to the plague as well.

Gradsul – Seaton:	150 miles
Seaton – Bale Keep:	50 miles
Bale Keep – Marsh:	50 miles
Hool (round-trip):	80 miles
Marsh – Bale Keep:	50 miles
Bale Keep – Elf Meeting:	35 miles
Elf – Satyr (round-trip):	20 miles
Elf – Seaton:	60 miles

Total travel: 495 miles

To calculate how long it will take for the party to travel this distance, go to page 143 of the *Player's Handbook* and calculate based upon the slowest speed represented in the party.

INTRODUCTION

Allow the PCs to read the information about Gradsul before beginning the game. The PCs while in Gradsul have heard about a disease affecting the some of the outposts in the area. The PCs can either be traveling as a group or individually.

There is a noticeable chill in the air this day. The sky is clear and the breeze has a crisp feel to it. The streets of Gradsul are bustling this morning as people take advantage of the coolness before it once more is replaced by the heat and humidity that is so common in Keoland. Wagons roll by delivering their goods to various shops or heading down to the harbor before the ships leave with the morning tide. Children race between legs laughing, and hawkers call out their wares to anyone who will listen.

The beauty of the day seems to diminish the recent news from the southern regions of the kingdom. There have been

rumors of an illness inflicting the land about the Hool Marsh. Those who catch it are said to have died a gruesome death within three weeks of being infected. But Hool Marsh with its sinkholes, quicksand, and creatures are far away.

ENCOUNTER 1: BEVCARD

Seeking a reprieve from the noise and bustle, you head off to find quieter streets to travel to your destination, be it a tavern, your room, off to work, or just out for a walk. Only a few other people seem to be on this side street. Passing by a quaint little house, a mother is sweeping it out while a small child plays nearby with a small boat pretending to be a pirate. Laughter echoes down the street as it sounds like someone throwing a ball of some sort against a wall. It seems like a good day to enjoy oneself.

Have the PCs roll a listen check. (DC 12) The PC knows it is a stone being thrown and not a ball. (DC 15) It sounds like the stone is hitting something soft as well as a wall. (DC 18) The PC hears something whimpering in pain, as the stone hits them. (DC 20) It sounds like a man is crying out in pain as he is being stoned. The laughter sounds as the man is being hit, almost drowning him out.

Up ahead on the street the PCs will hear a commotion as a man is being stoned. Read the following to a PC that goes to investigate.

The sound seems to be coming from a block or two down the street. You rush forward to see what is actually going on. As you get nearer, you hear from the alley, "You really hit him good that time, Jolin. I think you might have killed him. Let's get out of here." The sound of someone running, echoes down the alleyway as you approach.

The boys will have a 60 ft lead. They will already run out the other end of the alleyway towards the busier streets, which are two blocks away. It will take the boys 2 rounds moving at a jog to get back onto the crowded streets. Once there, they will try to blend into the crowds, spot check (DC 30) to see them. Each block is about 100 feet long. Tracking will be impossible once on the busy streets. There are just too many people, horses, and wagons moving about. If a tracker would like to try the DC is 35.

If caught, they boy(s) will tell the truth that they were throwing stones at the man. They saw him resting in the alleyway and started throwing stones at him since he looked like a beggar.

Looking down the alley, you see a man dressed in slightly torn clothes curled up in a fetal position with numerous welts and cuts on him from being hit by the stones. The worse one appears to be a jagged cut on his forehead that is still bleeding. The other end of the alleyway opens up to another street. The man doesn't seem to be moving at all.

A successful Heal check (DC 15) will tell the PC that the man is merely unconscious, while DC 20 reveals that the man is also suffering from some sort of sickness, and DC

25 reveals that the man has a form of the plague. Also close examination of the man reveals black spots on his arms and back. Anyone performing the heal check, casting curative spells, or who merely come within 5 feet of the man will catch the disease. Only those that are immune to diseases will be unaffected. The boys are not infected as they were throwing stones from more than 5 feet away and never went closer to him. Read DM's Aide 1 for more information on the plague.

The man currently has 1 point more subdual damage than current hit points. A successful Heal check (DC 15), or any cure spell will bring him back to consciousness.

Bevcard: Male human, Com3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+6; hp 22 (-10 normal/-13 subdual); Init +1 (dex); Spd 30 ft; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10); Atks +3 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger); AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Craft (Woodworking) +10, Wilderness Lore + 8, Swim + 5, Ride + 5, Listen + 3; Alertness, Dodge, Skill Focus (craft-woodworking)

Possessions: traveler's clothes, belt pouch, dagger.

When the PCs are able to revive the man.

Opening his eyes but not really seeing you, the man pulls back away a bit, "Please don't hurt me anymore. I didn't do anything. Just let me be."

After the PCs try to console the man, and tell him that they were not the ones who were hitting him. The man will relax a bit and answer their questions.

"Thank you for helping me. I am Bevcard. I thought I was going to be killed and then my sweet Eilona would be all by herself."

What were you doing here in the alleyway?

"I was resting away from the crowds and noise. I must have fallen asleep, because the next thing I knew I was being hit with stones. One hit my head and after that I was powerless to stop them."

Who is Eilona?

"She is my wife. We live in a village in the northern part of Salinmoor. She became very sick and the local healer could do nothing, but try to keep her fever down. I decided to come to Gradsul in the hopes of finding someone or something that can help her."

How long have you been in Gradsul?

"I have only been here for a few hours. I arrived early this morning, walking in when the gates opened. I have been away from my sweet Eilona for almost four days now."

Where do you live?

"I live in a small village, no bigger than a hamlet, about four days walk south of here. My wife hasn't been the only one to get sick recently. Maybe four or five others are bed ridden as well."

Once the questioning has ended, a squad of the city watch will walk by the alleyway while the PCs are talking with Bevcard. The sergeant of the squad knows about the symptoms of the plague and is on guard for it.

The sounds of heavy shod feet moving in sync echoes down from the alley's entrance. Just walking past is a squad of five members of the local watch. One looks down the alley, and speaks. "Hold in the name of the watch! What is going on here?" The group starts walking warily down the alley.

The squad stops about ten feet away from the PCs and Bevcard while speaking. Ask interrogating questions, about the PCs presence, the condition of the man lying in the alley and such. After a few moments of speaking, the sergeant will notice the spots on the man's arm and recognize the plague, if the PCs do not mention anything sooner.

See DM's Aid 2 for the guardsmen's stats.

The sergeant takes a step back, forcing the other watch members back as well, while signaling them to point their halberds at your group. "You all are to stand and come with us. Failure to do so will result in your immediate deaths. Not that it will mean much in about three weeks."

If ask what they have done or such.

"That man has the plague, and now so do you. Gather up all your things and help him walk. You will be taken to a quarantine area until your fate has been decided."

The first time PCs try to do anything except comply.

"This is your first and only warning. There can be no exceptions. No potential carriers can be allowed to walk freely in Gradsul and spread it to the rest of the populace. Any further attempts to flee, or anything else except come with us will mean your death."

If mention about the ones who stoned the man.

"Magical scrying will be used to find them and bring them in."

Some PCs might decide that they will not comply and attack the squad or attempt to flee. One or more of the watch using the special code signaling for re-enforcements will blow the alert whistle. Three more similar squads will arrive in 2 rounds. Three rounds after that a squad will arrive, similar to the one that will be trailing the PCs on the mission to the south. Keep on repeating the last squad until all of the PCs die or surrender. The squads will also track any fleeing PC. The squads will accept surrender, but any PC that kills a watch member will be thrown into an isolation cell and will not be sent on the mission. Have that player score and leave the table. Their PC will either die from the plague or will be hanged for attacking and killing a member of the city watch. The watch will also attack from a distance, never attempting to enter combat. But those that are forced into melee will try to stay away from Bevcard. The guards will use subdual tactics, unless the PCs use lethal force, then they will respond in kind.

Surrounded by a ring of halberds, you are led through the less crowded streets of Gradsul. After about fifteen minutes you arrive at a large two-story building near the south edge of town. Several more of the watch stand guard outside of the building with archers placed at strategic points covering all of the openings.

You are escorted inside, through a maze of doors and passages, into a room with eight beds. In the corner sits a bucket and on a small table sits a pitcher of water and a cracked basin.

Two men walk down the corridor with a large chest and stop about ten feet away. The sergeant speaks up. "Deposit all of your weapons and spell components into the chest. They will be stored for now. If you survive the disease, they will be returned to you. If you die, they will be returned to your families so they can be buried in your remembrance. This order has been passed down from King Skotti. Your items will be safe."

