

KEO7-07

The Stalkyard

A One-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[™]

Keoland Regional Adventure

Version 4.4.1

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As an unusually hot Keoish summer fades into autumn, events on the western border of the Empire continue to smolder. The truth is now filtering to the ears of Keoish citizens: war has come to the western marches and with every passing day marches eastward to Niole Dra. As the Keoish Empire reels from this sudden onslaught, a bold counterattack is planned on the heart of the assaulting forces: Godakin Keep. But is the assault a diversion, a suicide mission, or a stroke of genius? Only time will tell, because only the survivors author the histories.

A Keoland regional adventure for APLs 8-12, and Part Four of the *To the Last Man Standing* series. This is a direct sequel to KEO6-04 *Old Sins Cast Long Shadows*, KEO7-04 *Castlefall* and KEO7-06 *Bright Scaled Horror*. It is recommended that those adventures be played first if possible.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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For questions specific to this document and your region please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at keolandpoc@adelphia.net. For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2007.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in the *Appendices*.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. 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.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs 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 and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
	7	7	9	10	11

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Keoland. Characters native to Keoland pay

one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Empire of Keoland has begun to face its darkest hours. Without warning an unknown force of creatures assaulted and sacked Godakin Keep on the western border. These creatures have begun a systematic move eastward, and the Empire is desperate for time while it sends out recall orders and requests for assistance to its neighbors in the Sheldomar Valley.

In KEO7-04 *Castlefall* a group of enterprising heroes rescued an important artifact from a secret vault constructed beneath Godakin Keep, thereby thwarting some of the invader's plans. In KEO7-06 *Bright Scaled Horror* another group of heroes rescued the kin of the vault's guardian, a Brass Dragon who made its home in the Good Hills.

The invading forces have now begun to spread their advance, marching on Cryllor and sacking several small outlying towns in the Good Hills. The Keoish Royal Standards have begun to fortify the town of Black Top in the Good Hills in order to make a strong bastion in the region to operate from.

In Niole Dra, Field Marshal Vandon Neheli has decided to put the troops under his command to better use. After consulting with his distant relative, Count Orloc Neheli, the two brought a plan to the attention of the master of the Silent Tower; the Wyrd. This plan is simple; Field Marshal Neheli will use a magical portal created and owned by the Neheli family to lead his Royal Standards on a direct assault of Godakin Keep. In order to assure the maximum confusion the Field Marshal will have a diversionary assault on one of the towns overrun by the Horde; the town of Kilm.

The town of Kilm was once a small farming satellite of Godakin Keep. In the months since Godakin Keep fell, it suffered no calamity until a sudden message was delivered to Niole Dra claiming that the town was being assaulted in the night. No further communications from Kilm ensued and magical scrying has revealed a horrible tableau; the town of Kilm has been turned into some sort of grand magical experiment, with captive Keoish citizens being tortured and experimented upon. The town is now under the direct command of a small force of Marru, led by the fallen Hound Archon Gustavren.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

In the Introduction, the heroes are brought up to speed on the latest goings on in the Empire and are approached by Field Marshal Vandon Neheli, who is in charge of the forces detailed in Niole Dra proper. The Field Marshal thanks the heroes for their service to the Empire and then asks the heroes to accompany him for a meeting of special importance. The heroes are reintroduced to the Wyrd and to Count Orloc Neheli, who have requested the heroes' aid in creating a secondary target for the assault. This target is actually the town of Kilm, which has been sacked and turned into an enemy bastion. The Wyrd and Orloc believe that Kilm is being used as a crèche, or a breeding ground for the Marru. They will ask the heroes to lead an assault on the crèche to kill an old nemesis, a fallen hound archon, and to attempt to destroy the crèche.

In Encounter One the heroes prepare for battle and use a teleport circle owned by house Neheli to gain entrance to the town of Kilm. As they arrive they watch a sizeable force of Marru *teleport* out, presumably to rush to Godakin Keep's aid.

In Encounter Two the heroes will be able to reconnoiter the current town of Kilm and either bypass or overwhelm a small group of defenders

who are processing a prominent Keoish citizen for a transformation into a Marru within the crèche.

In Encounter Three the heroes will enter the Stalkyard, an interior maze that protects the Kilm crèche.

In Encounter Four the heroes will have the opportunity to loot the Kilm school of magic for information and determine some more of what the Marru intend to do.

In Encounter Five the heroes will meet the figure who controls the forces of the Marru, a being who will call himself The Returned. They will see for themselves that the forces he controls are far more than a few simple creatures and he will offer the heroes a choice: they may join his forces and help lead his armies to victory in exchange for overwhelming power.

In Encounter Six the heroes return to Niole Dra to find that The Returned's forces have crushed the Keoish counterattack at Godakin Keep.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

Determine if any hero is a Knight of the Watch. If they are, prepare **Player Handout One**. They will have an additional set of instructions.

Determine if any hero is a Knight of the Malagari (Darkwatch). If they are, prepare **Player Handout Two**. They will have an additional set of instructions.

Determine if any hero is a Silent One. (All heroes who are Woestaves are considered Silent Ones for the purpose of this determination). If they are, prepare **Player Handout Three**. They will have an additional set of instructions.

Have any PC who can make a **Knowledge (Monstrous Humanoid)** check and record this result. This indicates the PC's knowledge of Marru physiology. This is particularly necessary to know in Encounter Two, where the PCs may be surprised by the Marru. Any PC who has the AR item **Desert Dissection** from KEO7-04 *Castlefall* knows all general details of Marrutacts and Marrusaults, as listed. Refresh the players' knowledge before Encounter One.

Finally, the introduction contains a large amount of read-aloud text. This is necessary in order to convey a lot of the newest changes in Keoland to the heroes. After the introduction the adventure becomes much more adaptable, so it is

recommended that you prepare to adjust events on the fly for your table.

INTRODUCTION

As the sun makes its way down the western path towards the Jotuns, the heat from an unusually intense Keoish summer begins to fade with it. Everywhere you look, the common folk of the city are preparing to end another day. They are closing up shops, they are mucking out stables, they are headed to their homes and families.

A precious few understand how fragile their existence is. Keoland, the Lion Throne, mightiest of the nations of the Sheldomar Valley, has been invaded. At this very moment, the western border is embroiled in fighting such as has not been seen on a scale since Keoland's imperialistic phase hundreds of years ago.

Every day the number of people who understands grows larger. Every day another son is conscripted into the Royal Standards, every day another shop's products are purchased by the newly formed Ministry of Keoish Security.

The rumors have finally reached an inevitable chorus: Godakin Keep is gone, Black Top is a staging ground, and no word has come from Cryllor in weeks. It is even rumored that the long-disused Dragon Rock has had a nocturnal visitor within the last few nights. Few in Niole Dra sleep well these days.

You and your companions have escaped the growing sense of dread in the common folk by deciding to take dinner at the Beaten Black, a recently constructed tavern that caters specifically to those who label themselves with the dangerous title of adventurer. The tavern itself is unremarkable save for its namesake. Hanging over the bar is a massive tooth carved with runes and topped in a gold cap. It is easily over seven feet long and the proprietors claim that it is an actual incisor pulled from the mouth of a Black Dragon slain in the Dreadwood.

The tavern is full to overflowing and you find yourself at a mixed table of people like yourself.

At this point have the heroes introduce themselves and make any decisions about how they came to

be in this place. Prepare any applicable player handouts. When the heroes are settled in they will each be approached by a serving girl with a message for them.

As the steaming plates of your food begin to arrive, a pretty young serving girl crouches down to eye level. Smiling at you, she talks just loud enough to be heard over the din of the tavern.

"I'm sorry to bother you, but I'm to ask you to follow me to one of our private suites. There's someone who wishes a moment of your time."

The girl knows nothing of who sent her to the heroes, only that she was specifically told by her boss the tavern keeper who to talk to. The tavern keeper is nowhere to be found at this point (he is upstairs tending to his guests).

If the heroes are reticent to go, the serving girl will offer to bring their meal with them. Further hesitation will resort to the serving girl almost pleading with the heroes to go, as she does not wish to get in trouble. If a hero refuses to go to the private rooms, they are at risk of missing the adventure.

The heroes are taken to a well appointed private suite which the tavern keeper is just leaving as they arrive. In the front room is a figure of the Keoish military, Field Marshal Vandon Neheli. Dressed in a stylish parade uniform, the Field Marshal cuts an impressive figure. Standing well over six feet tall, he is obviously Suel but appears to have traces of some other bloodline from a distant relative which gives him a slightly exotic and appealing look. The Field Marshal is friendly and smiles at the heroes before ushering them in and offering them refreshments while apologizing for having their meal disturbed.

A Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) DC: 15 will tell the heroes that the title of Field Marshal is one recently created by the Royal Standards, with only a handful of postings. The two most well known Field Marshals are Perrinac Rhola and Vandon Neheli, whom are both intensely loyal to King Kimbertos.

A Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) DC: 20 will tell the heroes that Vandon Neheli is rumored to be a distant relation of Holphin Neheli, from a branch of the family that was recently elevated in order to help restore the prestige of the family name.

A Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) DC: 25 will tell the heroes that the Field Marshal is rumored to be in command of the Royal Standards stationed in Niole Dra proper, and that the established Royal Standard hierarchy was none too pleased with the recent creation of the posting.

Allow the heroes to introduce themselves to Field Marshal Vandon. When they are all in the room he will make a great show out of locking the door and closing the curtains from prying eyes before speaking. Read or paraphrase the following.

“Thank you gentlemen for interrupting your day to hear me out. I am Field Marshal Vandon Neheli, and it is my duty to charge you with a task in the name of the Lion Throne. First, some background.

As you may have heard, Godakin Keep on our western border has fallen. Keoland herself has been invaded and faces dire peril. Despite what you may have heard about the prowess of the Royal Standards the harsh reality is that we are currently fighting a holding action while we attempt to buy time to organize our defenses. The Good Hills are becoming a battleground and all communication from Cryllor has ceased.

I have received approval for a daring counterattack, which is where you come in. Before I can explain any more, I must have your agreement. If you cannot give it, I understand; but I will have to ask you to leave and say nothing of what has transpired here. Can you agree to lead a force of Royal Standards in this counterattack?

The heroes may agree, decline, or ask for more details. Some potential questions are listed here.

“How large of a force will we be leading?”

“You will be responsible for the leading and protection of twenty Royal Standards while they accomplish their mission.”

“What mission will they be performing?”

“I cannot answer that until you agree to lead them, unfortunately. Now you see why I needed people of a certain moral fiber.”

If the heroes repeat this question after reciting the oath, Vandon will tell the heroes that the Royal Standards are tasked with the destruction of valuable enemy supplies within Kilm. If the heroes press, tell them whatever is necessary to move

them along. The Royal Standards won't be making the fulltrip with the heroes.

“Where will we be going? Niole Dra is a bit far from the fighting.”

“Magical transportation will be provided for you. In fact, it will be necessary for the success of your goals. Other than that, I cannot tell you exactly where you will be going until you agree.”

If the heroes ask for more general information:

“The only other piece of information that I can give you is that your task will be very dangerous. Should you require it, you can be compensated accordingly. The Lion Throne is not without gratitude.”

Answer any other questions the heroes may have. If they agree, proceed to the following introduction. If they cannot agree to these terms, Field Marshal Vandon will voice his regret, attempt to persuade the heroes one last time, and then finally show any who wish to leave out.

Once the heroes agree:

Field Marshal Vandon nods briskly and smiles. He clears his throat meaningfully and speaks, taking the time to look each of you in the eyes while the syllables roll from his tongue like honeyed water.

“Please repeat after me: I swear an oath by my blood to never reveal the proceedings here, in the name of the Lion Throne. Let Dalt lock my tongue should I fail.”

If the heroes are suddenly antsy about swearing an oath by their blood, they have good reason. Vandon will explain that it is something he is required to ask for this situation “by his superiors.”

Any hero who balks at this will be given another chance to recite the oath. Refusal will mean that the hero will be shown the door while Vandon tells them that he understands their reluctance.

Finally, once the heroes are done swearing ominous oaths, Vandon will introduce them to two more important pieces to this puzzle.

As you repeat the oath, the slight sound of bells tolling rings through the building. Seven bells, then silence. Field Marshal Vandon smiles at you warmly, a twinkle reaching his eyes. It is easy to see why he has quickly built a reputation as a man others would die to follow. He moves to the suites' other door,

opening it soundlessly, and then dropping to one knee.

Soundlessly, two men enter the room, each touching Field Marshal Vandon on the shoulder as they pass. The first is tall and appears of moderate build, wearing floor length white robes. His face is covered with a black iron mask. Piercing blue eyes show through the eyelits, decorated to appear as though trails of tears run down his cheeks.

The second is short and hunched, skin emaciated and as dry as sun-kissed desert. Dirty, dull black robes puddle around his feet as he lurches alongside his companion. His fingers are long and filthy, nails crusted with unknown detritus. He is completely bald, making his piercing blue eyes stand out all the more on his pale face.

These two men are a pair of Keoland's most powerful magical practitioners. The first is the Wyrd, master of the Silent Tower and leader of those known as the Silent Ones. Heroes may have met him in several recent adventures, including KEO6-04 *Old Sins Cast Long Shadows* and KEO7-04 *Castlefall*.

The second is Count Orloc Neheli, famous and secretive wizard of House Neheli. The heroes may have met him through several Keoland regionals and interactives, including KEO4-03 *Lasting Deeds* and KEO5-05 *Burning Brightly*.

Both of these men can be identified with a **Knowledge (Metaregion 1/Sheldomar Valley) DC: 15**.

The Wyrd will greet the heroes. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Peace to you, travelers. We do not have much time, so I shall endeavor to make this short. As the Field Marshal can tell you, Keoland is in dire straits. The western border as we know it no longer exists, and magic more powerful than any I have seen in many years prevents accurate scrying attempts.

Within the last day, however, we have made a breakthrough. Count Orloc here has discovered that a certain kind of ritual scrying of his own devising is capable of breaking through the mists that prevent our normal attempts. In exchange for sharing his knowledge on the matter with us, the Silent Tower has agreed to assist with a task the Neheli ask of us.

Normally the Silent Tower would refuse any task that might make us seem partisan in the politics of the Empire, but the seriousness of the situation requires immediate action."

With a wave of his hand and a mumbled syllable, the Wyrd creates a frozen tableau on the table of the suite. A walled city teems with violent activity. Armed men fight on the walls against a besieging force. Siege towers in the process of disembarking inhuman foes are nestled against the wall. Above a central keep, the Keoish lion flies proudly from a flagpole. Black smoke pours up from several portions of the city.

With a second and third wave of the Wyrd's hand, the view changes, becoming such that it might be seen through a hawk's eye. The city is surrounded by a besieging force on three sides, and a huge flowing river on the fourth. From this vantage point you can see the besieging force carries seven large banners.