Some PCs might balk at this. Tell that it is for their safety and the safety of those that also are in here. Detection spells and abilities will reveal that the sergeant is telling the truth. The guards will not hesitate to force the PCs to comply.

ENCOUNTER 2: DUNGRIL

Food will be brought by around noon. But beyond that no one else will stop by until Dungril arrives. If the PCs haven't had time to introduce themselves earlier, then do so now. Also let them contemplate their situation. Bevcard didn't know about the spots until it was brought to his attention. He will be upset that he will not be able to do anything to save his wife now.

After what seems like maybe six hours, two since you were fed lunch, footsteps can once again be heard outside of your door. "Stand away from the door", says a gruff voice. Moments later a key can be heard unlocking the door. It opens inward to reveal guards with pikes and swords standing out in the hallway. The captain speaks up again. "Come with us. Captain Dungril wants to speak with you. Hold your questions for him."

The guards do not answer questions along the way. If any PC refuses to come, then he will be left in the room.

You are once more led through the hallways of the building and outside. It is good to feel the cool breeze again after staying in the stuffy room. The sun looks like it will set in about three hours. You are led briskly to a house about fifty feet away and into a room with a large square table. Sitting at the far end is a man with thinning hair just starting to gray. He is wearing fine cloths and has a rapier leaning against his chair. Around his neck lays a large metal disk. Standing off to his right is a woman with long raven black hair with sharp angular features. A long black hooded robe covers her from head to toe. You are asked to sit at the close end of the table, more than twenty feet away from the man and the woman.

"Thank you sergeant. You may leave us now. I would like to talk to these individuals privately". The sergeant nods and leads the rest of his men out of the room; a look of relief is evident upon his face.

The PCs might start asking questions, Captain Dungril will let them rail for a bit before he interrupts them. If the PCs interrupt him after he starts speaking, he asks that they be patient and let him talk. Any PC that calls to the fact that he is a paladin, Dungril will acknowledge that they are safe but will make sure they feel guilty if they decline to help.

"Now you are all probably wondering what is going on. No doubt you have heard of the rumors that a plague has come to the southern part of the Kingdom. Well, its true and the man you helped today is obviously infected and will die in a matter of days. By coming in close contact with him, you were infected yourselves. Normally, individuals that are infected are kept in the quarantine house until they die, but you have the potential to aid in the search for the cure. I would send you into Salinmoor, which is deeply entrenched with the plague. As you are already infected, you make the perfect group to go. However I won't force you. You have a choice, either you can stay here and die from the plague, or you can aid in the search for the cure, and perhaps save yourselves. What say you?"

Yes, it is very much of a one-way answer, but Captain Dungril will need to hear their answer. He will not answer any other questions until all have answered. Any non-paladin that says they will not go will be escorted out of the room and left in the quarantine area. Any paladin that refuses to go immediately becomes an ex-paladin, and consequently, contracts the plague.

"Good. I knew you all would help. There are a few things we know about this disease. Most, who contract it, die within three weeks. It is highly contagious as it can be transmitted from host to host by close contact only after a day of being infected, and is highly resistant to any magic that tries to remove the disease. Now with that said, it is believed that there might be a natural antidote to the plague but first the cause must be found. You are to journey south to the town of Seaton in Salinmoor. There you will be met outside of the town and told where you are to travel next in your search. Return to Seaton with any information that you discover. Any questions?"

Captain Dungril will impart the following information to the PCs; he will decline to answer anything dealing with the robed woman.

- You will be meeting with Holphin Neheli or a representative of his.
- Mounts will be provided for your use on the trip, but they must be returned once completed.
- Payment includes food and mounts for the journey. Holphin Neheli will be the one to talk to about any other kind of compensation.
- The southwestern parts of Salinmoor have been infected for over a month now. Seaton itself has been infected for nearly two weeks. The northern parts of Salinmoor, and the surrounding lands have been showing signs of the plague for about a week now.

- It is not known at this point what started the plague. The first signs of the plague were seen all across the Viscounty about the same time. Among those first infected were many of the garrison guards from Bale Keep.
- The guards had been on leave for about two weeks when they first started to show signs of the infection. The guards that replaced them at Bale Keep also started to become sick about the same time.
- You may stop by Bale Keep, but most if not all, of the original guardsmen and their replacements are now dead. The guards that are now stationed there are under orders to avoid contacting all others.

Once the PCs have finished asking questions.

“Two last items of business. First, avoid contact with any individual that you encounter on your trip south. It would be unwise to infect a healthy individual. Second, your weapons, gear, horses and supplies will be waiting for you at the south entrance of Gradsul. You will be escorted to prevent any unintentional contact with the other citizens of the city. You have some hours of daylight left, so I suggest that you leave immediately. Good luck.”

With that the door to the room opens again, and you are once more escorted by a ring of guardsmen.

ENCOUNTER 3: IT BEGINS

The walk to the gate has not been a pleasant experience. The ring of halberds, keeping you away from the guards and the rest of the populace as well, draws attention. It did not help when the guards warned all to stay away as you had the plague. At first it was only insults and demeaning remarks being hurled your way. Then the rotten vegetables, mud, rocks, and other disgusting sludge were thrown as well.

The guards will only occasionally tell the rock throwers to stop, but ignore the rest. The guards don't care if the PCs hurl insults back at the crowd, but will attempt to disrupt spell-casting or other overtly aggressive actions taken by the PCs.

Finally you arrive at the southern gates, most of the crowd has been dispersed as the gate guards come to the aid of the six that walk with you. Pawing the ground nearby are the mounts that have been promised for your use along with a large chest and several other bags. One of the guards unlocks the chest and then steps back to allow you access.

Inside the chest are all of the PCs weapons. None have gone missing or have been damaged in any way. The bags contain anything the PCs have left behind in the cells, food and extra water for the trip. The PCs will have some time at the gate to check and make sure all of their items are there before they are herded outside.

Mounting up, you begin what may possibly be your last adventure. Only a few guardsmen and townspeople wish you good luck as you head out. The rolling tall grasses of the plains stretch out before you. To your left, the Azure Sea can be seen on the horizon.

The stats for the group that will be following the PCs are part of DM Aid 2. This group will warn, and if necessary, attack the PCs to keep them from straying from the trail heading south, or if they attempt to interact with any healthy individual. The only time they will not directly interfere is when the PCs help out the merchant, as long as they do not come within ten feet of him. The brigands on the other hand do not have the same stipulation. Any brigand that escapes will be hunted down and killed.

If the trailing group does attack the PCs, remember that, more than likely, they will be higher level than the PCs and will use tactics in their assault to make sure they kill them all. This includes attacking the PCs at night when they are sleeping or such.

They trail behind the PCs, though it is practically impossible for them to be spotted from the distance they keep. (See the Player's Handbook page 61 regarding practically impossible tasks.)

The first hours of your trip pass quickly and quietly. Only a few other people were traveling north on the road. But they went out of their way to avoid any kind of contact with you. They even refused to answer any hails.

The night will pass quietly. The wizard guard's owl familiar will fly over the PCs every once in a while as if hunting for field mice but to provide an extra set of eyes.

The dawn sparkles like diamonds across the thin white clouds the next day. The chill that was in the air yesterday morning once more caresses your skin in the light breeze, still carrying the scent of the ocean.

The next several days will pass uneventfully. There are about seven different groups of 2 - 7 people walking along the trail. They will try to avoid the PCs. Throw them in for flavor. One or two groups might shout back and forth at the PCs exchanging information. All they know is that Salinmoor and the land south of here is embroiled in the plague and they are fleeing. Remember if the PCs approach too close, then the group that is following them will take appropriate actions. In dealing with the PCs and those that they had come in close contact with.

It is shortly about midday on the third day of travel when from down the road and over the hill you hear shouting and the clash of metal on metal.

Just forty yards down the other slope, there is a man crouched behind a wagon with a loaded crossbow pointed at four armed men who approach menacingly. On the ground between the two groups are two men lying in a pool of blood.

Right now the PCs have not been seen by either group, if they come yelling down the hill the man will throw his

arms up in surrender and the attacking group will turn to face the new threat. The two men on the ground are the merchant's guards, which have died in the fight. The bandits are 30 feet from the merchant on the other side of the wagon when the PCs crest the hill.

APL 2 (EL 5)

➤**Talton:** Male human Ftr2; CR 2; Medium-size humanoid; HD 2d10+4; hp 20; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 18); Atks +6 melee (1d8+3/19-20, long sword); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0.

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

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Intimidate +2 Jump +9; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (long sword).

Possessions: large steel shield, long sword, +1 breastplate

➤**Jinh and Rebkin:** Male human War1 (2); CR ½; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d10+2; hp 12 each; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 16); Atks +5 melee (1d8+3/19-20, long sword); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0.

Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Intimidate +4, and Jump +7; Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (long sword)

Possessions: long sword, chain shirt, and large steel shield

➤**Aslo:** Male human Rog1; CR 1; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d6+1; hp 7 each; Init +7 (+3 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atks +1 melee (1d8+1/19-20, long sword), +3 range (1d8/x3, long bow); SA sneak attack +1d6; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1.

Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Climb +4, Disable Device +6, Hide +7, Innuendo +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Open Locks +4, Spot +5, Search +6, Tumble +7; Improved Initiative, Point Blank

Possessions: Long sword, leather armor, Longbow, and 20 arrows

APL 4 (EL 7)

➤**Talton:** Male human Ftr5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d10+10; hp 44; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 18); Atks +9 melee (1d8+5/19-20, long sword); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1.

Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Intimidate +4, Jump +8, Ride +8; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (long sword), Weapon Specialization (long sword). Possessions: large steel shield, long sword, +1 breastplate, light warhorse

➤**Jinh and Rebkin:** Male human War3 (2); CR ½; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d10+9; hp 28 each; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 16); Atks +7 melee (1d8+3/19-20, long sword); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1.

Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +9, Intimidate +8, and Jump +9; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (long sword)

Possessions: long sword, chain shirt, and large steel shield

➤**Aslo:** Male human Rog3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+3; hp 17 each; Init +7 (+3 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atks +3 melee (1d8+1/19-20, long sword); missile +5 (1d8/x3, longbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +2.

Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Climb +6, Disable Device +7, Hide +9, Innuendo +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +6, Spot +7, Search +8, Tumble +9; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

Possessions: long sword, leather armor, longbow, and masterwork lockpicks

APL 6 (EL 10)

➤**Talton:** Male human Ftr8; CR 8; Medium-size humanoid; HD 8d10+16; hp 68; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 18); Atks +13 melee (1d8+6/17-20, long sword); AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2.

Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Intimidate +7, Jump +9, Ride +12; Cleave, Improved Critical (long sword), Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (long sword), Weapon Specialization (long sword).

Possessions: large steel shield, long sword, +1 breastplate, heavy warhorse

➤**Jinh and Rebkin:** Male human War5 (2); CR ½; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d10+10; hp 44 each; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 16); Atks +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20, long sword); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1.

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

Skills and Feats: Climb +9, Intimidate +8, Jump +9, Move Silently +5 (+2); Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (long sword)

Possessions: long sword, chain mail shirt, and large steel shield

➤**Aslo:** Male human Rog6; CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 6d6+6; hp 34 each; Init +7 (+3 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atks +5 melee (1d8+1/19-20, long sword); +7 ranged

(1d8/x3, longbow); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ Uncanny dodge, evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +3.

Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Climb +9, Disable Device +10, Hide +12, Innuendo +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Open Locks +8, Spot +10, Search +11, Tumble +12; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot

Possessions: long sword, leather armor, longbow, and masterwork lockpicks

The PCs can, of course, elect to do nothing and watch to see what happens from the hillside. If the PCs do not interfere the merchant will give up after his shot misses. The bandits will give the merchant a good thrashing but leave him alive on the side of the road. They will take the wagon and horses southwest. The bandits will not spot the PCs unless they do something to call attention.

If all of the PCs happen to be killed by the bandits, then the guards following them will kill off the bandits and burn all of the bodies (PCs and bandits).

Once the PCs have either killed all of the bandits or run them off, the merchant, Fitun Lograse, will thank the PCs for their help. He will have the following information if asked. During the entire conversation Fitun will stay far away from the PCs, as he is afraid that they might be infected. Fitun really doesn't know much more beyond what is here.

- The plague is everywhere in Salinmoor. Almost every village, town and hamlet is infected.
- If a cure isn't found soon, Salinmoor is going to be an empty land.
- The guards of Viscount Cronin Seconforth III have been rounding up the sick into quarantined areas and anyone who might be infected.
- Seaton has closed itself off from the surrounding land. Anyone infected is sent out of the city to the camps.
- Anyone wanting to get inside of Seaton has to wait three weeks in isolation to make sure they are not infected.
- Holphin Neheli, nephew of Duke Cedrian II, has been organizing anyone able to scour the countryside for a possible cure. He's a credit to his family. If he wasn't here, I don't know if Seaton would have anyone left alive in it.
- The Viscount spent most of the initial weeks, after learning about the plague, in his rooms afraid to come in contact with anyone. He is sometimes seen, but still very much afraid to come near anyone. He has allowed Holphin to pick up the slack.
- Holphin Neheli has been in Seaton for a while. A little before the plague started to show in Salinmoor. Don't know why he's visiting his distant cousin though.
- Rumor - The servants of Iuz are the ones really behind the plague. They want Keoland to pay for their part in the war.

ENCOUNTER 4: SEATON

There is a number of small tent groupings spread out about a quarter mile from town. It is not so much as individual areas of tents but just a higher concentration in some areas than others. The tents nearly ring Seaton. The people in and near the tents will watch the PCs pass with nothing more than a glance unless the PCs stop and try to talk to some of the people. The people will warn the PCs to stay away unless they want to catch the plague as well. If they tell the people that they are all ready infected, the PCs will be welcomed to set up tents nearby, as they cannot enter Seaton itself. There are patrols circling through the tents as well, but they are mainly there to make sure that the peace is kept. Only when the PCs approach Seaton will they be stopped by the guards and questioned.

Cresting another small hill the sharp smell of the ocean assaults your nose as you catch sight of the towers of the keep. However, as you come over the hill, below you is a sight that you did not expect. Spread out on the plains before Seaton are hundreds, maybe thousands of tents. The soft cries of sorrow and pain are carried upon the ocean breeze. The road leads right through the sea of tents to the walls of Seaton.

As you move through the tents towards Seaton, various faces stare at you with the looks of sorrow, anger, and hopelessness. Children that can still move, run between the tents playing the last few games of their lives.

The PCs can stop and talk to the villagers. They will give the same information as the merchant gave, with some additional thoughts/rumors running through the tent town.

- It is a plot by the Scarlet Brotherhood to weaken the lands near the Westkeep so they can retake it and the lands near the Hool Marsh. They are planning to set up base operations in the area.
- The creatures of the Dreadwood and the Hool Marsh are the ones who started the plague. They have allied themselves with the Brotherhood.
- The servants of Iuz are the ones really behind the plague. They want Keoland to pay for their part in the war.
- It's a plot by the lords to gain greater control over the lower class citizens of Keoland.
- The Suel are trying to kill off anyone not of the blood in an attempt to make Keoland a "pure" land.
- The churches are trying to gain a foothold in Keoland by spreading this plague in hope that all of the sick and dying will turn to them for help.

The road leads right up to the closed off wall city of Seaton. Guards with long bows walk along the top of the walls with 6 heavily armed guards stationed at the gates below. As you come within fifty feet of the wall, the archers have notched their bows

and the guards below have readied their long spears. One of them speaks up, "Halt you are to come no closer. Seaton is closed to all outsiders. If you are infected, you can set up near the other tents."

Tell the guards about mission

"That may be true but again you may be lying. In any case you still may not enter Seaton."

Produce writ

"Put the paper down and back away," as the guard comes forward and retrieves the writ. He studies it for a moment before speaking again. "Stay right there, Holphin will be informed of your arrival."

The guards are relatively friendly but are wary because of the plague. They know that Holphin has been here for almost four weeks now. They like Holphin and what he is trying to do to save everyone from the plague. The Viscount has been nearly paralyzed from fear of the plague and has given Holphin the authority to help care for Seaton and its people in this time of trouble.

About ten minutes later the gates to Seaton swing open to reveal a well-dressed man standing behind the closed portcullis. "Sergeant please escort these fine individuals closer so that we may speak," the man says calling out. The same guard that spoke with you earlier asks you to follow him to the gates. When you are about 10 feet away, the young man calls out again, "that is quite far enough. We wouldn't want anything bad to happen here." You notice that the guards both on the crowd and up on the walls still have a cautious look towards the group.

"Now, to begin, I am Holphin Neheli, and you are the ones sent to help me find a cure for this destructive disease. It is unfortunate that you caught the plague, and it is my hope that the cure is found before you, the people of Seaton and the rest of Keoland die. I have the names of your party on the writ, but do not know to whom they belong, please introduce yourselves."

He waits for the PCs to introduce themselves before continuing.