Field Marshal Vandon's words echo faintly off the walls of the suite as he speaks.

"Now you might understand why we need your silence. Word of this cannot reach the ears of the populace, for they would panic. Cryllor is under siege."

Allow the heroes a chance to digest this information. Answer any questions the heroes might pose within reason. Below are some possible questions they might have, along with who answers them.

"How recent is this view?"

(The Wyrd)

"This was seen less than an hour ago, by Count Orloc and myself."

"What are those things attacking the city?"

(The Wyrd)

"There are more than a few men and demihumans in the attacking force, but the bulk of the attackers seem to be made up of an ancient race known as the Marru. Additionally, we have seen more than a few true giants among the attackers. Here, on the north side of Cryllor, you can clearly see at least a half-dozen stone giants in charge of pushing these siege towers."

"The Marru? What are they?"

(Count Orloc)

The hunched form of Count Orloc bobs as he abruptly cuts off the Wyrd. His voice is raspy and weak; you have to strain a bit to hear it.

“The Marru are thought to be magically created in ages past, although they now breed true without magic. What is very odd is that the few pieces of lore we have about them indicate that they prefer much harsher climes than Keoland has to offer. They have been known to keep their enclaves in the harshest of deserts environments.”

“How large is the attacking force/how many defend the city?”

(Field Marshal Vandon)

“If the attackers use a fairly traditional military division, each large banner is a separate army, composed of roughly a thousand men...marru...giants...what have you. It appears that Cryllor faces an attacking force of over seven thousand foes. Count Manz regularly holds a swordfighting competition at this time of year called the Tocsin of Kelanen, which attracts quite a large temporary population of capable swordsmen from around the region.

The Royal Standard detachment in Cryllor numbers less than four hundred, as the Count prefers to hire mercenaries for the city’s safekeeping. We have no accurate numbers for his forces at this time. Either the siege was timed in order to coincide with the Tocsin in order to sap the strength of any militia we might draw from the area, or the attacking force was unknowledgeable of the event. In either case, we estimate the number of truly capable defenders in Cryllor at less than two thousand.

If it comes to it, I’m sure that the cityfolk will fight bravely, but they are not skilled in the art of war.”

“Can Cryllor hold out/How long can Cryllor hold out?”

(Field Marshal Vandon)

“Cryllor is exceedingly well situated defensively, however as you can see the attackers have already topped the walls. Once a siege breaks the walls, it quickly becomes mass butchery.

For all purposes, Cryllor no longer exists.”

When the heroes ask what their part to play in this affair is, or the conversation lags, move onward to the following:

Field Marshal Vandon clears his throat.

“King Kimbertos has been made aware of the situation. He has authorized a counteroffensive with the Royal Standards based in Niole Dra. Cryllor is lost to us, but there are a pair of targets that he feels will cause the invaders to slow their advance if we attack.

The first of these is Godakin Keep itself. We have reliable knowledge that the Keep is the nexus for their leadership. We are still unable to break the scrying covering Godakin, but we feel that with so large a force at Cryllor that Godakin must be nearly empty. The Royal Standards will use a Neheli teleport circle to assault Godakin Keep. We know that Marshal Praal of the Royal Standards turned traitor and we believe he is still in charge of the Keep. It will be the duty of the Royal Standards to cleanse the stain on their honor.

The second of these is a small town southeast of Godakin Keep called Kilm. Here we have been able to break the scrying wards. Count Orloc, can you please show them?”

The Count mumbles some arcane phrases and the tableau on the table changes. A small farming community is now the scene. Farmers work their plots while armed guards oversee them. The center of the small town itself has been razed and a diamond shaped edifice stands in its place. It appears to be fairly large, standing three to four stories.

The Count whispers;

“In the lore we have, it is indicated that the Marru build such structures when they create a new home for themselves. They are called crèches, and their purpose is believed to be a spawning ground and school for accelerated magical training.”

Suddenly the tableau zooms in, and a trio of figures is caught frozen while walking towards the crèche. One is a hulking marru abomination, clad in vicious looking plate mail. The marru drags an unconscious oerdian man in its massive arms. The unconscious man’s head hangs down, a long ornate braid of hair falling past a visibly scarred neck.

The final member of the trio is similar to the marru in that he bears canine traits, but even though he walks next to undeniable evil he carries himself with poise and presence. His head is that of a powerful hunting hound's, its features set for the chase. Strapped to its back is a pair of greatswords, one bent nearly in half.

The Count continues his sibilant whispering;

"That one is known to us. He is a Hound Archon whose name is legend among magical circles. His name is Gustavren, and he and his pack were cast out of Acheron when he failed in his duties.

It will be your task to enter the crèche, stalk and kill Gustavren, and destroy anything of that you find."

The heroes undoubtedly have some questions, do your best to answer them, although the rest of the information the NPCs have is quite sparse. They have no reliable information on the interior of the crèche, no idea how large a force lies within, and no idea of Gustavren's capabilities. The heroes will be using a Neheli teleport circle in the same manner that the Royal Standards will.

If the heroes ask for general information on Kilm, the NPCs will tell them the information contained in the beginning of Encounter Two.

The Field Marshal will ask the heroes to be ready for an assault to begin shortly after sunrise. As the heroes are in Niole Dra they may use this opportunity to purchase items per the LGCS before the assault. Heroes who are in need of a full night's sleep in order to change spell selections will be able to do so.

Eventually the heroes will be escorted out of the suite, and thanked by all three NPCs.

ENCOUNTER 1: HALFWAY THERE

In this encounter the heroes use a Neheli teleport circle to travel to Kilm, where they witness what the town has become and watch as a large force of Marru teleports out, presumably to go to Godakin Keep's aid. The town appears ripe for the picking.

If any hero has the AR item **Desert Dissection** from KEO7-04 *Castlefall*, refresh that player's knowledge of the Marrusaults and Marrutacts now.

Note that Marrulurks are excluded from that knowledge.

Additionally, heroes who belong to several organizations will receive additional orders from that organization.

Hand out **Player Handouts One, Two and Three** to applicable heroes.

The heroes arrive at the assigned staging area:

It is shortly after daybreak when you arrive at the assigned staging area, a series of warehouses owned by house Neheli. Huge stone circles have been erected in each room, ringed with arcane runes. As you arrive, a group of robed men finish a chant and a tensquad of heavy cavalry sitting in the middle of a circle winks out of existence.

Feel free to describe the area in more detail to the heroes if necessary. A force of nearly a thousand Royal Standards has assembled for this counterattack, representing a major investment of forces on the part of the Empire. Everywhere the heroes look there are armed men and battle clerics readying themselves for battle.

The heroes will quickly be met by a harried looking junior officer who will convey them directly to the Wyrd, who is awaiting their arrival. The Wyrd will ensure that the heroes are ready for transport by giving them each a small polished piece of quartz and telling them the following;

"When you wish to return, take this stone and hurl it to the ground while thinking of where you wish to travel to. I recommend thinking of someplace exceedingly familiar to you, such as right here. I cannot stress this enough, if you lose the stone, or break it, we have no way to return you reliably. We will simply be too busy with everything today to watch you closely."

The squad of Royal Standards that the heroes are supposed to lead is assembled and ready. They await transport with the heroes.

When the heroes are ready for transport, Count Orloc and the Wyrd will usher them into the circle and begin to chant.

The Wyrd utters some arcane phrases and the warehouse simply disappears from your sight. Suddenly your world is filled with searing pain and your vision is filled with two tunnels. At the end of one tunnel is a fanged maw reaching out to destroy you, at the end of the

other is the town of Kilm as you saw it in the tableau. With a sense of horror, you feel yourself being pulled in two separate directions!

Ask each hero for their Will save modifier, and then roll a d20 for them out of sight, to simulate a Will save they would not know the result of. After you have done that, read the following.

With a wrenching gasp of mental effort, your body tumbles down the tunnel towards the town. The fanged maw grazes you as it attempts to reach you. With an audible pop, you find yourself seated in the middle of a corn field on a small hill overseeing Kilm.

Each hero takes damage based off the following chart.

APL 8: 10 damage

APL 10: 15 damage

APL 12: 20 damage

There is no save against this damage, and each hero is marked and scratched as though they had been bitten.

When the heroes gather themselves and move into line of sight of the crèche, read or paraphrase the following.

From your vantage you see two things occurring simultaneously. A small handful of Marru is herding a shuffling line of peasants through a set of rapidly closing doors in one side of the crèche. On another side of the crèche a sizeable force of Marru is standing in orderly ranks, clasping wrists. A smaller Marru standing among them raises an oddly shaped staff and the entire group winks out of existence. The stone doors of the crèche swing shut behind the last of the peasants and the sounds of nature slowly resume as you look down upon the town of Kilm.

ENCOUNTER 2: ALL THAT REMAINS

Use **DM AID 1** for the map of Kilm.

In this encounter the heroes have the option of exploring Kilm for clues as to what is going on in the town and may encounter a small group of Marru who are preparing a prominent, long-lost Keoish citizen for transformation into a Marru. The heroes may then choose to attempt to free the detainee or bypass the Marru.

Kilm

Any hero who succeeds at a **Knowledge (Metaregion One/Sheldomar Valley) DC 15** will know the following basic information. Additionally, any hero who asks one of the NPCs from an earlier encounter about Kilm will receive this information.

The town of Kilm is a fairly typical farming community. Before the insurrection began, Kilm served as a small farming satellite where merchants would gather to arrange for the purchase of food, which would then be shipped elsewhere for a profit. The town boasts little that would attract people more accustomed to city life, but it was quite successful in serving as a goods relay station.

In the year CY 588 the town was razed by unknown forces. This prompted a surge in patrols into the Jotuns in order to ward off these raids. The town was rebuilt in CY 591 and until CY 595 was garrisoned with a small force of Royal Standards.

The town has the following areas:

Area 1: Farms/Fields

This area appears to be a typical farmstead. A diverse mixture of crops takes firm root in the healthy Keoish soil. Cows and pigs appear healthy behind well constructed pens.

These areas have little of value or note. The houses on these areas are one room affairs suitable for peasant life only.

Area 2: Councilman's House

This house has no farmland attached in its fenced in area. It is larger than the other houses in the area and appears well appointed. A small signpost outside the house reads "Councilman Herbrook: all traveling merchants please register within."

The front door swings wide on a broken hinge.

This house was the home of Councilman Herbrook, apparently an official in charge of keeping track of merchants traveling through Kilm. The interior of the house is a shambles and appears to have been recently ransacked.

A **Search DC 25** will turn up a ledger from underneath a rotted out floorboard. The ledger has names and dates of merchants who arrived in Kilm, whether they were buying or selling, and what goods they moved. Every entry with the

exception of the following two is in regards to livestock or crops.

“Arrived; Gillen of Mill Creek. Delivered two crates with the Keoish crest to the Happy Hooligan.”

“Arrived; Adrienne of Mill Creek. Delivered four crates with the Keoish crest to the Happy Hooligan.”

A Knowledge (Metaregion 1/Sheldomar Valley) DC 15 will tell the heroes that the Mill Creek Barony of Keoland is largely a hunting reserve but that there have been rumors through the past year of political strife in the region. Several powerful Neheli families take sport there yearly and the Baron is a strong supporter of King Kimbertos.

Area 3: The Happy Hooligan

Use DM AID 2 for the cellar of this area.

The squares numbered 1 2 and 3 are the three Marrusaults, the square numbered 4 is the Marrutact.

The burned-out remains of a large tavern reside on what passes for the main road through Kilm. A well-preserved signpost declaring this to be The Happy Hooligan stands within sight of a pried open set of doors leading underground into what appears to be a cellar.

If the heroes enter the cellar:

This cellar is very large, appearing to take up the entire footprint of the space the tavern used to occupy above it. In contrast to the above ruins, the cellar is well preserved, with high ceilings. Closed casks and sealed boxes create a series of dim passages through the cellar.

Have the heroes make Listen DC 15 checks. Success indicates that they hear the following.

A muffled groan echoes from somewhere in the cellar. A rattle of chains accompanies it, followed by a burst of maniacal laughter.

Once the heroes reach the indicated area of the map, they must make opposed Hide and Move Silently checks against the occupants of the cellar. In this manner the heroes may move to within thirty feet of the Marru. Once the heroes are within thirty feet, the Marru's Discriminating Hearing comes into effect, and the heroes will be detected unless they use magical means to silence themselves.

If the heroes are detected by the Marru, the Marru will let them come a bit further in an attempt to draw them into a trap. Read the following.

Against the cellar wall you see the source of the noise. A pair of men are suspended from a roof beam by long chains. Each man shows signs of being beaten and both are slumped down as far as their chains permit. Standing near the men are several of the Marru.

If the heroes manage to somehow completely catch the Marru unawares, read the following.

Against the cellar wall you see the source of the noise. A pair of men are suspended from a roof beam by long chains. Each man shows signs of being beaten and both are slumped down as far as their chains permit. A group of Marru are standing with their backs to you, periodically delivering punches and kicks to the men and laughing lightly to themselves.

APL 8 (EL 11)

Marrusaults (3), Hexar, Nekkef, Suile, hp 62, See Appendix 1

Marrutact, Lorien, hp 58, see Appendix 1

APL 10 (EL 13)

Marrusaults (3), Hexar, Nekkef, Suile, Fighter 2, hp 85, See Appendix 2

Marrutact, Lorien, hp 80, see Appendix 2.

APL 12 (EL 15)

Marrusaults (3), Hexar, Nekkef, Suile, Fighter 4, hp 103, See Appendix 3

Marrutact, Lorien, hp 90, see Appendix 3..

Tactics: If the heroes are detected, the Marrusaults will attempt to spread out and shield the Marrutact behind them so that he can cast spells offensively.

If the heroes are undetected, the Marru will simply attempt to focus their attention on any hero that they might be able to kill with combined attacks and creative flanking.

After the encounter, the heroes will have a chance to interact with the captives and search the cellar if they so desire.

One of the two men is dead, victim to dehydration and torture. The other man is on the verge of breaking under the stress his captors have placed upon him. Wild eyed and dirty, he appears to be of the mixed Oerdian stock common to the region. A

Spot DC 15 will reveal that the man's skin is a horrible tapestry of burns, scars and bruises of varying ages. This prisoner has been being tortured for a very long period of time.

The man rants and raves whenever someone comes close, straining weakly against the chains that bind him. The keys to the locks on the chains are nowhere to be found, but the lock may be picked with an **Open Lock DC 20**.

If a hero performs a **Heal DC 20** or any level of magical (hp) healing, the man will come to his senses and thank the heroes profusely for their assistance. He will then straighten himself up and introduce himself as Lord Garson Elgarin, son of Countess Allita Elgarin of Flen.

Lord Garsin Elgarin

In the year CY588, after the razing of Kilm, Lord Garsin led an expedition into the Jotuns with the goal of determining the source of the recent (at the time) raids on the county of Flen. Unfortunately for Lord Garsin, he found exactly what he was looking for. Literally stumbling across an uncharted series of valleys, he and his expedition were the first Keoish to encounter the Marru.