"Well met all of you, but back to the business at hand. About three weeks ago, shortly before I was due to depart Seaton, it was noticed that many of the citizens of this town were dying of similar conditions. A quick investigation revealed that nearly a tenth of the populace had contracted some sort of disease. The town of Seaton was quickly closed to the outside and everyone was confined to their homes in hopes of stopping the spread. At the same time, runners were sent to the outlying villages to warn about the disease. What was found, was that the rest of the land had already been in the throws of the plague for some time now. Additional runners were sent to the Hool Marsh Protectorate, Dreadwood Preserve and to the Duchy of Gradsul to warn of the plague. Luckily it had only started to appear on the edges of those lands. But that does not mean it cannot spread farther. Three days ago it was determined that the plague started with guards returning from Bale Keep for a bit of rest and relaxation. The replacement personal had died within three weeks of their arrival. Additional re-enforcements have been sent to the Keep, as we cannot allow it to fall to the denizens of the swamp.

Several search teams have been sent out throughout the land to find the possible cause and cure for this plague. With this new information, I would like your group to find out what you can at Bale Keep and to search a section of the swamp. I will not blame you if you do not wish to venture into the Hool Marsh. If you wish you can spend your remaining days in the tents surrounding this town. So what say you?"

Assuming the PCs agree to help (not much choice otherwise), Holphin imparts the following information. Anything not covered is under investigation.

- I am here under the request of my uncle, Duke Cedrian III, to get my cousin, the Viscount, to come to the next Lord's Council.
- I arrived about a week before the plague broke out in Seaton. I was only planning on staying a little longer than a week.
- Viscount Cronin Seconforth III still runs the day-to-day business of Seaton but has given the search for the cure over to me. He is very busy.
- Currently about 1/3 of the populace shows the symptoms of the plague and it is expected to keep on growing.
- Three other search teams have been sent out to various parts of the swamp, so far none have returned. The last one was sent about six days ago.
- The Druidess Reynard Yargrove thinks the plague was started deliberately, and is awaiting any news that we might discover.
- Payment cannot be offered as the coffers are nearly spent in trying to combat the disease and keeping everyone fed. If you can find the cure, then a suitable reward might be able to be found.
- You can stay at tent town or off on your own, but Seaton is closed.
- The sergeant will have the map and writ upon your departure.

"Good luck on your search. I pray you find the answers that we need." With that, Holphin turns and walks away as the gates to Seaton are closed once more. The guards also wish you luck as you move away. The sergeant leaves you the map with the section of the Hool Marsh that you are to search highlighted.

All depending upon what time they arrive at Seaton, they can either camp here for the night or continue as far as they can for the rest of the day. If the PCs stay for the night, they can hear the same rumors as before. They will also notice several people moving around between the tents helping those near death more comfortable. Off to the southwest is a large pit where the dead are burned in hopes of stopping the spread of the plague.

ENCOUNTER 5: BALE KEEP

The main goal that the PCs need to accomplish is to talk to the blacksmith. The blacksmith survived the plague, and has information that will be helpful to them. The

guards will challenge the PCs as they approach, but if the writ is produced then they will answer the PCs questions. The PCs still will not be allowed to enter the Keep.

You turn from the ocean and start following the road down towards Bale Keep, which lies near the edge of the Hool Marsh. As the days pass, the rolling plains smooth out slightly and the air gets moister. The road and the surrounding area are nearly deserted, as it seems that you are the only travelers along this route. From time to time you see farms off in the distance, but nothing moving.

The air is getting thick from all of the moister and a light haze has settled over the land. Off in the distance, a dark shape slowly takes form. At first what appears as just a large square mass begins to exhibit distinct features as towers can be seen along the corners of the structure. As the light haze burns away under the rays of the sun, the keep can be clearly seen. Guards move around the top of the walls noting your arrival. When you are about 50 feet away from the keep, one of the guards speaks up. "Halt. What is your business at Bale Keep?"

If the PCs explain why they are here, and that they have a writ from Holphin to ask questions, then the guard will tell them to walk up to the gate and pass the writ through the now open view portal so it can be examined. These guards are on edge because of the plague and they know if they are attacked re-enforcements might not be able to be sent.

After a few moments, another voice can be heard on the other side of the gate. "This seems all in order. I am Captain Logronge. Unfortunately I cannot let you enter the keep, but I will try to answer any questions that you have."

Logronge knows the following items:

- His troops arrived about four weeks ago to a nearly empty and deserted keep. Only the blacksmith, Covret, was still living.
- No new cases of the plague has been seen in the keep as it is all new personal except for Dringil who is back on his feet and working again.
- They are under orders not to let anyone into the Keep to prevent any new outbreaks.
- So far the creatures from the marsh have not tried to attack the Keep, but he knows that the marsh has been active, more than normal. He feels it in his gut.
- The haze is a common occurrence because of the swamp.
- Nothing out of the ordinary has been found around the Keep. All of the old foodstuffs had been burned just in case.
- Hool Marsh is a dangerous place; your mounts can be quartered here.
- Lizardmen, ogres, troll and all sorts of nasty creatures live in the swamp.

Captain Logronge will get Covret to come and speak with the PCs if they ask.

About two minutes later you hear someone hobbling up to the gate and this time an older man with a pockmarked face appears. With a neutral look on his face, "Well I am told that you want to ask me some questions about what happened here. It wasn't pretty I can tell you that. Be a shame that you folks have to follow the same path as well. One of you could get lucky and live like me. So what is it that you want to know?"

- About two weeks after the old guards left, the new personnel at the Keep began to show signs of some kind of sickness all within days of each other.
- Symptoms included black spots appearing on the body, high fever but deathly cold skin, gangrenous extremities, delirium, blindness, large purplish swelling of hands and feet, tiny blister-like red marks covering the entire skin.
- The plague left him with the pock marked face, but a clubfoot causes his limp.
- Don't remember anything special happening, almost (smiles).
- She was a good looking woman about my age, saw her for the first time the day before the guard switch when the new guards showed up. She knew how to have a good time. Never saw her after that though. She must have left with the group going home. Never caught her name.
- She had long brown hair streaked with gray, failing onto a wiry frame. She has dark eyes that sparkled with life.

ENCOUNTER 6: HOOL MARSH

The PCs were instructed to do a sweeping pattern of their section of the Hool Marsh. The PCs were given a map back at Seaton. If they had forgotten about it or lost it, then just ask how they are going to search the swamp. Horses and other mounts are difficult, at best, to ride in the marsh. If a PC insists on riding his/her mount in the marsh, there is a 10% chance each hour of travel that it will get stuck, or bolt.

The land along the edge of the Hool Marsh is heavy with moisture and the stench of decaying matter. A few small mammals make the land here their home but insects and reptiles are the main residents. The cool breeze from the coastline is a faded memory here, but with the summer months behind you, it is not as bad as it could be.

From all around, you can feel eyes watching your movements, but whenever you stop to look to see what is there, you find nothing. It is almost like the predators of the land are waiting for you to make a mistake before they close in for the kill.

After many miles of travel, you come to the spot indicated on the map as your entrance point into the marsh. The semi-moist land and dense vegetation await you only a few feet away. Remembering the dangers that await the unwary traveler in the wetlands, you proceed slowly in hopes of finding the cure.

The minutes slip into hours, and hours into days as you tread mile after mile in the relentless marsh. Although it is

teaming with life, the insect's constant biting and hovering around you is distracting. Only through vigilance have you avoided the quicksand pits, the nearly bottomless pools of water and muck, and the other natural dangers inherent in the marsh.

The next part is the house of Vituln. It is found near the Hool River about forty-five miles into the marsh. More than likely during the fifth day of travel since leaving Bale Keep, the PCs will come across Vituln about noon. That is if the PCs went along the river, but if the PCs took the other part of the loop the distance is 75 miles to Vituln. Adjust the box text as needed.

Have the PCs make a Spot check (DC 15), to notice Vituln's hut. If someone makes the check read the following, otherwise, about five minutes later Vituln appears further up the river edge cleaning some clothes. She will invite the PCs back to the hut for some refreshments and inquire about their business. Vituln knows the PCs are here and is currently under the effect of an *alter self* spell in order to look like a young maid named Nulti. She will be discreet about recasting the spell if necessary.

It is a little after midmorning as you spot something off to the west of the river. Through the trees, a steady stream of smoke seems to be rising up into the air. Looking a little closer, barely noticeable through the trees is a small moss hut, hidden in the reeds.

As you get closer to the hut, you can hear a woman's voice softly singing inside. A moment later, a young woman steps out of the house with a basket in her hands. After five paces she stops and looks over in your direction. <pause> She drops her basket and grips her knife, as her gaze intensifies. "Who are you? And what do you want with Nulti, Daughter of the Mists?"

Vituln suspects why the PCs have shown up in her land, but waits to hear it for herself. She is polite as long as the PCs are polite. If the PCs become rude or obnoxious, she will ask them to leave as she has a pet nearby that is very hungry.

Assuming the PCs are not rude, she will offer them something to drink and eat once the introductions are done and the PCs have indicated their good intentions.

Have you lived here long?

I have lived here for almost 5 years now. Yes know it is deadly, but there is a hidden beauty to this place that I just cannot leave.

How have you been able to live in this place?

I have ways of surviving this land.

What kind of dangers can we expect?

There are all of sorts of creatures that live here that would love to attack and eat the unwary. Not only animals, but also some plants as well.

Are there any poisons or diseases that are common?

Poisons and diseases exist throughout these wetlands. After a time you acquire a certain knack to what to avoid and what to take if you are indeed sick.

Don't come any closer we are infected with the plague.

That is nasty stuff indeed. My old village was hit by a plague when I was very young. I barely survived it. The scars took a long time to heal. Here let me check you out. Don't worry I can't catch it again. (Picks one of the PCs and checks them out). *You do not seem to be showing any external signs of the plague, but yet I can tell something has infected you. Can you tell me some of the symptoms?*

Describes the symptoms

Hmm, this is most unusual. It seems to be familiar for some reason.

Familiar, how?

Well ... I have seen these symptoms before. Not in humans of course, but in some of the animals in the marsh. I was curious about the deaths and I eventually traced them to a plant deep in the marsh. It is a large leafed plant standing about two feet tall with small black berries tucked down near the base. I saw animals that only eat the leaf of the plant die a few weeks later with the same marks upon them.

Is there a cure?

The funny thing is, I saw some other animals eat the leaves of the plant and the berries at the same time. Those animals never died because of the poisons in the leaves. The berries must contain some anti-toxin within them. From what I could figure out, in order for new plants to grow the berries and the juices from the leaves need to mix together so the hard shell core can be cracked and the seedling fall where it may.

Do you know where we can find some?

I do know where some of the plants are located. I can take you to them. You would not be able to find them without my help.

At this point, the PCs should have little questions left. If Vituln is asked why she lives in the marsh, she will simply state that she prefers the company of the marsh and will not speak any further about it.

ENCOUNTER 6A: BALANCING SCALES

Vituln will lead the PCs deeper into the swamp towards where the Black Weed plant can be found, but the plants are located deep within the Black Skull lizardmen territory. A scouting party for the lizardmen will come across and attack the party once Vituln leaves. Vituln will let someone take point and simply guide the party.

Gathering a sturdy walking staff, Nulti joins your group in search of the plant and it's berries. With her guidance, Vituln leads you away from the river and deeper into the marsh. She points out various natural hazards along the way, including one choker vine only twenty feet away.

After about an hour of travel, Nulti stops the group, "We are near where I last saw some of the plants. I suggest we spread out and look around."

If the PCs accept this proposal, Vituln will start moving away from the rest of the party searching for the plant. Her search will carry her behind some trees, just as the lizardmen start their attack.

Finding the plant requires a Search check (DC 18) or a successful Spot check (DC 20). The lizardmen are hiding in some nearby pools waiting for the PCs to spread out far enough so they can take them down one at a time. The lizardmen know Vituln and will not attack her. Vituln will leave the PCs to their fate and head back to her hut. She will not restore the *alter self* spell at this time.

Jumping out of small pools nearby, scaley humanoid shaped creatures with long tails wielding weapons attack!

APL 2 (EL 5)

🐉 **Lizardfolk (4):** hp 11 each; see *Monster Manual* page 128.

🐉 **Lizardfolk, Drd1:** CR 2; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +5 (+1 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +1 melee (1d6+1, club) or +1 melee (1d4+1, claws) and -1 melee (1d4, bite); SQ: Nature sense; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +4

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

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Concentration +5, Heal +6, Jump +4, Knowledge (nature) +4, Swim +9, and Wilderness Lore +6; Improved Initiative, Multiattack

Spells (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th - cure minor wounds, mending, know direction; 1st - entangle, faerie fire.

Possessions: great club

APL 4 (EL 7)

🐉 **Lizardfolk, Ftr2 (4):** CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 2d8 + 2d10+4; hp 24; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 10, flat-footed 15); Atks +5 melee (1d10+1, great club) or +4 melee (1d4+1, claws) and +2 melee (1d4, bite), +3 ranged (1d6+1, javelin); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0.

Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Jump +9, and Swim +11; Multiattack, Power attack, Weapon Focus (great club)

Possessions: great club, javelin (2)

🐉 **Lizardfolk, Drd3:** CR 4; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; Init +5 (+1 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +3 melee (1d6+1, club) or +3 melee (1d4+1, claws) and +1 melee (1d4, bite); SQ: Nature sense, woodland stride, trackless step; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5.

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

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Concentration +7, Heal +8, Jump +4, Knowledge (nature) +6, Swim +11, and Wilderness Lore +8; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Multiattack

Languages: Common, Draconic, Druidic

Spells (4/3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th - cure minor wounds, know direction, light, mending; 1st - entangle, faerie fire, goodberry; 2nd - charm person or animal, speak with animals.

Possessions: great club

APL 6 (EL 9)

🐉 **Lizardfolk, Ftr4 (4):** CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 2d8 + 2d10+4; hp 38; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 10, flat-footed 15); Atks +8 melee (1d10+3, great club) or +7 melee (1d4+1, claws) and +5 melee (1d4, bite), +5 ranged (1d6+1, javelin); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1.

Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Jump +11, and Swim +13; Cleave, Multiattack, Power attack, Weapon Focus (great club), Weapon Specialization (great club)

Possessions: great club, javelin (2)

🐉 **Lizardfolk, Drd5:** CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 7d8+7; hp 38; Init +5 (+1 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +5 melee (1d6+1, club) or +5 melee (1d4+1, claws) and +3 melee (1d4, bite); SQ: Nature sense, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape 1/day; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +6.

Str 12, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 10

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Concentration +9, Heal +10, Jump +4, Knowledge (nature) +8, Swim +13, and Wilderness Lore +10; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Multiattack

Languages: Common, Draconic, Druidic

Spells (5/4/3/1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th - cure minor wounds, flare, know direction, light, mending; 1st - entangle, faerie fire, goodberry, shillelagh; 2nd - charm person or animal, flame blade, speak with animals; 3rd - summon nature's ally III.

Possessions: great club

ENCOUNTER 7: ALMOST CURED

If the PCs survive the encounter with the lizardfolk, they will be able to find the plants if they had not already. Of course the PCs could always assume that Vituln was lying and head back immediately without finding anything.

Any PCs that are killed or knocked unconscious will be taken back to the lizardfolk's camp once the combat is over. They will be eaten as dinner.

If the PCs search for Vituln after the battle, they will not find her in the area. From here, the PCs can just leave the marsh or try to head back to her hut.

If the PCs head back to Vituln's hut, they need to make a successful Wilderness Lore (track) check (DC 8) to find the way.

Finally you find yourself back at Nulti's hut by the river. As you approach you see an older woman sitting by a fire in front of the hut. She seems a little surprised at your arrival. The woman's

long brown hair is laced with gray. She pulls her cloak around her thin frame as she faces you. "Yes? Can I help you?"

Vituln is lying most of the time while talking to the PCs in the attempt to throw them off of her trail. An intelligence check, DC 15, by the PCs will realize that Vituln looks like the woman describe by Covret. Vituln will detect as evil if the PCs try at this point.

Who are you?
I am Vituln. I live here.

Do you know Nulti?
No, I do not know who she is.

Where were you an hour ago? (Etc)
Off collecting some wood for the fires and food for dinner, why?

There was a young woman here earlier. (Etc)
Oh dear, someone was here? This is horrible; I hope she didn't take anything. I wonder why she was here.

Have you ever been to Bale Keep?
I have not been there for several years. The last time I was there it was obvious that no one wanted me around, so I have lived here ever since. I never leave this land.

Do you know Covert?
There was a man named Covert that I knew once. We had a good time while it lasted, but that was in the past. Why do you ask?

He saw you at Bale Keep.
Don't know why, maybe it was because of the plague.

What do you know of the plague?
Oh, it's a horrible disease that kills a lot of people. Is there a plague affecting the land again?

The PCs, by this point, should have some reservations about Vituln and what she is telling the PCs. She will try to confuse and deny any knowledge that she knows that a plague is affecting the outside land.