The expedition was rapidly attacked and mostly destroyed. Lord Elgarin and several of his surviving men attempted to flee but were captured after several days of dogged pursuit. Not wanting to call attention to his noble rank, Lord Garsin divested himself of all his accoutrements that spoke of him as the scion of a powerful house. One of his loyal men-at-arms, who was soon to die with a festering wound, agreed to don Lord Garsin's clothes, so that should the group be captured they would not realize the real Garsin's importance.

As they feared, the group was eventually captured and most of the men were killed, including the fake Lord Garsin.

Back in Keoland, the Countess Elgarin was distraught over the loss of her son. In her grief, she turned to magical augury in an attempt to determine the fate of the expedition. Seeking only the best aid available, she sent a missive to the Silent Tower in an attempt to enlist the aid of the Silent Ones. When her message went unanswered the Countess Elgarin turned to other nobility, and eventually found herself requesting the assistance of one of Keoland's most powerful practitioners of magic Count Orloc.

Count Orloc's divination was easily able to locate the focus of his search, the enchanted blade that Lord Garsin took great personal pride in. This greatsword, known as *Irid Iriun* ("Foul Temper" in Oerdian), was located by Orloc near the fallen body of Garsin's man-at-arms. When informed of her son's fate the Countess Elgarin was inconsolable and refused to believe the evidence presented. Despite her efforts to the contrary, rumors of Lord Garsin's demise filtered through the realm's nobility.

Lord Garsin's life in the intervening years has been anything but pleasant. The Marru who lived in the valleys of the Jotuns used captive humans as slaves, and such was Garsin's fate. Lord Garsin spent the next nine years being slowly worked to death in the Marru's iron mines.

The Marru, being the product of magical experimentation and breeding themselves, quickly saw the way the captive humans in the iron mines were drawn to Lord Garsin's demeanor and bearing. Despite his hardships, he managed to keep a good many people alive through his simple refusal to let his hope die. Using magical divinations of their own, the Marru determined the truth of Lord Garsin's heritage and earmarked him and several others for their grand design.

Secretly, Lord Garsin was attempting to organize a great breakout from the Marru's Iron Mines. The slave population was growing, and most of the slaves looked to Lord Garsin as a leader. After several years of careful planning, the slaves revolted and attempted to escape. Unfortunately, the slave plans were well known by the Marru, and the revolt was squashed mercilessly. After that, Lord Garsin was brought to Kilm, where he now crosses paths with the heroes.

Interacting with Lord Garsin Elgarin

If Lord Garsin is brought to a sensate state, he will quickly plead for the heroes to release him, seeing that they have defeated his captors. He knows that he is in Kilm, and that means his family's holdings are in great danger. Some basic interactions are listed below. In some cases, a DC is listed after Garsin's text. This is the DC for a **Knowledge (Sheldomar/Metaregion One)** check to confirm that it is truth. Entries without a listed DC cannot be verified as true or false through this manner.

"Who are you?"

"Although I know I don't look it, I am Lord Garsin Elgarin. I am the son of Countess Allita Elgarin of Flen."

(DC15: The Countess of Flen did have a son named Garsin who went missing almost ten years ago.)

"How did you come to be here?"

"In CY588 this town, the town of Kilm, was a successful hobniz village. The town was razed by creatures that we tracked to the Jotens. I led an expedition to attempt to find and enact revenge against these attackers. Unfortunately, I found them."

(DC10: Several failed expeditions to the Jotuns attempted to curtail humanoid raiding. The stabilization of Sterich has helped this cause but not eradicated the problem entirely)

"You have been captive for almost ten years?"

"Yes, much to my hatred. My men and I were ambushed after we discovered several valleys in the Jotens that these creatures called home. We fought and tried to escape but we were caught or killed. They imprisoned the rest of us, forcing us to work in the iron mines the creatures used. I tried to lead an escape attempt, but we were brought low by a traitor in the slave pens. After the revolt was put down, I was brought here. I have been here for about a month or so now I would wager."

"Who is this man?"

"This is Gregor, the last survivor of my original expedition. He attempted to escape with me."

"Do you know where the Marru make their home in the Jotens?"

"I know exactly where their valleys are. Assuming you gave me a map; I could lead you there or give directions to another."

"Did the Marru know who you are?"

"No, the Marru do not know who I am, other than the leader of the revolt. When we were about to be captured a man of mine who was mortally wounded offered to switch clothes with me so that I could not be identified as nobleborn."

"Why are you here? How do you know where you are?"

"After the Marru crushed our revolt, they brought some of us here. I know this area of Flen well, and though it has changed through the years it is unmistakable to me. I have longed to see it nearly every day for the last ten years."

"Is there anything you can tell us about the Marru of this town? Do you know anything about the (crèche)?"

"I know that some important Marru come and go from the...crèche, did you call it? I also know that recently the Marru have begun consorting with other folk from the Jotens, giants and the like. A few days ago some giant procession came through, all dressed in the finest of fancy jewels. Their footsteps shook the ground like thunder. Gregor and I were brought before them for some reason, though I don't understand a word of what was being said. The giants seemed to be on good terms with the Marru. I didn't see any unease in either group."

As for that building...I don't know anything about it other than that they put some other strange Marru in charge of it. In ten years he's the only one I've met who could speak with me."

"Can you describe that Marru?"

"Well he is shorter than the real big ones, but bigger than these or the ones who wear the fancy regalia. Wears a suit of Full Plate like he was born to it and his face looks a bit different. Most of these look like jackals or hyenas. He seemed more like one of my uncle's hunting hounds."

(Tell the heroes that this fits the description of Gustavren, should they ask)

Garsin is polite and humble to the heroes, thanking them profusely for ending his suffering. Once talk turns to what to do with him, Garsin will speak again.

"Give me a few minutes to scrounge some of these weapons and I'll fight with you if you desire. Unless you have the means to get me out of here magically and back to Flen, I'm coming with you. These Marru are going to find out what it feels like to have a true son of Keoland owe them something."

The heroes are free to do with Garsin what they please, and they have several options. If they wish, he will accompany them. Garsin will be window dressing for any fights that occur, providing no useful help.

Alternately the heroes can send Garsin away. If they have some form of magical transportation he will gladly accept it. If a hero gives Garsin the stone that was given to them by the Wyrd, he will

use that to *teleport* to Flen. Unless that hero has another way to magically leave Kilm at the end of this adventure they will earn the AR item **Behind the Front**.

The Garsin Dilemma – Is he an impostor?

Heroes who have adventured in Keoland frequently will know that several years ago Lord Garsin was freed from captivity by several prominent adventurers – some of the adventurers may even be directly present. These heroes will undoubtedly know that this scenario has played out in a similar fashion in the past and will want to determine who exactly Lord Garsin is.

Any hero, who asks or tells Garsin about this previous encounter, including meeting him in the past, will be met with an incredulous stare and disbelief. Lord Garsin will claim to have been captive for this entire duration and never to have met the heroes before. Any magic used to determine truth will yield that Garsin is telling the truth, leaving some potentially interesting questions for Keoland's future. Is Garsin insane? Is there someone or something out there masquerading as Lord Garsin? If so, what damage has it done to the Kingdom? These are questions with answers for another day. Right now the heroes have only the immediate options of how to deal with Lord Garsin in front of them.

If, after all this, the heroes search the basement they will find several broken crates. With a **Search DC 25** they will find that one of the broken crates has what appears to be a family crest on it. The crest is the Keoish lion set on a red and green diagonal field.

A **Knowledge (Sheldomar/Metaregion One) DC 15** will tell the hero that this is the family crest of the Syn'Andolyn family, rulers of the Earldom of Gand.

A second **Search DC 35** will turn up a simple wooden spoon half buried in the dirt floor under the broken crates. This spoon is a *myrlund's spoon*, and will also be found if any hero casts *detect magic* while in the cellar.

Area 4: The Crèche

The area around the crèche itself is a swept-clean remnant of the town of Kilm. It is obvious that several structures were torn down to accommodate the creation of the crèche.

The crèche itself is a very large structure which occupies a disproportionate amount of what used to be the center of Kilm. The crèche has four

gently sloping sides that come to a point some sixty feet above the ground. The walls are made of what appears to be a single sheet of stone, and the edges are the only parts that show any sign of being worked with tools.

A **Knowledge: (Architecture and Engineering) DC 30** will find only the tiniest of imperfections in the three sides without doors, these likely made from exposure to the elements.

Any dwarven heroes can make a stonecunning check against DC 10. Success indicates that the hero knows that this architecture matches against several dwarven styles, all of which have fallen out of favor as being inherently unstable. The stone itself is a type of bedrock found only in mountain ranges that abut deserts. It is very resistant to heat, reflecting the sun's warmth and leaving the interior cooled.

When the heroes look for an entrance:

Three sides of the building bear no visible means of entry. The fourth has a pair of very tall double doors. The doors extend at least thirty feet up the crèche's height.

The doors themselves are unlocked, untrapped, and unguarded. There are many tracks going into and out of the doors, too many to make any real sense of.

Magical transportation into the crèche is impossible because the crèche is not strictly part of the prime material plane. The Marru crèche located in Kilm was created in such a manner that it is coterminous with the Elemental Plane of Earth. The door itself radiates conjuration (teleportation) magic.

A hero who casts *detect magic* may make a **Knowledge (Planes) DC 35**. Success indicates that the hero knows the following information.

1. The crèche itself is not entirely part of the Prime Material Plane. It appears to be partially coterminous with the Elemental Plane of Earth. The most likely reason for creating something in this manner is to prevent magical transport or divination into.
2. The door itself may be destroyed or permanently barred. If that occurs, it should be impossible to ever enter or leave the crèche again, barring divine intervention.
3. The doors cannot be destroyed by simple brute force. The assistance of some form of powerful extraplanar creature will be necessary.

The heroes would have to use extraordinary measures in order to permanently destroy the doors. Any such attempt must include an extraplanar being with either the earth or air subtypes and that being must have at least 14 HD. If the heroes are capable of controlling such a being and wish to destroy the doors, award them full XP for the adventure and move to **Conclusion: Destroying the Crèche Doors.**

If the heroes attempt to open the doors, or search it, read the following.

As you close to within a few feet of the doors, you feel the earth beneath your feet shudder slightly, almost as if it were your skin crawling in disgust. When the shuddering is finished after a few seconds, you can see that the crèche has grown in height by about a foot. A fine layer of grey dust floats away from the base of the crèche.

The heroes should now realize that unless they find a way to do some serious damage to the crèche, that it will continue to get larger. Eventually the heroes will need to open the door.

Without sound, the tall doors swing wide, revealing a cool stone passage covered with a fine layer of sand. The passage quickly descends into total darkness.

From here on, the crèche is considered to be dark. Heroes must provide their own light sources. Since it is important for the heroes to not necessarily know what is going on outside of their sight range inside the crèche, you should make sure to keep track of the light each character carries or can see in.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE STALKYARD

The interior of the crèche is comprised of two portions. The first is the Stalkyard, which is where young marru are tested for their abilities and the flawed are destroyed. The second is a school at the far end of the Stalkyard where the marru practice their foul magics and create more of their kind.

The Stalkyard is a series of linked encounters that shows the heroes what marru society is as well as providing them with some challenges.

The interior of the crèche is large, easily the size of a small town in itself, simply submerged beneath kilm. It would be an incredibly tedious

affair to have the heroes attempt to search every room and corridor, so there is a means to have the heroes traverse the Stalkyard.

There is a pair of mandatory encounters in the Stalkyard, followed by a series of optional encounters. The number of optional encounters each party faces will be determined off of the highest wisdom modifier in the party.

Each party will face a number of optional encounters equal to 4 minus the highest wisdom modifier in the party. So a party where the highest wisdom score is 14 would face 2 optional encounters while a party where the highest wisdom score is 18 would face 0 optional encounters.

The optional encounters are designed to wear away at the party's resources a tiny bit, in order to simulate the wear they suffer as they cross the Stalkyard.

The Stalkyard itself resembles a worn down and ancient city, abandoned to the ages. This is primarily because the vast majority of the marru are out attempting to conquer Keoland or responding to the Keoish counterattack.

In describing the Stalkyard, attempt to give the heroes the feeling that they are in the house of someone who has just stepped away. Many areas will have the signs of hastily abandoned work daily activities.

Encounter 3A: The Welcoming Committee (Mandatory)

Proceeding down the passageway, you hear the sound of running water. The passage opens up into a large room with several wells spaced around it.

Trotting towards the entrance is a group of heavily armed Marru. Seeing you, they appear surprised, momentarily unsure of what to do.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Marrusaults (3), Hexar, Nekkef, Suile, hp 62, See Appendix 1

Marrutact, Lorien, hp 58, see Appendix 1

APL 10 (EL 12)

Marrusaults (3), Hexar, Nekkef, Suile, Fighter 2, hp 85, See Appendix 2

Marrutact, Lorien, hp 80, see Appendix 2.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Marrusaults (3), Hexar, Nekkef, Suile, Fighter 4, hp 103, See Appendix 3

Marrutact, Lorien, hp 90, see Appendix 3.

The heroes gain a surprise round in this combat. The EL of this encounter has been adjusted by -1 to account for this.

There is no included map for this room as it is an unremarkable area. Start the heroes and Marru 60' apart from each other and let the fight begin.

The marru attack single-mindedly, attempting to focus on heroes who look weak or easily defeated. The marru will use their size advantage when possible to threaten and kill spellcasters in the rear ranks.

When the heroes are finished with the marru and they prepare to look around:

Looking out from the well room, you see several paths leading down into a stonework maze. The maze spreads throughout a giant bowl-shaped depression at least a mile across. On the far side of the bowl you see a pale green light emanating from a squat stone building. Immediately ahead of you is a small plaza.

Encounter 3B: The Marru Oracle (Mandatory)

Ahead of you the maze opens into a small plaza. In the center of the plaza is a small raised platform such as the ones street performers beg for coins from in Nirole Dra. Seated on the platform is a Marru wearing long white robes and cradling an ornate staff. From your vantage you can see that the Marru's face and hands are wrapped entirely in white linen bandages. The Marru turns towards you, perhaps hearing your footsteps or picking up your scent. He raises his hand and points at you.

The Marru seated in the plaza is named Hralen, and he is a curious sort of test for young Marru. Hralen is a leper, which is commonly known among the crèche. If a Marru contracts a disease such as leprosy, they are considered an unfit bloodline and killed. When the crèche went to carry out this justice on Hralen, he started spouting out prophesies of a great war and cleansing, espousing the victory of the Marru. Being a superstitious people, the Marru decided to let Hralen live and support him. Exceptionally

daring Marru whisper their name in his ear, and he is sometimes possessed with visions about their life.

Hralen is a noncombatant and (except for the danger of leprosy) completely non-threatening. If Hralen suffers any damage at all, subdual or lethal, he collapses and dies. "Heroes" should be made to feel especially valiant about their defeat of a sick and dying old Marru.

If the heroes attempt to talk to him, Hralen will speak in common.

"A pleasure it truly is to listen to sounds other than the Marrutongue and the sounds of the Stalkyard. Who are you and why do you test yourself here?"

Hralen is a crazy old Marru with a touch of prophecy in him. He is an opportunity for the heroes to interact a bit and get an insight or two about Marru culture but other than that he is largely unimportant. If this encounter drags on, Hralen will simply roll over and fall asleep.

Below are some possible questions and answers for Hralen.

"Who are you?"

"I am called Hralen, Jarleye of the Halfsun bloodline. Last of my line I am."

"What are you doing here?"

"The Marru of the Sunstrong crèche keep me. I am a prophet, a curiosity."

"How did you get here? Why can you speak Common?"

"It is uncommon for Marru to have what humans describe as wanderlust. As a youngling, I had it in quantites to spare. Marru who leave their crèche are branded outsiders and should they ever return they are killed."

"Why aren't you dead then?"

"I was to be executed when I returned, and indeed was on the path to the tablet when I was seized with a fit of visions. The Returned saw fit to grant me my life and now I sit in the Stalkyard as a test for the young. They whisper in my ear to see if I see anything about them, and run before my sickness consumes them."

"What sickness?"

"I am a leper."

"The tablet?"

“That is where Marru go to die. I gather you are here to breach the tower, the tablet is inside.”

“The Returned? Who is that?”

“He is the master of the tower. For untold years we Marru have lived in hidden valleys in the Jotens, away from prying eyes. Several years ago a powerful figure found us and began to cultivate my people’s hatred of the outside world. Today they march under his banner.”

Eventually the heroes should be done with Hralen. If any hero is daring or foolish enough to come into physical contact with Hralen, have them make a Fortitude save DC 20. Failure yields the AR item **Leprosy!**

Encounter 3C: Living Quarters (Optional)

The maze of passages eventually leads you to a well traveled corridor. A door in one wall of the passages lies broken off its hinges.

If the heroes choose not to investigate, they may skip this encounter. If they enter, they are walking into a typical marru dwelling.

The area behind the door is a chaos of life gone awry. The area is obviously a living quarter, with several beds along one wall and the trappings of everyday life evident. A table near the center of the room is broken into large chunks, which then appear to have been partially burned in a firepit. Broken pieces of crockery and small bits of refuse lie strewn about the room. It appears as though the occupants left in a great hurry.

This living area was emptied when the marru were forced to respond to the keoish counterattack. Searching the area yields nothing of value.

Encounter 3D: Sandworm Pit (Optional)

As the heroes move through the crèche, they come across a pit of juvenile sandworms.

The floor just ahead of you widens out, resembling the top half of an hourglass. A circular pit descends into darkness. A dilapidated rope bridge spans the pit, swaying gently in a barely felt breeze. On the far side of the pit you see a small unmoving form lying on the ground. From the bottom of the pit you can hear a gentle echoed hissing.

Crossing the pit is an exercise in skill checks, magic, or ingenuity. A **Balance DC 20 + APL** will get a traveling hero across. Flight or teleportation

will suffice as well, as will many other means of transport. Heroes may attempt to help each other across by steadying each end of the bridge, adding a +2 circumstance bonus to the roll of the person crossing (+4 maximum).

Failure to succeed on this balance check while crossing the bridge means the hero starts to fall in. a Reflex save DC 18 will allow the hero to catch on to the bridge without falling. Failure on the reflex save means the hero falls in, suffering 2d6 falling damage and landing among several hungry juvenile sandworms.

A hero in the pit may then climb out of the pit without needing any rolls, but suffers 10 damage as the juvenile sandworms bite them mercilessly.

If any form of area damage more than 20 points is thrown into the pit, the sandworms will die.

The form on the far side of the bridge is a dead marru. The cause of death is obvious, as it is missing both its legs, with a bloody smear trailing down into the sandworm pit.

Any hero with the **Desert Dissection** AR item will note that this marru appears to be rather immature and oddly formed. Its arms appear to be too long for its body, and its face is misshapen.

Encounter 3E: The “University” (optional)

This corridor opens into a large amphitheatre. The bowl shaped structure is empty but for tiered rings of seats looking down on a central podium. Among the seats you can see stacks of parchment and bound books.

The amphitheatre appears capable of seating 100 or more comfortably, and upon entering it becomes apparent that the acoustics are perfect for hearing whoever stands at the podium.

The books are all written in marru, and can only be truly translated with the use of magic. Other means of transcription will simply require too much time. A **Spot DC 20** (or specifically asking) will note that the glyphs on the books appear to be the same, indicating some advanced form of copying them.

There is nothing else of value in the area.

Encounter 3F: The Corridor Trap (optional)

This corridor demonstrates the ingenuity of the Marru in setting a trap.

The corridor widens in front of you as it approaches a set of iron doors in the distance. The floor becomes cut marble of the highest

quality. Ten feet in front of you the marble is stained a horrid shade of brown that very much resembles dried blood.

A pair of marrulurks are watching the heroes from covered alcoves high in the wall. As the heroes make the obvious choice of searching the area for traps, the marru begin studying whatever hero searches the area. Any search checks the hero make, make them for the hero and tell them that they find no evidence of a trap.

If the hero searches for three rounds, the marrulurks will fire a single volley from hiding and then retreat through the back of their alcoves and disappear.

The marrulurks are NOT using their death attack as listed in their appendix entry, they are simply attempting to inflict damage and then flee.

The targeted hero will receive ranged attacks at the listed values per APL. Mechanically, this is listed as a trap for ease of bookkeeping.

APL 8 (EL 5)

(2) Atk +12 ranged (1d8 plus poison, arrow);
poison (Large monstrous scorpion venom, DC 14 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 Con/1d4 Con);

APL 10 (EL 7)

(2) Atk +15 ranged (1d8 plus poison, arrow);
poison (Large monstrous scorpion venom, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 Con/1d4 Con).

APL 12 (EL 9)

(2) Atk +18 ranged (1d8 plus poison, arrow);
poison (Large monstrous scorpion venom, DC 16 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 Con/1d4 Con).

ENCOUNTER 4: THE ARCANICA

The Arcanica is detailed in **DM AID 4**.

After the heroes have moved through the Stalkyard and gained some insight into marru ecology, they eventually will reach the Arcanica, which is where the magically inclined marru are taught.

All doors in the Arcanica swing closed automatically unless propped open.

Area 1: Entry Hall

Finally, the strange maze ends as you approach a large pair of iron doors set into a

squat structure built into the wall. The doors are decorated with images of robed marru with twisted staves, each performing acts of magic.

The doors themselves radiate a sickly green glow.

The doors are untrapped and unlocked. When a hero opens the door:

Inside the doors you see a large entry hall. Small doors sit in the east and west walls, an ornate set of double doors seals the north wall.

Area 2: Materials Storage

This room is a jumble of tables and shelves. The former are piled high with boxes and crates, the latter with jars and vials. A fine layer of dust covers most of the materials, indicating that these rooms do not see frequent use.

Area 3: Library and Alchemy Laboratory

This room is filled wall to ceiling with bookshelves. Set throughout the room are long marble tables, each covered with beakers and vials. A complex arrangement of tubes runs from the beakers to copper pipes which in turn run to the ceiling. A foul odor lingers in the air near the tables.

At a central lectern in the room sits an open book. In the north wall a single black iron door sits sealed.

Any hero with an alchemy related skill will recognize this setup as a complicated distillery of unknown liquids. The pipes run into the ceiling, then into the beakers, and then back into the ceiling.

Any hero who reads the book may read **Player Handout 4**.

The filled vials in the room are examples of the Marru zymes. Any hero foolish enough to attempt to drink one is wracked with nausea for a minute as their body fights the concoction. Until they are analyzed and examined they cannot be properly used.

Finally, among the materials are six potion vials each marked with a common rune for "healing". They are each a potion of *cure serious wounds*.

Area 4: Milo and the Machine

This room is entirely given over to two eye catching sights. The first is a large machine crafted of burnished brass. Chained to the

machine are nearly a dozen men, each in various stages of decrepitude. The second is a large basalt slab set before the machine. On the slab lies an unconscious man.

Complex tubes and wires fill the room. Each man chained to the machine has several tubes running into their arms which then feed into copper piping overhead. Hanging from the ceiling over the unconscious man on the slab is a dizzying array of syringes, each filled with a different colored fluid. A large tome sits open on a small end table.

A simple wooden door sits closed on the eastern wall.

Anyone reading the tome may read **Player Handout 5**.

The machine in the room is, again, clearly recognizable as a sophisticated alchemy apparatus. The men strapped to the machine are all of mixed oerdian stock and wear simple clothes, appearing to be natives to the area.

A **Search DC 25** will reveal that several of the men have painful looking deformities, all similar in that they resemble pieces of a marru attached to a normal man. One has sharp incisors; one has knees that are bent backwards, et cetera.

Several of the men are dead, and the survivors are on death's door. No amount of healing, magical or otherwise, can save them.

The man on the basalt slab is a different case. When a hero examines him:

The man on the slab appears healthy except for some fading bruises. If it were not for his location, he might be taken as being asleep. As you watch, a deep inhalation shakes his body.

His features are primarily oerdian and he has long dark hair that has been bound into a braid. Examining more closely, you see a horrifying sight.

Starting on the sides of his neck, running down over his chest and then continuing down the sides of his legs the man has a series of holes that have been punched in his skin. The horrifying aspect is that threaded through each hole is a fine golden thread coated in just the barest hint of the man's blood. Having seen your share of wounds, you quickly recognize what has happened to the poor soul on the slab.

He's been stitched back together.

Most Contrite Ironclad Mauler Milo Astra, Knight of the Watch

Heroes who have been adventuring in Keoland for many years may recognize the man on the slab as Milo Astra. Any hero who participated in KEO3-03 *Will of the People* will immediately recognize him. Milo perpetrated an attempt on the Earl of Linth's life in an effort to cause a civil war which would topple the Linth house and prevent an ancient prophecy from coming true. He was slain by the Earl's guards, a group of hired adventurers. Afterwards, his body was secretly taken away to the Linth manor house, where it was stuffed and mounted as a personal trophy. After the events of KEO4-05 *A Last Dance at Midnight*, Milo's body was recovered and he was *resurrected* by the Knights of the Watch and returned to duty.

Milo served as a bridge in the gap between the largely suel order and the oerdian people it protects. When the troubles began on the western border, Milo asked for and received permission to travel and offer assistance. Unfortunately for Milo, he was overwhelmed by a Marru patrol and brought to the crèche.

Milo radiates a strong aura of conjuration (healing) at all times.

If any hero touches Milo (making a heal check is considered automatically touching him), he will awaken and speak.

Suddenly roused, the man on the slab pulls away from your hands, rolling to a fighting crouch. His eyes cast about for a weapon. In the light of the chamber you can see the blood that runs on the thread that binds him begin to move faster.

"Who are you? Where am I?"

If any hero wants to kill Milo he may be struck down without a fight. He is unarmed, unarmored, and the victim of countless experiments.

If the heroes talk to Milo, the following conversations are possible.

"Who are you?"

"I am Most Contrite Ironclad Mauler Milo Astra, Knight of the Watch."

"What are you doing here?"

"I am a captive, I came west to aid with the upheaval in the Good Hills, but these creatures ambushed me and I was knocked unconscious."

"What happened here?"

"I don't know, really. I remember.....a little....just ah, no. Hmm, I don't want to talk about it."

At this point Milo isn't of much use to the heroes. He is unarmed and armored, but he will ask the heroes to allow him to accompany them. If they offer the use of the Wyrds magic he will decline, just asking for an escort out of the crèche.

Other than Milo and the Machine, there is nothing else of value in the room. When the heroes move through the eastern door, proceed to encounter five.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE SEED OF THE NEW FLESH

Opening the eastern door, you are greeted with an odd sight considering the room it adjoins. A simple study complete with a writing desk and moderately sized table awaits you. A pair of statues depicting fierce marru warriors are the only notable décor.

Seated at the table are a pair of forms. One you recognize as a particular man with a hound's head, the other is much stranger. Wearing robes the color of a magnificent sunset, the second figure's face is completely obscured behind a shifting riot of colors.

Seeing you enter, the two turn to you. The voice that comes from the robed figure sounds as though it is a combination of a dozen people.

"I've been awaiting your arrival eagerly, extarasi. Won't you sit?"

The heroes may choose to launch themselves into immediate action. If they do so and attack, proceed to the combat below.

If the heroes choose to sit, or at least to speak to the figure without attacking, he will continue.

"I've brought you here today to show you my might. I am known by many names, but the one that suits me best at this juncture is The Returned. For lack of a more discerning title, I am Keoland's new Emperor.

You see, the empire as you know it has become weak and toothless, subject to the whims of its vassal states. Quite simply, this

angers me and this angers my deity, whom has charged me with correcting this injustice.

Your king is a reluctant one, barely above a commoner's blood, and he has proven himself to be a remarkable statement on the proof that virtue is not hereditary but that madness runs in families.

It is my hand on the rudder that moves the marru and many others, and it took much doing to bring you here. Even now the Royal Standards who assaulted Godakin Keep are being hunted down in the hills. Today shall be remembered as a dark day for such a noble fighting force, squandered by those who do not know any better. I, however, know how to use my resources.

Resources like the stitched man with you. In a fortnight he will be my creature in soul as he is in body, and he will become a fine general for my armies.

This is the same offer I extend to you."

Milo yells out, "I shall never be your creature, servant of a bad master!"

The figure reaches out its hand, gesturing at you.

"I have searched you out because you are some of Keoland's most valuable weapons. The Lion Throne will simply misuse you as they have misused so many others. I will not underestimate you as they will.

Become the generals of my army as the stitched one will. Keoland deserves to be a realm of tolerance between its inhabitants, a realm where those who have different blood are not simply shucked off to work in labor camps near a pitiless swamp.

There will be shed blood, and not all of it will be the guilty's, but at the end of this insurrection, Keoland will no longer be the laughingstock of the world.

Sadly, I must press you for an answer."

The heroes are being offered a terrible bargain. If any hero accepts, make sure they understand that this will mean the removal of their character from the campaign. They receive the AR item **Extarasi**.

Once the heroes dither, refuse, or attack the following occurs.

"A waste. Reconsider your choice as you await my returning you to this world. Death, you will

see, is no bar to entering my service.” With that the robed man simply disappears.

Gustavren shudders uncontrollably, his eyes changing colors from flat black to a fiery red and then back again. He whispers in a horrible voice as he draws a greatsword coated in ice from a sheathe.

“You are too late! I must obey!”