If combat ensues, Vituln will attempt to use her magic to escape, but if it looks like the PCs have her cornered, Vituln will try to bargain with them. In exchange for her life, she will tell the PCs how she started the disease and that the berries of the plant will help cure the plague. Vituln does not know that the berries will not cure anyone infected by the airborne strain. All she wanted was to take revenge upon the ills visited upon her. With her plans ruined and no other foreseeable recourse left to her, she just wants to live out the rest of her life in the swamp. If the PCs try to take her in, she will fight to escape or die trying.

(See DM Aid 3 for Vituln's statistics)

ENCOUNTER 8: GROVE INTENTIONS

If the PCs managed to get the berries from the Black Weed plant, the cure is almost complete. The travel back to the Bale Keep on the way to Seaton is uneventful. When the PCs return to Bale Keep they find a message from the elves to meet them at a grove in the Dreadwood about the plague.

The steamy hot marsh, with all of its troubles, is behind you. A possible end to the plague is in sight. With the berries collected, the healers can hopefully use them to heal the plague victims.

Finally, on the horizon looms Bale Keep, the first vestige of civilization in this harsh land. As you get closer, the guards on the walls notice your return and shout a welcome. A man comes out of the keep and walks towards you leading the mounts that you had left here.

"See you made it to the Hool and back again. Did you find what you were looking for?" Covert shouts as he approaches.

Covert will engage in small talk about what happened before handing over a message that the Keep had received from an elven Dreadwalker the day before (PCs Handout 2). Covert does not know what the message says.

The message given the PCs is from the druidess Reynard, but she used the elves as an intermediary. The PCs will meet the elves at the grove. The elf Yeran is actually the druidess using her thousand faces ability. Yeran will tell the PCs where to find the last part of the cure and then bring both parts back here. Reynard has been watching the PCs almost from the beginning, using the animals of the land. She will watch them enter the Dreadwood as a crow and follow them to the grove. She will then go to the hidden group of Dreadwalkers, and meet up with the PCs. This tactic enables her to get a good feel on the way the PCs think and act and plan her next request accordingly. A successful Intuit Direction check (DC 15), will keep the PCs moving due north. For every point below 15 that the check is missed, have them end up 1 mile to the west.

With unanswered questions, you head north to find out what this Yeran has to tell you. The first time you left Bale Keep, you headed towards the Hool Marsh and now you go towards the Dreadwood Forest. This quest certainly has not led you to some of the more hospitable places in Keoland.

The journey north over the rolling plains has been quite relaxing. The miles quickly pass by and eventually you arrive at the edge of the Dreadwood.

Assuming the PCs are on track, they must make a successful Spot check (DC 15) to notice a game trail heading into the woods nearby. The trail will lead directly to the grove. Otherwise, the PCs will have to rely on their previous Intuit Direction check in order to find the grove. If they are off, it is possible to lose a day of travel

while getting back on track. Lost or not, without the game trail, travel through the forest is at half speed. You may want to have Yeran give them a hand, if they become lost.

After a couple hours of travel through the Dreadwood, you come upon a small clearing. It is about twenty-five feet in diameter, and relatively free of debris and undergrowth. In the center is a small fire pit designed to keep its light hidden. There are no other markings about this place to designate its purpose.

"Ah, I am glad that you could make it." You hear a female voice say from outside of the grove. In step several elves dressed in forest garb with a female elf bearing the symbol of the Dreadwalkers. "Please sit and rest. I know that your journey so far has not been an easy one. I am Yeran." Yeran motions to the other elves that came with her to watch the surrounding woods.

Yeran will address each PC by their name when answering any questions. If the PCs wonder how she knows so much about them, she will say that the trees have many ears. Yeran does not say who her mistress is, except for a woman of great influence in the land. Yeran will also be able to tell if any of the PCs have been infected with the plague. If any PC looks too weak and weary, she will tell them that they can stay at the campsite while the others fetch the moss.

"Now I am sure you are wondering why you have been asked to come here instead of heading back to Seaton directly. My mistress has watched the progress of the search parties closely for any hint of the cause. Yours is the only one that has found one. The knowledge that you gleaned from the witch woman has led my mistress to find what is needed to complete the cure. There is one last plant that is needed. In your language, it is called the Green Death moss. Normally it is deadly to anyone that eats it, but in this case properly combined with the berries that you recovered, it will only kill of the disease causing the plague and not the host.

Anyone with the Heal skill can make a check (DC 20), to know that what Yeran is telling the PCs is true. A successful Heal check (DC 30), will enable the PC to figure out the proper mixture on their own.

"There is a patch of the moss not far from here, but it is under the protection of some mischievous creatures called satyrs. We could recover the moss ourselves but my mistress thinks this would be a good test of your character. If you are able to obtain the moss in a peaceful manner, you shall be rewarded with a special gift. You can refuse and just stay here while we retrieve the moss. In either case, we will meet back here so that the cure can be properly fashioned. Decide."

What is the reward?
"A gift from the forest."

How do we get there?

Yeran motions to the woods and a glowing ball of light about one foot in diameter comes floating out. "My mistress' friend here will guide you to the glade and guide you back once you are done."

Reynard has befriended a squirrel who guides the PCs. It will not stray from its task, but at the same time it will play with the PCs along the way.

Are not the berries enough to cure the plague?

"If you had consumed the plant's leaves yourselves, yes, but it changes inside a persons body and therefore the cure changes.

Can the plague harm animals?

"Maybe, if it stays alive long enough, it can change even more to affect more than just humans. It would be difficult to stop at that point."

What is stopping us from holding onto the berries until we get paid more money?

"Now that my mistress knows what caused the disease, she knows what plants to search for the cure. The berries you hold will quicken the spread of the cure, but you can not stop it."

ENCOUNTER 9: SATYR'S SONG

Following the squirrel, the PCs will be led to the Satyr's grove. Inside the grove, the PCs will have to win the Death Moss. The squirrel is very playful and sees the PCs as its new playmates for the trip. If there is time left in the slot, you can play this up. The satyrs will not be alarmed by the PCs approach as the druidess Reynard had told them. In order to get the moss, every PC will need to tell a good story, sing a song, or participate in some kind of performance. The satyrs will not give the PCs any names. They might have agreed to give over the moss, but they still do not trust non-fey creatures. Not that they trust fey creatures all that much either. This form of the plague cannot infect the satyrs, so they take no type of precautions.

The playful squirrel finally arrives at another glade in the Dreadwood. A small stream ripples over rocks and roots as five two-legged, cloven-hoofed creatures with fur covering their body and small horns on their heads dance around singing. As you break through the tree line, they all stop and watch you. One of them strides forward. "Who are you and what are you doing in our home?"

The satyrs will act skittish and dance around the trees near the party. Have the satyrs ask all sorts of questions about the PCs. All the while the satyrs will be moving around the party and when they think someone is distracted will attempt to play a joke on them. It could be just tapping on them the shoulder from out of nowhere, to putting some stinkweed on the PC, to anything that you can come up with. If the PCs act particularly hostile to the satyrs, they will flee into the woods and hide. To find a patch of the Green Death Moss without help requires a successful Search check (DC 25), about a half-mile from the glade to the north. If the PCs play along with the games, or don't act hostile to the satyrs then continue with the following.

"Nothing in this world is free. If you want the moss than you have to pay for it. Each of you must sing a song, dance a jig, play an instrument, or tell a story. If we like them, then the moss is yours." The rest of the satyrs sit back against trees to watch you fulfill your part of the bargain.

No matter how good or bad the PCs do, the satyrs will eventually hand over the moss that is needed. To get a good reaction from the satyrs a PC need to make a performance check, DC 15, anything below that the satyrs will ridicule and tease the PC. The better the performance, the better the reaction. Once the last act is completed. Encourage the players to roleplay through this performance if they are so inclined.

"You have certainly put mirth into our hearts, although that might not have been your intent. But none-the-less you have paid the price, so here is the moss that you are looking for." A tall satyr pulls a sack out from behind a tree. Inside the sack are carefully cut pieces of green moss that could be replanted without much trouble.

"Now, I would follow that curious squirrel back, if you don't want to become lost in the forest." The satyr says pointing to the squirrel, sitting on a tree branch, while the piper begins playing again starting a new round of dancing.

♣ **Satyrs (5):** hp 22 each; see *Monster Manual* page 160.

ENCOUNTER 10: NEW LIFE

With the berries and the moss, the PCs now have both parts of the cure. The elf Yeran (Druidess Reynard) will show the PCs how to use the berries and the moss to make the cure. She will keep some of the berries and moss to grow more of the cure to help the rest of the region. She will not reveal who she really is to the PCs. Only Yeran is in the campsite, the other elves are hidden among the trees on sentry duty, though a successful Spot check (DC 32) will locate them.

The squirrel continued playing the same games on the way back to the elves as it did on the way over to the satyrs. It played hide-and-seek behind the trees, darting between legs, and other childish games. Eventually you arrive back at the elven campsite and are greeted by Yeran who stands as you approach. "Welcome back, were you able to obtain the moss? Please tell me about it." She says motioning to sit once more.

The squirrel is up in the trees right behind the PCs. It will chitter madly if the PCs tell an outright lie or chirp, if they skirt the truth. Yeran will ask more probing questions until she finds out the truth of what happened. If the PCs got the moss by playing along with the satyrs but tell bold-faced lies about what happened, they do not receive the Darkwood scimitar, nor will they get the scimitar if they threatened the satyrs and had the satyrs give over the moss by force or had to search for it by themselves.

"You have done well, as I said before you shall receive a gift in return for getting the moss. If you hand over the moss and the berries, my mistress will get started on the cure. It shall take but a day for the first batch to be ready. You can take the batch back with you to Seaton, after taking the cure to heal yourselves of course."

As you get the berries and moss ready to be handed over, Yeran reaches behind her and pulls out a scimitar that appears to be shaped from a dark stained wood and lays it on the ground in the middle of the campsite. "It may look fragile, but looks are deceiving. It is made from a very special wood found deep in the Dreadwood. Take good care of it and it will take good care of you."

Picking up the berries and the bag of moss, Yeran heads out of the campsite. "You need not worry about danger this night, for you will be guarded by some of the defenders of Dreadwood. Sleep well and see you in the morning." With that Yeran slips out in the forest and you soon lose sight of her.

Yeran is true to her word, not a single creature disturbed your sleep that night. About midmorning, Yeran enters the campsite quietly and effortlessly bringing a ceramic jug with her. "Here is the fruit of your labors. Only a small quaff of the syrup is needed to combat the plague. It will take about a day for it to work. After that the victims will begin to recover. Your path out of the Dreadwood will be guarded so you shall not fear an attack in the woods. More of the cure will be sent when it is ready. Good Journeys." With that Yeran leaves the campsite again and is almost immediately gone from sight again.

Yeran will also suggest the PCs to partake of the cure even if they have not been infected. It will help prevent them from catching the plague. (The syrup gives a non-infected individual a +10 circumstance bonus to resist the initial incubation. This bonus will last for one month.)

CONCLUSION

All cured, the PCs return to Seaton with the cure. Holphin will see that it is distributed fairly among the masses and send the recipe to the rest of the region. He will also see that the cures are safely taken from the Dreadwood. The jug contains enough syrup to heal about 200 individuals. There is nothing to stop the PCs from distributing the cure to any of the victims that they see along the way. But if they are not careful about healing the people, then they soon will be swamped by hordes of individuals seeking the cure. The Druidess Reynard sent a message to Seaton stating the cure was on its way. Holphin has sent out an armed escort to find the PCs and to make sure they get to Seaton in one piece.

Your hidden guardians most have done their job, as you were unmolested in your trip out of the Dreadwood. A bright sunny, warm day greets you as you exit the Dreadwood. A faint breeze rolls over the tall grass bringing freshness to the air.

The journey back to Seaton brings past several deserted homesteads bearing weeks of growth and neglect. The closer you get to Seaton, the more abandoned farms and mills you pass along the way.

After almost three score miles of travel from the meeting with Yeran, you finally catch a small hint of salt air on the breeze as you crest a small hill. On the other side, probably 5 miles away or so, you can see Seaton. The seaport looks like it is being swallowed by a dark growth, black mark on the green land, as the makeshift tent city extends for nearly a mile around the city.

Coming towards you from the disease-infested city, there appears some thing or some things heading your way. When they are close enough to distinguish, it is a group of ten soldiers flying the colors of Seaton and Holphin Neheli. Eventually they pull up about fifty feet away from the group. The sergeant moves forward, "Word has been received that you are returning with good news and the viscount sent us to be your escort into the city. Come, let us not keep the viscount waiting."

The soldiers will form up ranks around the PCs, three in front and rear and two on each side. The soldiers are friendly enough and will tell the PCs about the ever increasing tent city population and the increasing death toll. The soldiers sent to escort the PCs have already been infected, and being sent out on this escort duty is better than trying to keep peace in the tent city or burying the dead.

The trip through the tent city is just as you remembered before, people lying where they fell, mournful cries filling the air, and a few brave souls trying to help those so badly infected that they can barely move. Death carts move through the tents collecting the dead, and others taking notes on paper.

Your escort guides you almost right up to the gate, as a warning shout is called out by one of the soldiers on the parapet. When the sergeant announces you, you are told to head to the sally gate on the coast side of the city wall. When you arrive, you are immediately admitted inside and a waiting page escorts you to a nearby office. Inside you see Holphin Neheli, the man who sent you out on this mission, and an older, well-dressed gentleman sitting down at a table.

During the conversation, the PCs will probably try to cut in several times with questions or comments. Holphin knew the PCs were arriving soon as he received word by carry pigeon of the PCs success. He will be sending out more parties to collect more of the cure as it is finished. The cure will be sent to the other regions in equal shares. The Viscount Cronin is still very much alive and running Seaton. None of these statements are lies, nor the fact that the cure will be going to the worst cases first.

Holphin stands, "Ah, you have returned and with the cure no less. This is a good day for all. The citizens of Seaton of the Viscounty and beyond have much to thank you for. If you just give the jug to Viscount Cronin's aide we can see about the first batch being given to those that are worst off."

The gentleman will thank the PCs as he takes the jug and heads outside leaving them alone with Holphin.

"There was some doubt that a cure could ever be found in time, but you succeeded. Unfortunately most of the coffers have been drained in tending the sick that are now camped outside of Seaton. We have lost many skilled craftsmen to the plague and skilled individuals are needed to help fill the spaces. The normal

gold fee will be waived if any of you are skilled enough and willing to join the ranks of craftsmen and professionals in Seaton. The only other thing that I can offer you is my personal thanks and perhaps one day I can do something to help you." With that Holphin Neheli stands and shakes the hand of every PC and heads of the office.

Later that day cheers of joy can be heard from both inside and outside of Seaton praising Holphin for organizing the search parties for the cure and the PCs for finding it.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary role-playing experience award. The role-playing award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different role-playing amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus role-playing) to each character.

Encounter 3	
Defend the merchant	125 xp
Encounter 6A	
Defeat lizardmen	125 xp
Encounter 7	
Defeat Vituln and retrieve berries	50 xp
Encounter 9	
Retrieve moss through bargain	10 xp
Total experience for objectives	310 xp
Discretionary role-playing award	0-50 xp
Total possible experience	360 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:

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 50 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. 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 that it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter 3

- +1 Breastplate (value 1350gp, weight 30 lbs, frequency common)
- 100 gp

Encounter 10

- Darkwood Scimitar (value 40 gp, weight 4 lbs, frequency common): This beautifully carved art piece is fine for decoration, or perhaps even as an impromptu club (Damage 1d4).

Conclusion

- Guild Membership -As Seaton lost some of its working population to the plague, there are some opportunities available for the PCs to pick up the slack. If a PC has 4 or more ranks in a craft skill, then they can become an apprentice to work in that shop. If the PC has 11 or more ranks, then they can become a journeyman worker in the shop. If the PC has 18 or more ranks in a craft or profession, then they can become a master in the shop.
- Influence point – Holphin Neheli

The Black Death Plague

The plague was started by the witch, Vituln, in retaliation for years of insults, hatred, mistrust, and forced exile. Finding an opportunity to lash out at the world that left her to rot in the Hool Marsh, she introduced a deadly plant pulp into the meals of the Bale Keep garrison. The following day the current garrison guards, being replaced by fresh troops, returned to their homes throughout Salinmoor carrying the disease with them. From there it quickly spread throughout the rest of the Viscounty.

Effects of the plague: Incubation period 2 weeks, during which the host is a carrier after the first day. To avoid contracting the disease initially and avoid becoming a carrier, the infected person must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 28). Starting the third week, the host will need to make Fortitude saves every day (DC 20). If the check is successful, only 1 point of Constitution is lost, while on a failed check, 2 points of constitution are lost. Five successful checks need to be made in order to survive the disease. If a host is able to make five successful checks, then he/she begins to recover 1 point of constitution per day of bed rest. While a person is being ravaged by the plague during the third week, he finds it hard to keep any food or water down. Successful Fortitude checks (DC 18) to eat or drink, or the victim also begins to suffer from hunger pain. As one of those evolutionary quirks, the plant has a natural resistance (SR 28) to magic and this is passed onto the disease itself. It does not affect the ability of the victim to use magic except when trying to cast any kind of curing spell on an infected person. Only a paladin's natural immunity to disease seems to prevent one from catching the disease, but a paladin's cure disease ability is still subject to the disease' SR. Any druid with immunity to natural poisons is also unaffected by this disease. As the disease is resistant to magic, *cloaks of resistance* or spells that give a bonus to saving throws will not aid in the fortitude saves. Racial bonuses, such as dwarven poison resistance but not resistance to magic, can be added to the fortitude save. Normally you can still recover a point of ability damage per day, but the disease so ravages the body that it is unable to heal itself.