APL 8 (EL 11)

Gustavren the Packmaster, Male Outsider
Ftr7: hp 130; see *Appendix 1*

APL 10 (EL 13)

Gustavren the Packmaster, Male Outsider
Ftr9: hp 150; see *Appendix 2*

APL 12 (EL 15)

Gustavren the Packmaster, Male Outsider
Ftr11: hp 170; see *Appendix 3*

There are three primary ways of dealing with Gustavren. The heroes can kill him, they can run from him, or they can attempt to break through whatever control The Returned obviously has over him.

Killing Gustavren:

Simple as it is to say, it is not so simple to do. Gustavren fights to the death, unlike his previous run-ins with the heroes. This fight is the ultimate test of the heroes' resources, because any time Gustavren is wounded below 50% total hit points he will use the next opportunity to separate from the heroes via *teleport* to a hidden cache of potions in order to heal himself and return. For every 20 hp of damage he must heal, Gustavren will be gone for one round. Gustavren has enough potions stocked to heal himself a total of hit points equal to his maximum, depending on the APL.

Gustavren's *teleport* is a supernatural ability, so it does not provoke an attack of opportunity and does not require concentration checks.

When he returns, Gustavren will *teleport* to a point that he can see when he left that will not allow any of the heroes to get him in an unduly unfavorable situation. He will then resume crushing heroes one by one while muttering various things.

Fleeing from Gustavren:

This combat has a high probability to send the heroes fleeing. If it does, use normal movement speed until the heroes reach the Stalkyard. Once they reach the Stalkyard it will take them a number

of minutes equal to double the amount of encounters they had to cross it in reverse. (minimum four minutes) If the heroes have some way to avoid getting lost (*find the path*, etc) the time required to cross is halved.

For every minute required to cross the Stalkyard, Gustavren will attack them once by teleporting in. Draw a map to your liking but always ensure that the area is cramped (no wider than 10'). Gustavren will pick the terrain carefully for his return.

Breaking The Returned's Control

Fighting Gustavren is an important piece of a future puzzle because it hints to the heroes that The Returned has some form of powerful mind control as a tool. Why this is important, what this mind control is, and where The Returned obtained it will become a plot point in a future adventure.

Since this is the first hint that the Hound Archon is potentially controlled against his will, it is important that you make it visible to the players that Gustavren is fighting for control and that he is conflicted. In the round-by-round encounter scenario detailed below, there are some things that Gustavren will say in order to make this apparent.

The primary means of breaking the mind control must be through roleplaying, assisted with a diplomacy mechanic. Perceptive heroes may try to break Gustavren's state with the use of *dispel magic* or *greater dispel*. Unfortunately for the hero, the source of the magic is of nearly incomprehensible power, and such efforts will be unsuccessful. Any hero who casts a dispel-type spell will immediately know that the magic is beyond their ability to simply lift.

Any hero may attempt to make a **Diplomacy DC 18 + APL**. Success indicates that Gustavren openly hesitates, his sword wavering while he fights for control.

In order for this effect to last however, the heroes must roleplay their attempt to reach through to Gustavren. Several themes are good ways for the heroes to resonate empathy from Gustavren.

- **Chivalry.** As an Archon, Gustavren used to be a paragon of chivalric thought. Appealing to his desire to return to that path is a good way into his psyche.
- **Duty.** Hound Archons in particular are creatures that are duty bound. Appealing

to Gustavren's ingrained sense of duty is also a good path into his head.

- **Mercy.** This is particularly useful if the heroes are still wounded or obviously outmatched. Hounds love sport, and there is no sport in killing weaker enemies.

After the heroes make the initial successful diplomacy check, they must then follow it up with two more of increasing difficulty while also continuing to roleplay their attempt.

The second **Diplomacy** check is **DC 23 + APL**. The third is **DC 28 + APL**. During this period, Gustavren will not attack unless he is directly attacked or a diplomacy check is failed.

If the heroes complete all three diplomacy checks, read the following.

As quickly as the rage sets upon Gustavren, it passes. His eyes become clear blue, and then they roll up into his head as he slumps to the ground, unconscious.

Award full XP for the encounter.

Round 1: Full Attack a weak looking hero if possible. If not, *teleport* to area 3 and ready an action to attack anyone opening the door.

Gustavren yells the following:

"Impure thoughts lead to profane actions! I am unclean!"

Round 2: If still in an advantageous position (getting a full attack on one hero while not facing the full brunt of the heroes' attacks) or if a hero is potentially killable, press the attack. If wounded, *teleport* to the cache and begin healing.

Yell the following:

"I am not some simple jester! I am Gustavren the packmaster!"

Round 3: If not in need of healing but positioning is becoming bad, *teleport* to area 5 or area 1 in order to flank and attack a weak looking hero.

Gustavren yells the following:

"I want this nightmare to be over!"

Killing a Hero:

Gustavren will yell the following when he kills a hero, one at a time.

"Back to the cold dark with you!"

"Your reach exceeds your grasp!"

"You will show the proper respect!"

"Torment me no more!"

"I shall split your thoughts open!"

"I feel the hand of the unseen upon me!"

The goal when playing as Gustavren is to use hit-and-run tactics to wear the heroes down. It should be almost impossible for the heroes to prevent you from teleporting away, so you should take advantage of your powers to whittle down a superior force.

Whenever Gustavren teleports away to heal, you should do your best to prevent metagaming by falling out of initiative rotations and allowing the heroes to act until they have taken enough actions for Gustavren to return.

Every time Gustavren teleports out to heal, he will yell one of the following when he returns.

"I'll show you this beaten dog still has some teeth!"

"I am reinvigorated. Are you?"

"How much more can you withstand?"

If the heroes get involved in a hit-and-run fight, have Gustavren yell as he attacks. Use the following as a guideline to instill some fear into the heroes.

"I smell your fear!"

"There is no place to hide from one who tracks across the cosmos!"

"Even if you get outside, where shall you run to?"

In the event any heroes are killed or captured, they are not permanently lost. They gain the AR item **A Mysterious Return**.

ENCOUNTER 6: RETURN TO NIOLE DRA

After defeating Gustavren the heroes will find that the crèche is empty and they will need to return to Niole Dra. Whatever manner they accomplish this in is immaterial. When they return:

Upon your arrival in Niole Dra you are immediately met by Count Orloc and the Wyrd. Orloc looks even more haggard than usual even the wyrd's shoulders are stooped from fatigue. All around the city has taken on the air of a funeral as badly wounded Royal

Standards moan and thrash by the hundreds on the cobblestones.

Orloc speaks.

"It was an ambush. Somehow they knew what was planned and our teleport circles were compromised. Many of our troops just never arrived, and those that did and survived say that something attacked them as they crossed over. Until we know otherwise we have to assume that our foe can somehow assault us while we use teleportation magic. It is an incalculable advantage.

What did you find? Were you successful?"

Allow the heroes to report whatever they wish, and those heroes who have an additional objective to report their success or failure. After all is said and done, the day was a loss for Keoland.

CONCLUSION: SUCCESS

Your mission complete, you count yourselves fortunate to have survived one of the worst days in Keoish history. The news of the counteroffensive is not good; less than one in ten returned from Godakin Keep, and the use of teleportation magics appears to be compromised.

Through this dark day, the light of hope shines. Returned to the ranks of Keoland's finest warriors are one missing for ten years and one renowned for his martial prowess. Additionally, a wealth of knowledge about the specifics of the Marru army has been brought back.

The one who calls himself The Returned accused the Lion Throne of hubris, but perhaps today he has sealed his own fate by failing to kill Keoland's most powerful allies.

CONCLUSION: DESTROYING THE CRECHE DOORS

It takes the enlistment of some powerful extraplanar muscle, but the work goes quickly enough once they arrive. The crèche doors seem to attempt to resist the efforts to destroy them but against your minions there is no respite.

It starts with a single squeal of tortured metal and suddenly the top half of the doors fold and bend over on each other. In an eyeblink the

doors are bent and mutilated. In a second eyeblink the doors are reduced to the size of a Keoish Sparrow and fall into the dust, leaving a smooth blank slate of wall behind them.

Whatever is in the crèche is no longer within Keoland.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter 2

Rescue Elgarin.

APL 8: 330 xp.
APL 10: 390 xp.
APL 12: 450 xp.

Encounter 3

Defeat the Marru.

APL 8: 300 xp.
APL 10: 360 xp.
APL 12: 420 xp.

Encounter 5

Kill/Escape From/Redeem Gustavren.

APL 8: 330 xp.
APL 10: 390 xp.
APL 12: 450 xp.

Story Award

APL 8: 300 xp.
APL 10: 360 xp.
APL 12: 420 xp.

Total possible experience

APL 8: 1,125 xp.
APL 10: 1,350 xp.
APL 12: 1,575 xp.

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a

“treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional adventure, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter 2:

APL 8: L: 4,900 gp, C: 2,500 gp, M: 3 +1 *Great Falchions* (3,450 ea), *Headband of Intellect +2* (4,000), *Gloves of Arrow Snaring* (4,000) *Cloak of Resistance +2* (4,000)

APL 10: L: 5,500 gp, C: 5,200 gp, M: 3 +1 *Great Falchions* (3,450 ea), *Headband of Intellect +2* (4,000), *Gloves of Arrow Snaring* (4,000) *Gauntlets of Ogre Power* (4,000), *Cape of the Mountebank* (10,080).

APL 12: L: 8,600 gp, C: 8,800 gp, M: 3 +1 *Great Falchions* (3,450 ea), *Headband of Intellect +2* (4,000), *Gloves of Arrow Snaring* (4,000) gp), *Gauntlets of Ogre Power* (4,000), *Cape of the Mountebank* (10,080) *Stone Salve* (4,000), *Staff of Fire* (17,750).

Encounter 3:

APL 8: L: 4,900 gp, C: 2,500 gp, M: 3 +1 *Great Falchions* (3,450 ea),

APL 10: L: 5,500 gp, C: 5,200 gp, M: 3 +1 *Great Falchions* (3,450 ea),

APL 12: L: 8,600 gp, C: 8,800 gp, M: 3 +1 *Great Falchions* (3,450 ea), *Gauntlets of Ogre Power* (4,000),

Encounter 5:

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 1 gp, M: *Mithral Full Plate* +1, +1 *Frost Greatsword*

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 1 gp, M: *Mithral Full Plate* +1, +1 *Frost Greatsword*

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 1 gp, M: *Mithral Full Plate* +1, +1 *Frost Greatsword*, *Belt of Giant Strength* +6

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 8: L: 9,800 gp, C: 5,001 gp, M: X gp – Total: (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 11,000 gp, C: 10,401 gp, M: X gp – Total: (2,300 gp).

APL 12: L: 17,400 gp, C: 17,601 gp, M: X gp – Total: (3,300 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

Leprosy!: Didn't your mother teach you not to play with rotting people wearing linen bandages? You should have listened, because now you're a leper. If this remains uncured (*cure disease at 7th lvl will suffice*) at the end of a scenario, you lose a small but memorable piece of yourself. Each piece lost gives you a cumulative -1 penalty to your

charisma. If cured, all lost charisma is restored without further magic. Luckily for those around you, you're not further contagious.

Dark Knowledge: You have discovered the secret behind the recent explosion of the numbers of Marru. Don't allow anyone to be captured by them.

Zyme Machine: You know what's in that Zyme. You can drink any Zyme you come across in your future travels and they will have the listed effects.

Extarasi: Evil beckons! You have answered the call of The Returned and accepted your place as his destroying fist. Your character is removed from the campaign and becomes property of the Keoland Triad. Please send all pertinent character information to keolandplots@hotmail.com. Don't worry about telling your friends farewell, you will be seeing them again when they bow at your feet.

A Mysterious Return: You were defeated by Gustavren the Packmaster in a stunning showcase of the powers granted to him by The Returned. However, when you next open your eyes you are no longer in the crèche and that horrible sword is no longer chopping you to pieces. You have no explanation for this. Report this AR item to every Keoland Regional adventure you play until KEO8-06.

Item Access

APL 8 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6 plus the following):

- *Staff of Fire* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Cape of the Mountebank* (Adventure, DMG)
- *Mithral Full Plate +1* (Adventure, DMG)
- *Crystal of Adamant Weaponry* (Lesser) (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Crystal of Energy Assault* (Lesser, Cold) (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Crystal Echoblade* (Adventure, Magic Item Compendium)
- *Belt of Priestly Might* (Kord/Hextor/Heironeous) (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)

APL 10 (all of APLS, 6, 8 plus the following):

- *Holy Surge Weapon Upgrade* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Fleshgrinding Weapon Upgrade* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)

- *Foxhide Armor* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Shield of Mercy* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Shattermantle Weapon Upgrade* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Rod of Surprises* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)

APL 12 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 plus the following):

- *Amulet of Retributive Healing* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Angelhelm* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Belt of Battle* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Goggles of Foefinding* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Robe of Retaliation* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Rearguard's Cape* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Spellmight Bracers* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Skirmisher Boots* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Transposer Cloak* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Vest of the Master Evoker* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)

APPENDIX 1 – APL 8

ENCOUNTER 2 AND ENCOUNTER 3

MARRUSAULT, FTR2 **CR 7**
 NE Large monstrous humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +3
Languages Common, Marru

AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 22
 (+1 dex, +8 armor, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 62 (8 HD)
Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Speed 20 ft. Full Plate (4 squares)
Melee Great Falchion +15/+10melee (1d12+10/15-20)
 and bite +5 melee (1d8+5);
Ranged none
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +8; **Grp** +18
Atk Options Pounce, Howl of Defiance
Combat Gear Full Plate, Great Falchion +1, Gauntlets
 of Ogre Power. ^{SS} Great Falchion – *Sandstorm* page
 96-97

Abilities Str 20, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 14
SQ none
Feats Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Great
 Falchion), Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon
 Focus (Great Falchion) Improved Critical (Great
 Falchion).
Skills Listen + 7, Search +1, Spot +3
Possessions combat gear.

Howl of Defiance (Su): Once per day, a marrsault
 can loose a terrifying howl as a free action. All
 creatures except other marrusaults within 30 feet
 must succeed on a DC15 Will save or become
 fatigued. Those within 10 feet who fail their save
 become exhausted. The save DC is Charisma-
 based

Pounce (Ex): If a marrusault charges, it can make
 a full attack, including its bite attack

Ferocity (Ex): A marrusault is such a tenacious
 combatant that it continues to fight without penalty
 even while disabled or dying

Marruspawn Traits

Discriminating Hearing (Ex): A marruspawn can
 hear across great distances with ease, gaining a +4
 racial bonus on Listen checks. A marruspawn's
 hearing is so sensitive that it can sense the presence
 of most creatures merely by the sound of their
 breathing, their heartbeat, or their movement if they
 are within 30 feet.

When a marruspawn detects a noise, the exact
 location of the source is not revealed – only it's
 presence somewhere within that range. A
 marruspawn can take a move action to note the
 direction of the sound. Whenever a marruspawn
 comes within 5 feet of the source, it can pinpoint the
 sound's location. Undead, constructs and other

creatures that have no metabolism are not subject to
 being detected by discriminating hearing unless they
 move – in any round when they move, they are
 detected by the sound they make while moving
 through the air or shuffling along the ground. Only
 incorporeal creatures are completely undetectable,
 unless they wish to be detected.

Resistance to Dessication (Ex): Centuries of life
 in the waste afford marruspawn the ability to cope
 with thirst and reduced fluid intake. A marruspawn
 thus gains resistance to dessication damage 10.
 Whenever a marruspawn is subject to magical
 dessication damage, that damage is reduced by 10
 before being applied to the marruspawn's hit points

A marruspawn also takes no nonlethal or lethal
 damage from failing Constitution checks to avoid
 becoming dehydrated, although it still might become
 fatigued if it fails a check. If a marruspawn ever
 becomes dehydrated, whether due to natural causes
 or another effect (such as a spell), it needs to drink
 only a mouthful of water to lose that condition. A
 marruspawn also requires only half as much water in
 a day as is normally required for a creature of its size.

Resistance to Fire (Ex): Bred to withstand magic
 artillery, a marruspawn enjoys an inborn resistance to
 fire 5

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A marruspawn can see
 twice as far as humans in conditions of poor
 illumination

Languages: Marru.

MARRUTACT, WIZ2 **CR 7**
 NE medium monstrous humanoid
Init +5; **Senses** Listen +10, Spot +0
Languages Common, Marru

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18
 (+1 dex, +4 natural, +4 mage armor)
hp 58 (9 HD)
Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +12

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee staff +8 melee (1d6)
Ranged none
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +15
Atk Options Pounce, Howl of Healing
Combat Gear Staff, Robes, headband of intellect +2

Abilities Str 11, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16
SQ Spell Resistance 16
Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative,
 Scribe Scroll, Improved Toughness
Skills Concentration +13, Hide +13, Knowledge
 (arcana) +16, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge
 (geography) +16, Listen +10, Spellcraft +118,
 Survival +6(+8 to avoid getting lost or avoid hazards)
Possessions combat gear.

Howl of Healing (Su): Once per day, a marrutact can loose a regenerative howl as a free action. All marruspawn pledged to the howling marrutact within 30 feet heal 3d8+5 points of damage. Those within 10 feet heal an extra 1d8+1 points of damage.

Spells: A marrutact casts spells as a 5th level wizard
Marruspawn Traits

Discriminating Hearing (Ex): A marruspawn can hear across great distances with ease, gaining a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks. A marruspawn's hearing is so sensitive that it can sense the presence of most creatures merely by the sound of their breathing, their heartbeat, or their movement if they are within 30 feet.

When a marruspawn detects a noise, the exact location of the source is not revealed – only it's presence somewhere within that range. A marruspawn can take a move action to note the direction of the sound. Whenever a marruspawn comes within 5 feet of the source, it can pinpoint the sound's location. Undead, constructs and other creatures that have no metabolism are not subject to being detected by discriminating hearing unless they move – in any round when they move, they are detected by the sound they make while moving through the air or shuffling along the ground. Only incorporeal creatures are completely undetectable, unless they wish to be detected.

Resistance to Dessication (Ex): Centuries of life in the waste afford marruspawn the ability to cope with thirst and reduced fluid intake. A marruspawn thus gains resistance to dessication damage 10. Whenever a marruspawn is subject to magical dessication damage, that damage is reduced by 10 before being applied to the marruspawn's hit points.

A marruspawn also takes no nonlethal or lethal damage from failing Constitution checks to avoid becoming dehydrated, although it still might become fatigued if it fails a check. If a marruspawn ever becomes dehydrated, whether due to natural causes or another effect (such as a spell), it needs to drink only a mouthful of water to lose that condition. A marruspawn also requires only half as much water in a day as is normally required for a creature of its size.

Resistance to Fire (Ex): Bred to withstand magic artillery, a marruspawn enjoys an inborn resistance to fire 5.

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A marruspawn can see twice as far as humans in conditions of poor illumination.

Languages: Marru, Common.

Spells Prepared (Caster level 7th) (4/6/4/3/2, save DC = 15 + spell level): 0 – *Daze, Disrupt Undead, Mage Hand, Resistance*; 1st – *Mage Armor, Magic Missile x4, True Strike*; 2nd – *See Invisibility, Mirror Image, Scorching Ray x2*; 3rd – *Fireball x2, Dispel Magic*. 4th – *Wall of Ice, Enervation*

Spellbook: 0 – *Daze, Disrupt Undead, Mage Hand, Resistance*; 1st – *Mage Armor, Magic Missile x2, True Strike*; 2nd – *See Invisibility, Mirror Image Scorching Ray*; 3rd – *Fireball, Dispel Magic, Lightning Bolt*. Major Image 4th – *Wall of Ice, Enervation*

ENCOUNTER 5

GUSTAVREN, PACKMASTER

FALLEN HOUND ARCHON

CR 11

Male outsider Ftr7

LN Medium outsider (Archon, Extraplanar, Lawful)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages All

AC 29, touch 11, flat-footed 19

(+9 armor, +9 natural, +1 dex)

hp 130 (13 HD)

Fort +10 (+14 vs. poison), **Ref** +7, **Will** +8

Speed 30 ft. mithral full plate +1 (6 squares)

Melee +1 greatsword +22/+17/+12 (2d6+12+1d6 frost / 17-20, x2) and bite +15 (1d8+5) or Bite +19(1d8 + 5) and 2 Slam +14 (1d4+4)

Ranged none

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +19

Atk Options Spell-like abilities

Combat Gear mithral full plate +1, +1 frost greatsword, belt of giant strength +6

Abilities Str 23, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12

SQ Aura of Menace, change shape, damage reduction 10/magic and silver, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and petrification, scent, spell resistance 23, teleport, tongues

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Improved Critical (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (teleport)

Skills Concentration +10, Diplomacy +4, Hide +9*, Jump +18, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +11, Survival +10* (+12 following tracks)

Possessions combat gear

Spell-like abilities: at will—*aid, continual flame, message* (caster level 6th)

Aura of Menace (Su): A righteous aura surrounds archons that fight or get angry. Any hostile creature within a 20-foot radius of an archon must succeed on a Will save to resist its effects. The save DC varies with the type of archon, is Charisma-based, and includes a +2 racial bonus. Those who fail take a -2 penalty on attacks, AC, and saves for 24 hours or until they successfully hit the archon that generated the aura. A creature that has resisted or broken the effect cannot be affected again by the same archon's aura for 24 hours. Will DC 16 negates.

Change Shape (Su): A hound archon can assume any canine form of Small to Large size. While in canine form, the hound archon loses its bite, slam, and greatsword attacks, but gains the bite attack of the form it chooses. For the purposes of this ability, canines include any doglike or wolflike animal of the animal type.

Fallen from Grace: As a celestial who has been cast out, the Fallen Hound Archon has lost all alignment-

dependent special abilities that depend on a good/evil axis. The Fallen Hound Archon has had its DR changed to 10/magic and silver and has lost the ability to detect evil and the ability to project an aura of protection from evil.

Teleport (Su): Archons can use *greater teleport* at will, as the spell (caster level 14th), except that the creature can transport only itself and up to 50 pounds of objects.

APPENDIX 2 – APL 10

ENCOUNTER 2 AND ENCOUNTER 3

MARRUSAULT, FTR4 **CR 9**
 NE Large monstrous humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +3
Languages Common, Marru

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 22
 (+1 dex, +9 armor, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 85 (10 HD)
Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Speed 20 ft. Full Plate (4 squares)
Melee Great Falchion +18/+13 melee (1d12+13/15-20)
 and bite +11 melee (1d8+6)
Ranged none
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +10; **Grp** +21
Atk Options Pounce, Howl of Defiance
Combat Gear Full Plate +1, Great Falchion +1,
 Gauntlets of Ogre Power. ^{SS} Great Falchion –
Sandstorm page 96-97

Abilities Str 24, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 14
SQ none
Feats Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Great
 Falchion), Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon
 Focus (Great Falchion) Improved Critical (Great
 Falchion) Weapon Specialization (Great Falchion).
Skills Listen + 7, Search +1, Spot +3, Climb +3
Possessions combat gear.

Howl of Defiance (Su): Once per day, a marrusault can loose a terrifying howl as a free action. All creatures except other marrusaults within 30 feet must succeed on a DC15 Will save or become fatigued. Those within 10 feet who fail their save become exhausted. The save DC is Charisma-based

Pounce (Ex): If a marrusault charges, it can make a full attack, including its bite attack

Ferocity (Ex): A marrusault is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying

Marruspawn Traits

Discriminating Hearing (Ex): A marruspawn can hear across great distances with ease, gaining a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks. A marruspawn's hearing is so sensitive that it can sense the presence of most creatures merely by the sound of their breathing, their heartbeat, or their movement if they are within 30 feet.

When a marruspawn detects a noise, the exact location of the source is not revealed – only it's presence somewhere within that range. A marruspawn can take a move action to note the direction of the sound. Whenever a marruspawn comes within 5 feet of the source, it can pinpoint the sound's location. Undead, constructs and other

creatures that have no metabolism are not subject to being detected by discriminating hearing unless they move – in any round when they move, they are detected by the sound they make while moving through the air or shuffling along the ground. Only incorporeal creatures are completely undetectable, unless they wish to be detected.

Resistance to Dessication (Ex): Centuries of life in the waste afford marruspawn the ability to cope with thirst and reduced fluid intake. A marruspawn thus gains resistance to dessication damage 10. Whenever a marruspawn is subject to magical dessication damage, that damage is reduced by 10 before being applied to the marruspawn's hit points

A marruspawn also takes no nonlethal or lethal damage from failing Constitution checks to avoid becoming dehydrated, although it still might become fatigued if it fails a check. If a marruspawn ever becomes dehydrated, whether due to natural causes or another effect (such as a spell), it needs to drink only a mouthful of water to lose that condition. A marruspawn also requires only half as much water in a day as is normally required for a creature of its size.

Resistance to Fire (Ex): Bred to withstand magic artillery, a marruspawn enjoys an inborn resistance to fire 5

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A marruspawn can see twice as far as humans in conditions of poor illumination

Languages: Marru.

Description: Jacketed in coal-black full plate and clutching a prodigious scimitar, this jackal-headed humanoid looks like a juggernaut of death.

MARRUTACT, WIZ4 **CR 9**
 NE medium monstrous humanoid
Init +5; **Senses** Listen +10, Spot +0
Languages Common, Marru

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18
 (+1 dex, +4 natural, +4 mage armor)
hp 80 (11 HD)
Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +13

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee staff +9/+4 melee (1d6)
Ranged none
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +15
Atk Options Pounce, Howl of Healing
Combat Gear Staff, Robes, headband of intellect +2

Abilities Str 11, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 18, Cha 16
SQ Spell Resistance 16
Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative,
 Scribe Scroll, Improved Toughness.
Skills Concentration +15, Hide +15, Knowledge
 (arcana) +18, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge

(geography) +18, Listen +10, Spellcraft +20, Survival +8(+10 to avoid getting lost or avoid hazards);

Possessions combat gear.

Howl of Healing (Su): Once per day, a marrutact can loose a regenerative howl as a free action. All marruspawn pledged to the howling marrutact within 30 feet heal 3d8+5 points of damage. Those within 10 feet heal an extra 1d8+1 points of damage.

Spells: A marrutact casts spells as a 5th level wizard
Marruspawn Traits

Discriminating Hearing (Ex): A marruspawn can hear across great distances with ease, gaining a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks. A marruspawn's hearing is so sensitive that it can sense the presence of most creatures merely by the sound of their breathing, their heartbeat, or their movement if they are within 30 feet.

When a marruspawn detects a noise, the exact location of the source is not revealed – only it's presence somewhere within that range. A marruspawn can take a move action to note the direction of the sound. Whenever a marruspawn comes within 5 feet of the source, it can pinpoint the sound's location. Undead, constructs and other creatures that have no metabolism are not subject to being detected by discriminating hearing unless they move – in any round when they move, they are detected by the sound they make while moving through the air or shuffling along the ground. Only incorporeal creatures are completely undetectable, unless they wish to be detected.

Resistance to Dessication (Ex): Centuries of life in the waste afford marruspawn the ability to cope with thirst and reduced fluid intake. A marruspawn thus gains resistance to dessication damage 10. Whenever a marruspawn is subject to magical dessication damage, that damage is reduced by 10 before being applied to the marruspawn's hit points

A marruspawn also takes no nonlethal or lethal damage from failing Constitution checks to avoid becoming dehydrated, although it still might become fatigued if it fails a check. If a marruspawn ever becomes dehydrated, whether due to natural causes or another effect (such as a spell), it needs to drink only a mouthful of water to lose that condition. A marruspawn also requires only half as much water in a day as is normally required for a creature of its size.

Resistance to Fire (Ex): Bred to withstand magic artillery, a marruspawn enjoys an inborn resistance to fire 5

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A marruspawn can see twice as far as humans in conditions of poor illumination.

Languages: Marru, Common.

Spells Prepared (Caster level 9th) (4/6/4/4/3/2, save DC = 15 + spell level): 0 – *Daze, Disrupt Undead, Mage Hand, Resistance*; 1st – *Mage Armor, Magic Missile x4, True Strike*; 2nd – *See Invisibility, Mirror Image, Scorching Ray x2*; 3rd – *Fireball x2, Dispel Magic*. 4th – *Wall of Ice, Enervation, Ice Storm* 5th – *Transmute Rock to Mud, Cone of Cold*

Spellbook: 0 – *Daze, Disrupt Undead, Mage Hand, Resistance*; 1st – *Mage Armor, Magic Missile x2, True Strike*; 2nd – *See Invisibility, Mirror Image Scorching Ray*; 3rd – *Fireball, Dispel Magic, Lightning Bolt. Major Image* 4th – *Wall of Ice, Enervation, Ice Storm*; 5th – *Transmute Rock to Mud, Cone of Cold*.