Visible signs of the plague: At the start of the third week, infected individuals begin showing signs of the disease. They range from, black spots appearing on the body, high fever but deathly cold skin, gangrenous extremities, delirium, blindness, large purplish swelling of hands and feet, tiny blister-like red marks covering the entire skin. Most victims have at least one of the symptoms but usually more. To determine the signs of the plague that the PCs might exhibit, if they get infected, roll 1d10 for each infected PC. 1-7 – only one symptom (die roll corresponds to the symptom listed above), 8-9 – has two symptoms, 10 – has three symptoms. Re-roll any symptoms that come up twice. The blindness caused by the disease does not get a separate saving throw to resist, as it is part of the disease. Once the PC has been cured of the disease, their eyesight will return. A *remove blindness* spell will also restore the PCs eyesight at anytime.

Cure: The berries from the Black weed plant interact with the virulent agent from the plants flesh curing those that had eaten the pulp, but once the disease transmits from the original host to other hosts, it changes. The berries will need to be eaten with green death moss, in order for everyone to stop spreading the disease and recover from it. The Green Death moss can be found in most marshes, swamps and deep woods. The Black weed plant can only be found in the heart of the Hool Marsh. If the Green Death moss is eaten but not in conjunction with the berries, a Poison Save (DC 18) is needed or takes 1d6 temporary Con damage. A minute later another save is needed or take an additional 2 points of permanent Constitution damage.

DM AID 2

The following stats are for the group trailing the PCs. They are hired adventurers given the task by the Gradsul government to help contain the plague. They have been sent to follow the PCs since the PCs are designated as a risk to further spread the plague. Devinti and Niton will soften up the PCs with spells while the rogues hang back and fire arrows. The fighters will use their ride-by-attacks and eventually enter melee combat.

EL 14

➤ **Human Ftr8 (3):** CR 8; Medium-size humanoid; HD 8d10+16; hp 68 each; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (touch 12, flat-footed 17); Atks +13 melee (1d8+6/17-20, long sword); AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +3
Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Jump +10, Ride +13, Swim +7; Cleave, Dodge, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by-Attack, Weapon Focus (long sword), Weapon Specialization (long sword)

Possessions: long sword, breastplate, large steel shield, and light warhorse

➤ **Human Rog8 (2):** CR 8; Medium-size humanoid; HD 8d6+16; hp 50 each; Init +8 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Atks +6 melee (1d8+1/19-20, long sword); +8 (1d8/x3, longbow); SA sneak attack +4d6; AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +2
Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Climb +10, Disable Device +10, Hide +13, Innuendo +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +13, Open Locks +10, Spot +10, Search +12, Tumble +12; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot

Possessions: long sword, leather armor, longbow, masterwork lockpicks, 40 arrows, and light warhorse

➤ **Niton Borjac:** Male human Cleric 9; CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 9d8+18; hp 66; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 12, flat-footed 17); Atks +6/+1 melee (1d6, light mace); AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +5 Will +10.
Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +8, Ride +7; Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: war hammer, breastplate, large steel shield, and light warhorse

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; base DC = 14 + spell level): oth - cure minor wounds (2), detect magic, detect poison, inflict minor wounds, read magic; 1st - bless, divine favor, endure elements*, magic weapon, obscuring mist, shield of faith; 2nd - bull's strength*, endurance, hold person, resist elements, silence, spiritual weapon; 3rd - dispel magic, invisibility purge, magical vestment*, summon monster III, wind wall; 4th - discern lies, dismissal, divine power, spell immunity*; 5th - flame strike, spell resistance*

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Protection (You can generate a *protective ward*, a spell-like ability to grant someone you touch a resistance bonus on her next saving throw equal to your level. Activating this power is a standard action. The *protective ward* is an abjuration affect with duration of 1 hour that is usable once per day); Strength (You can perform a feat of strength, which is the supernatural ability to gain an enhancement bonus to strength equal to your level. Activating the power is a free action, the power lasts 1 round, and its usable once per day.)

➤ **Angea Devinti:** Female human Wiz(illusion)11; CR 11; Medium-size humanoid; HD 11d4+11; hp 45; Init +6 (+2 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10); Atks +5 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d4/19-20, dagger); SA spells; SQ spells; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +9.
Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +9, Concentration +9, Knowledge (Arcane) +11, Scry 11, Spell craft +11, Spot +4, Profession (Scribe) +8; Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Enlarge spell, Improved Initiative, Silent spell, Spell Focus (Illusion)

Possessions: traveler clothes, belt pouch, dagger, light warhorse

Spells (5/6/6/6/5/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level) 0th - dancing lights, detect magic, flare, prestidigitation, ray of frost; 1st - color spray, expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile (2), shield; 2nd - cat's grace, endurance, invisibility, hypnotic pattern, melf's acid arrow, mirror image; 3rd - dispel magic, displacement, flame arrow, fly,, major image, protection from elements; 4th - fire shield, minor globe of invulnerability, shadow conjuration, stone skin, wall of fire; 5th - bigby's interposing hand; shadow evocation, wall of force; 6th - chain lightning, greater shadow evocation

Here are the stats for the guards that the PCs will encounter throughout the module. Each squad consists of 4 second level warriors and lead by 1 third level warrior.

🗡️ **City Watch Guards:** Male human War2; CR ½; Medium-size humanoid; HD 2d10+4; hp 15; Init +6 (+2 dex, improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atks +5 melee (1d8+2/19-20, long sword), +5 melee (1d8+3/19-20, halberd), +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0.

Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +7; Weapon Focus (long sword), Weapon Focus (Halberd)

Possessions: long sword, chain mail shirt, halberd, light crossbow, and 10 bolts

🗡️ **City Watch Sergeant:** Male human War3; CR ½; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d10+6; hp 23; Init +6 (+2 dex, improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 16); Atks +6 melee (1d8 +2/19-20, long sword); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1.

Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Intimidate +7, Jump +8; Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (long sword)

Possessions: long sword, chain mail shirt, large steel shield

DM AID 3

🗡️**Vituln:** Female human Witch6; CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 6d4+6; hp 25; Init +5 (+1 dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10); Atks +2 melee (1d4 -1/19-20, dagger); +4 range (1d4-1/19-20, dagger); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +5.

Str 9, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Knowledge (Nature) +12, Listen +2, Scry +5, Spellcraft +6, Wilderness Lore +9; Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Knowledge-Nature), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Transmutation)

Possessions: 2 Daggers

Spells Known (6/7/6/4; base DC = 14+ spell level): 0 – arcane mark, cure minor wounds, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, read magic; 1st – cause fear, sleep, charm person, cure light wounds; 2nd – alter self, speak with animals; 3rd – bestow curse.

Vituln was born in a small town west of Seaton to a candle maker and a seamstress. Being the only girl of six children, her father doted on her constantly. By the time she was ten years old, her father had arranged a marriage for Vituln to the son of a baker. The following year is when things started to go against Vituln. She began to demonstrate strange abilities that no one could understand. She began to hear voices that no one else could hear. Soon Vituln was blamed for anything that went wrong, including the fire that consumed her parent's house while they were still inside. Barely escaping the bigotry that followed her everywhere at twenty years old, Vituln finally settled in the Hool Marsh, hoping to be left alone. Alone she was, and over the years, extremely bitter as well. She vowed to take revenge upon those who forced her to settle there, which she sees as the whole world. Learning a form of magic from a green hag she befriended, Vituln cultivated her power and knowledge of the region. Vituln does not like to get into combat directly unless there is no other choice. She would rather use her magic to avoid direct conflicts through changing her looks, or having others fight for her.

DM'S MAP 1



- A. SEATON
- B. BALE KEEP
- C. MARSH ENTRY POINT
- D. VITULN'S HUT
- E. LIZARDFOLK AMBUSH
- F. ELF GROVE
- G. SATYR GROVE

-
- Death March

PLAYER HANDOUT 2

Although you might be only doing this to save yourselves or just this little part of the world, your success will aid more than you can realize. One who has studied this plague wishes to relay information about completing the cure. Go directly north from Bale Keep for thirty-five miles, until you come to a woodland glade. There you will be met so that all may be saved.

Dreadwalker Yeran

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.