ENCOUNTER 5

GUSTAVREN, PACKMASTER

FALLEN HOUND ARCHON

CR 13

Male outsider Ftr9

LN Medium outsider (Archon, Extraplanar, Lawful)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages All

AC 29, touch 11, flat-footed 19

(+9 armor, +9 natural, +1 dex)

hp 150 (15 HD)

Fort +11 (+15 vs. poison), **Ref** +8, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. mithral full plate +1 (6 squares)

Melee +1 greatsword +24/+19/+14 (2d6+14+1d6 frost / 17-20, x2) and bite +17 (1d8+5) or Bite +21(1d8 + 5) and 2 Slam +16 (1d4+4)

Ranged none

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +21

Atk Options Spell-like abilities

Combat Gear mithral full plate +1, +1 frost greatsword, belt of giant strength +6

Abilities Str 23, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12

SQ Aura of Menace, change shape, damage reduction 10/magic and silver, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and petrification, scent, spell resistance 25, teleport, tongues

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Improved Critical (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*teleport*), Greater Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Cleave

Skills Concentration 11, Diplomacy +4, Hide +9*, Jump 19, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12, Survival +10* (+12 following tracks)

Possessions combat gear

Spell-like abilities: at will—*aid, continual flame, message* (caster level 6th)

Aura of Menace (Su): A righteous aura surrounds archons that fight or get angry. Any hostile creature within a 20-foot radius of an archon must succeed on a Will save to resist its effects. The save DC varies with the type of archon, is Charisma-based, and includes a +2 racial bonus. Those who fail take a -2 penalty on attacks, AC, and saves for 24 hours or until they successfully hit the archon that generated the aura. A creature that has resisted or broken the effect cannot be affected again by the same archon's aura for 24 hours. Will DC 16 negates.

Change Shape (Su): A hound archon can assume any canine form of Small to Large size. While in canine

form, the hound archon loses its bite, slam, and greatsword attacks, but gains the bite attack of the form it chooses. For the purposes of this ability, canines include any doglike or wolflike animal of the animal type.

Fallen from Grace: As a celestial who has been cast out, the Fallen Hound Archon has lost all alignment-dependent special abilities that depend on a good/evil axis. The Fallen Hound Archon has had its DR changed to 10/magic and silver and has lost the ability to detect evil and the ability to project an aura of protection from evil.

Teleport (Su): Archons can use *greater teleport* at will, as the spell (caster level 14th), except that the creature can transport only itself and up to 50 pounds of objects

APPENDIX 3 – APL 12

ENCOUNTER 2 AND ENCOUNTER 3

MARRUSAULT, FTR6 **CR 11**
 NE Large monstrous humanoid
Init +5; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +3
Languages Common, Marru

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 22
 (+1 dex, +9 armor, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 103 (12 HD)
Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

Speed 20 ft. Full Plate (4 squares)
Melee Great Falchion +20/+15/+10 melee (1d12+13/15-20) and bite +13 melee (1d8+6)
Ranged none
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +12; **Grp** +23
Atk Options Pounce, Howl of Defiance
Combat Gear Full Plate +1, Great Falchion +1, Gauntlets of Ogre Power. ^{SS} Great Falchion – *Sandstorm* page 96-97

Abilities Str 25, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 14
SQ none
Feats Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Great Falchion), Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Great Falchion), Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (Great Falchion) Weapon Specialization (Great Falchion).
Skills Listen + 7, Search +1, Spot +3, Climb +5
Possessions combat gear.

Howl of Defiance (Su): Once per day, a marrusault can loose a terrifying howl as a free action. All creatures except other marrusaults within 30 feet must succeed on a DC15 Will save or become fatigued. Those within 10 feet who fail their save become exhausted. The save DC is Charisma-based

Pounce (Ex): If a marrusault charges, it can make a full attack, including its bite attack

Ferocity (Ex): A marrusault is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying

Marruspawn Traits

Discriminating Hearing (Ex): A marruspawn can hear across great distances with ease, gaining a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks. A marruspawn's hearing is so sensitive that it can sense the presence of most creatures merely by the sound of their breathing, their heartbeat, or their movement if they are within 30 feet.

When a marruspawn detects a noise, the exact location of the source is not revealed – only it's presence somewhere within that range. A marruspawn can take a move action to note the direction of the sound. Whenever a marruspawn comes within 5 feet of the source, it can pinpoint the

sound's location. Undead, constructs and other creatures that have no metabolism are not subject to being detected by discriminating hearing unless they move – in any round when they move, they are detected by the sound they make while moving through the air or shuffling along the ground. Only incorporeal creatures are completely undetectable, unless they wish to be detected.

Resistance to Dessication (Ex): Centuries of life in the waste afford marruspawn the ability to cope with thirst and reduced fluid intake. A marruspawn thus gains resistance to dessication damage 10. Whenever a marruspawn is subject to magical dessication damage, that damage is reduced by 10 before being applied to the marruspawn's hit points

A marruspawn also takes no nonlethal or lethal damage from failing Constitution checks to avoid becoming dehydrated, although it still might become fatigued if it fails a check. If a marruspawn ever becomes dehydrated, whether due to natural causes or another effect (such as a spell), it needs to drink only a mouthful of water to lose that condition. A marruspawn also requires only half as much water in a day as is normally required for a creature of its size.

Resistance to Fire (Ex): Bred to withstand magic artillery, a marruspawn enjoys an inborn resistance to fire 5

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A marruspawn can see twice as far as humans in conditions of poor illumination

Languages: Marru.

Description: Jacketed in coal-black full plate and clutching a prodigious scimitar, this jackal-headed humanoid looks like a juggernaut of death.

MARRUTACT, WIZ6 **CR 11**
 NE medium monstrous humanoid
Init +5; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +0
Languages Common, Marru

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18
 (+1 dex, +4 natural, +4 mage armor)
hp 90 (13 HD)
Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +14

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee staff +10/+5 melee (1d6)
Ranged none
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +10; **Grp** +15
Atk Options Howl of Healing
Combat Gear Staff, Robes, headband of intellect +2

Abilities Str 11, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 21, Wis 18, Cha 16
SQ Spell Resistance 16
Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Improved Toughness.
Skills Concentration +17, Hide +17, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge

(geography) +18, Listen +10, Spellcraft +22, Survival +8(+10 to avoid getting lost or avoid hazards);

Possessions combat gear.

Howl of Healing (Su): Once per day, a marrutact can loose a regenerative howl as a free action. All marruspawn pledged to the howling marrutact within 30 feet heal 3d8+5 points of damage. Those within 10 feet heal an extra 1d8+1 points of damage.

Spells: A marrutact casts spells as a 5th level wizard
Marruspawn Traits

Discriminating Hearing (Ex): A marruspawn can hear across great distances with ease, gaining a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks. A marruspawn's hearing is so sensitive that it can sense the presence of most creatures merely by the sound of their breathing, their heartbeat, or their movement if they are within 30 feet.

When a marruspawn detects a noise, the exact location of the source is not revealed – only it's presence somewhere within that range. A marruspawn can take a move action to note the direction of the sound. Whenever a marruspawn comes within 5 feet of the source, it can pinpoint the sound's location. Undead, constructs and other creatures that have no metabolism are not subject to being detected by discriminating hearing unless they move – in any round when they move, they are detected by the sound they make while moving through the air or shuffling along the ground. Only incorporeal creatures are completely undetectable, unless they wish to be detected.

Resistance to Dessication (Ex): Centuries of life in the waste afford marruspawn the ability to cope with thirst and reduced fluid intake. A marruspawn thus gains resistance to dessication damage 10. Whenever a marruspawn is subject to magical dessication damage, that damage is reduced by 10 before being applied to the marruspawn's hit points

A marruspawn also takes no nonlethal or lethal damage from failing Constitution checks to avoid becoming dehydrated, although it still might become fatigued if it fails a check. If a marruspawn ever becomes dehydrated, whether due to natural causes or another effect (such as a spell), it needs to drink only a mouthful of water to lose that condition. A marruspawn also requires only half as much water in a day as is normally required for a creature of its size.

Resistance to Fire (Ex): Bred to withstand magic artillery, a marruspawn enjoys an inborn resistance to fire 5

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A marruspawn can see twice as far as humans in conditions of poor illumination.

Languages: Marru, Common.

Spells Prepared (Caster level 11th) (4/6/5/5/4/3/1, save DC = 15 + spell level): 0 – *Daze, Disrupt Undead, Mage Hand, Resistance*; 1st – *Mage Armor, Magic Missile x4, True Strike*; 2nd – *See Invisibility, Mirror Image, Scorching Ray x2*; 3rd – *Fireball x2, Dispel Magic*. 4th – *Wall of Ice, Enervation, Ice Storm* 5th – *Transmute Rock to Mud, Cone of Cold x2*. 6th – *Chain Lightning*

Spellbook: 0 – *Daze, Disrupt Undead, Mage Hand, Resistance*; 1st – *Mage Armor, Magic Missile x2, True Strike*; 2nd – *See Invisibility, Mirror Image Scorching Ray*; 3rd – *Fireball, Dispel Magic, Lightning Bolt. Major Image* 4th – *Wall of Ice, Enervation, Ice Storm*; 5th – *Transmute Rock to Mud, Cone of Cold*. 6th – *Chain Lightning*

ENCOUNTER 5

GUSTAVREN, PACKMASTER

FALLEN HOUND ARCHON

CR 15

Male outsider Ftr11

LN Medium outsider (Archon, Extraplanar, Lawful)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages All

AC 29, touch 11, flat-footed 19

(+9 armor, +9 natural, +1 dex)

hp 170 (17 HD)

Fort +12 (+16 vs. poison), **Ref** +9, **Will** +10

Speed 30 ft. mithral full plate +1 (6 squares)

Melee +1 greatsword +27/+22/+17 (2d6+17+1d6 frost / 17-20, x2) and bite +20 (1d8+5) or Bite +24(1d8 + 5) and 2 Slam +19 (1d4+4)

Ranged none

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +18; **Grp** +24

Atk Options Spell-like abilities

Combat Gear mithral full plate +1, +1 frost greatsword, belt of giant strength +6

Abilities Str 24, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12

SQ Aura of Menace, change shape, damage reduction 10/magic and silver, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and petrification, scent, spell resistance 27, teleport, tongues

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Improved Critical (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*teleport*), Greater Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Cleave, Improved Sunder

Skills Concentration 12, Diplomacy +4, Hide +9*, Jump 19, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12, Survival +10* (+12 following tracks)

Possessions combat gear

Spell-like abilities: at will—*aid, continual flame, message* (caster level 6th)

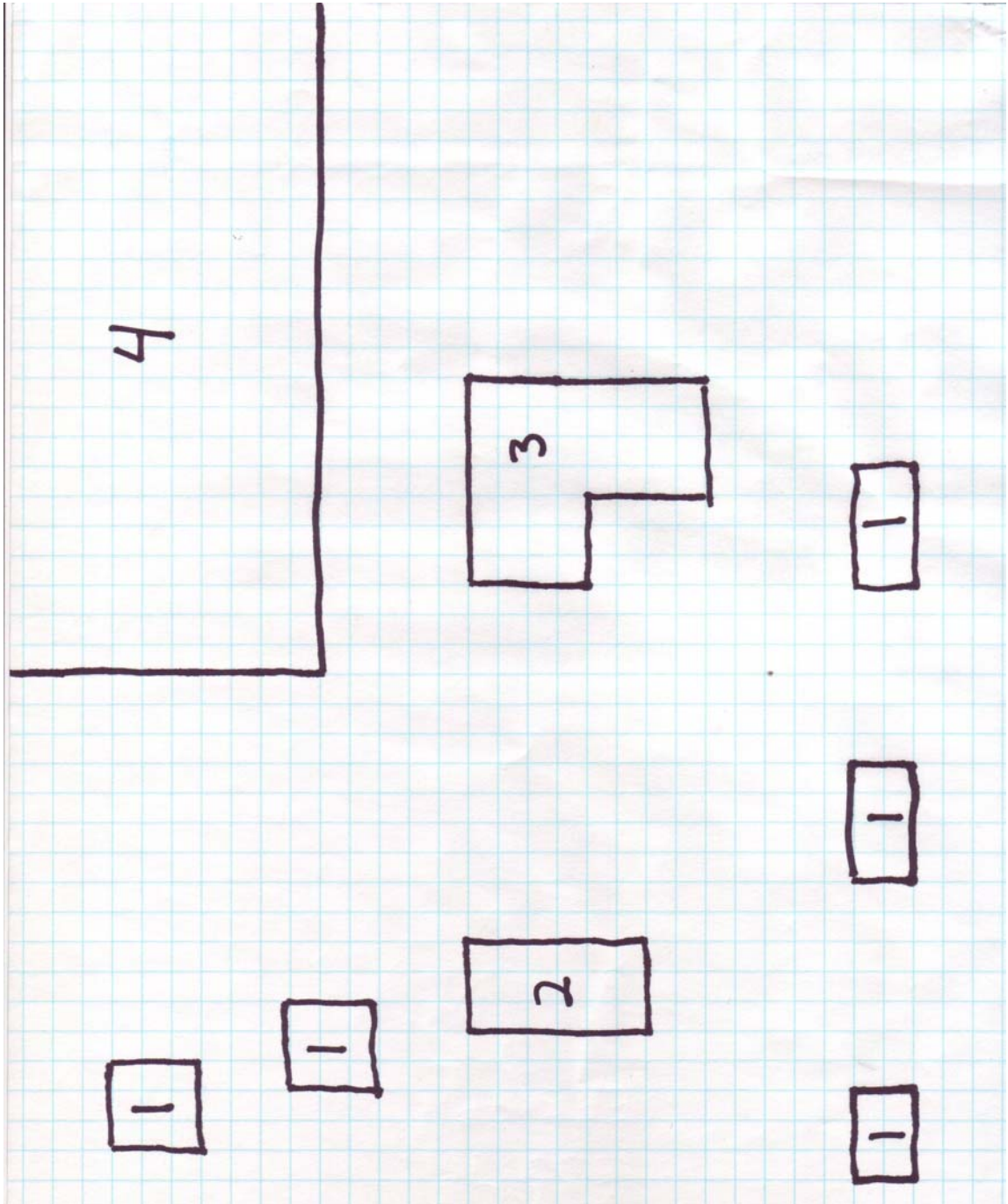
Aura of Menace (Su): A righteous aura surrounds archons that fight or get angry. Any hostile creature within a 20-foot radius of an archon must succeed on a Will save to resist its effects. The save DC varies with the type of archon, is Charisma-based, and includes a +2 racial bonus. Those who fail take a -2 penalty on attacks, AC, and saves for 24 hours or until they successfully hit the archon that generated the aura. A creature that has resisted or broken the effect cannot be affected again by the same archon's aura for 24 hours. Will DC 16 negates.

Change Shape (Su): A hound archon can assume any canine form of Small to Large size. While in canine form, the hound archon loses its bite, slam, and greatsword attacks, but gains the bite attack of the form it chooses. For the purposes of this ability, canines include any doglike or wolflike animal of the animal type.

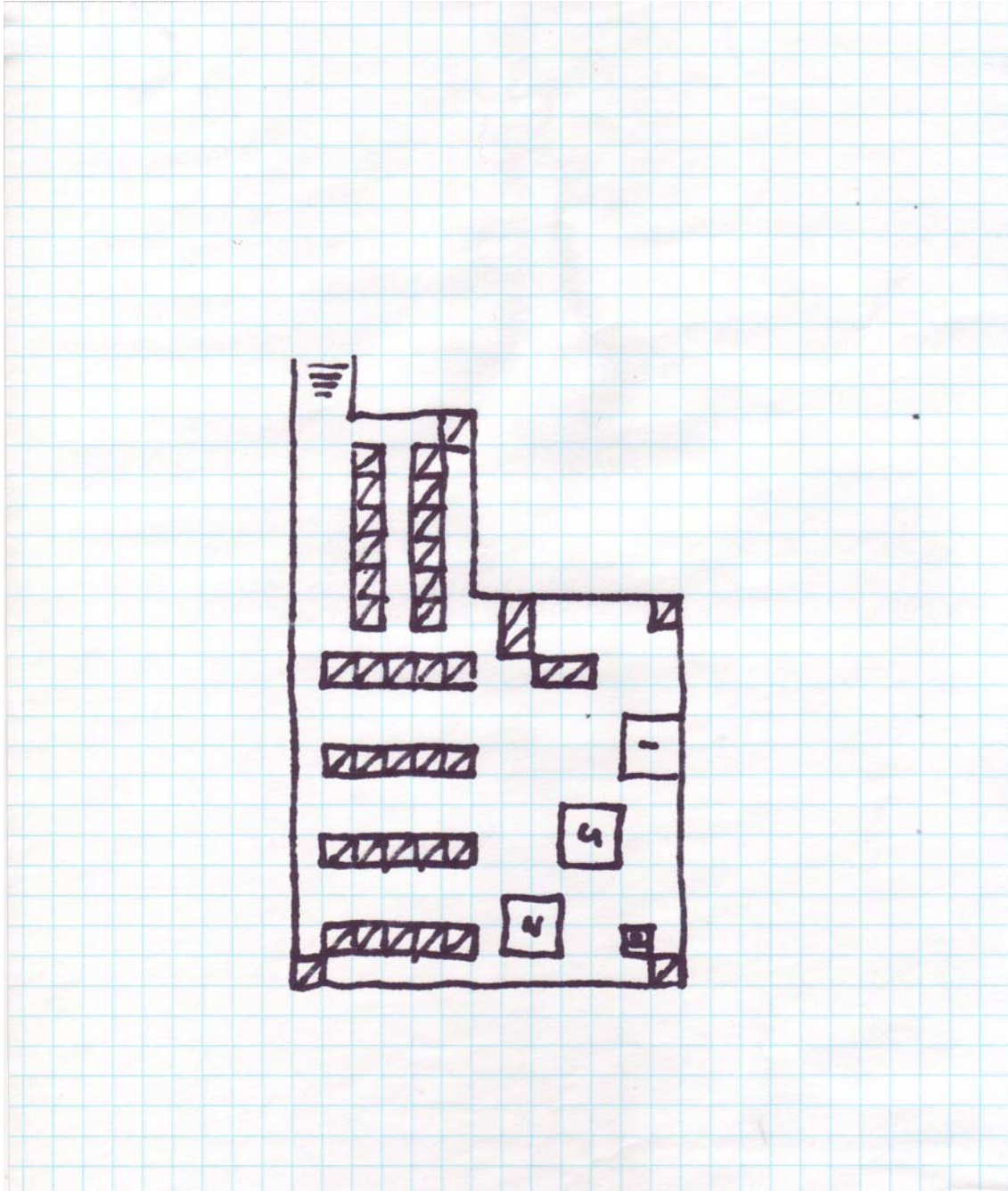
Fallen from Grace: As a celestial who has been cast out, the Fallen Hound Archon has lost all alignment-dependent special abilities that depend on a good/evil axis. The Fallen Hound Archon has had its DR changed to 10/magic and silver and has lost the ability to detect evil and the ability to project an aura of protection from evil.

Teleport (Su): Archons can use *greater teleport* at will, as the spell (caster level 14th), except that the creature can transport only itself and up to 50 pounds of objects

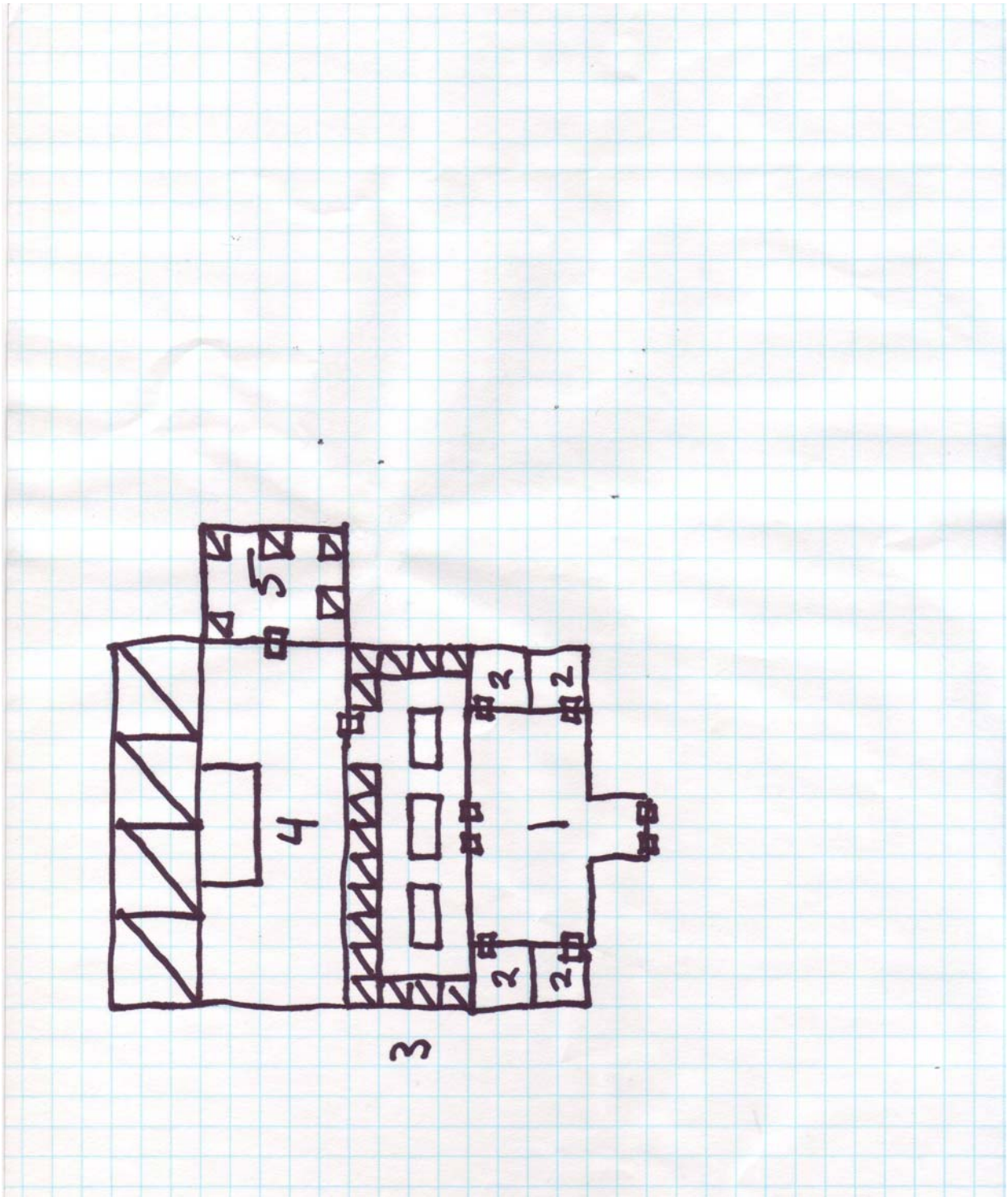
DM AID: MAP #1 – KILM EXTERIOR



DM AID: MAP #2 – KILM BASEMENT



DM AID: MAP #3 – THE ARCANICUM



DM AID #4 – A PICTURE OF MY CAT IN A BUCKET



“Can I cast *fireball* from in here?”

No felines were harmed in the making of this adventure.

DM AID: NEW RULES

NEW MONSTERS

Marrusault (Sandstorm, page 171)

Large Monstrous Humanoid

Hit Dice: 6d8+18; hp 45

Speed: 20 ft (Full Plate) 30 ft base.

Armor Class 23, touch 10, flat-footed 22 (+5 natural, +8 armor, +1 dex, -1 size)

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+15

Attack: Great Falchion +11 melee (1d12+7/18-20) or Bite +10 melee (1d8+5)

Full Attack: Great Falchion +11/+6 melee (1d12+7/18-20) and bite +5 melee (1d8+2)

Space/Reach: 10ft./10ft.

Special Attacks: Howl of Defiance, pounce

Special Qualities: Ferocity, Marruspawn traits

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +5

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 14

Skills: Listen +7, Search +1, Spot +3

Feats: Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (great falchion), Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (great falchion)

Environment: Warm Deserts

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually Neutral

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +2

In ancient days, armies of marrusaults darkened the once-green plains, fighting for the will of the marru. Bred for fighting, each marrusault knows its worth in any conflict. Hardy survivors, marrusaults eked out existence where many of the weaker or more specialized spawncrafted creations of the marru perished with heir masters. Still, a marrusault depends on the equipment and other resources it gains from swearing service to a marrutact. Sometimes a marrusault goes rogue – these creatures often find death in the waste, their bones posing a mystery to travelers who come upon them. Individually, marrusaults are known for the ability to withstand wounds that would drop a lesser creature. Of course, such fortitude is another gift of spawncraft.

Like all marruspawn, a marrusault relies on its discriminating hearing to pinpoint hidden enemies. Once identified, a marrusault uses its howl as it pounces on its target, bringing its mighty blade to bear

Howl of Defiance (Su): Once per day, a marrsault can loose a terrifying howl as a free action. All creatures except other marrusaults within 30 feet must succeed on a DC15 Will save or become fatigued. Those within 10 feet who fail their save become exhausted. The save DC is Charisma-based

Pounce (Ex): If a marrusault charges, it can make a full attack, including its bite attack.

Ferocity (Ex): A marrusault is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

Marruspawn Traits

Discriminating Hearing (Ex): A marruspawn can hear across great distances with ease, gaining a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks. A marruspawn's hearing is so sensitive that it can sense the presence of most creatures merely by the sound of their breathing, their heartbeat, or their movement if they are within 30 feet.

When a marruspawn detects a noise, the exact location of the source is not revealed – only it's presence somewhere within that range. A marruspawn can take a move action to note the direction of the sound. Whenever a marruspawn comes within 5 feet of the source, it can pinpoint the sound's location. Undead, constructs and other creatures that have no metabolism are not subject to being detected by

discriminating hearing unless they move – in any round when they move, they are detected by the sound they make while moving through the air or shuffling along the ground. Only incorporeal creatures are completely undetectable, unless they wish to be detected.

Resistance to Dessication (Ex): Centuries of life in the waste afford marruspawn the ability to cope with thirst and reduced fluid intake. A marruspawn thus gains resistance to dessication damage 10. Whenever a marruspawn is subject to magical dessication damage, that damage is reduced by 10 before being applied to the marruspawn's hit points

A marruspawn also takes no nonlethal or lethal damage from failing Constitution checks to avoid becoming dehydrated, although it still might become fatigued if it fails a check. If a marruspawn ever becomes dehydrated, whether due to natural causes or another effect (such as a spell), it needs to drink only a mouthful of water to lose that condition. A marruspawn also requires only half as much water in a day as is normally required for a creature of its size.

Resistance to Fire (Ex): Bred to withstand magic artillery, a marruspawn enjoys an inborn resistance to fire 5

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A marruspawn can see twice as far as humans in conditions of poor illumination

Marrutact (Sandstorm, page 171)

Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Hit Dice: 7d8+7; hp 38

Speed: 30 ft.

Armor Class 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+4 natural, +4 *mage armor*, +1 dex, -1 size)

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+7

Attack: Masterwork Staff +8 melee (1d6)

Full Attack: Masterwork Staff +8/+3 melee (1d6)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Howl of Healing, spells

Special Qualities: Marruspawn traits, spell resistance 16

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +9

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16

Skills: Concentration +11, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (geography) +14, Listen +8, Spellcraft +16, Survival +4(+6 to avoid getting lost or avoid hazards)

Feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative.

Environment: Warm Deserts

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually Neutral

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +3

Howl of Healing (Su): Once per day, a marrutact can loose a regenerative howl as a free action. All marruspawn pledged to the howling marrutact within 30 feet heal 3d8+5 points of damage. Those within 10 feet heal and extra 1d8+1 points of damage.

Spells: A marrutact casts spells as a 5th level wizard

Marruspawn Traits

Discriminating Hearing (Ex): A marruspawn can hear across great distances with ease, gaining a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks. A marruspawn's hearing is so sensitive that it can sense the presence of most creatures merely by the sound of their breathing, their heartbeat, or their movement if they are within 30 feet.

When a marruspawn detects a noise, the exact location of the source is not revealed – only it's presence somewhere within that range. A marruspawn can take a move action to note the direction of the sound. Whenever a marruspawn comes within 5 feet of the source, it can pinpoint the sound's location. Undead, constructs and other creatures that have no metabolism are not subject to being detected by discriminating hearing unless they move – in any round when they move, they are detected by the sound they make while moving through the air or shuffling along the ground. Only incorporeal creatures are completely undetectable, unless they wish to be detected.

Resistance to Dessication (Ex): Centuries of life in the waste afford marruspawn the ability to cope with thirst and reduced fluid intake. A marruspawn thus gains resistance to dessication damage 10. Whenever a marruspawn is subject to magical dessication damage, that damage is reduced by 10 before being applied to the marruspawn's hit points

A marruspawn also takes no nonlethal or lethal damage from failing Constitution checks to avoid becoming dehydrated, although it still might become fatigued if it fails a check. If a marruspawn ever becomes dehydrated, whether due to natural causes or another effect (such as a spell), it needs to drink only a mouthful of water to lose that condition. A marruspawn also requires only half as much water in a day as is normally required for a creature of its size.

Resistance to Fire (Ex): Bred to withstand magic artillery, a marruspawn enjoys an inborn resistance to fire 5

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A marruspawn can see twice as far as humans in conditions of poor illumination.

Languages: Marru, Common.

Typical Spells Prepared (Caster level 5th) (X/X/X, save DC = 14 + spell level): 0 – *Daze*, *Disrupt Undead*, *Mage Hand*, *Resistance*; 1st – *Mage Armor*, *Magic Missile* x2, *True Strike*; 2nd – *See Invisibility*, *Mirror Image* *Scorching Ray*; 3rd – *Fireball*, *Dispel Magic*

Spellbook: 0 – *Daze*, *Disrupt Undead*, *Mage Hand*, *Resistance*; 1st – *Mage Armor*, *Magic Missile* x2, *True Strike*; 2nd – *See Invisibility*, *Mirror Image* *Scorching Ray*; 3rd – *Fireball*, *Dispel Magic*.

NEW WEAPON

Great Falchion (Sandstorm, page 97)

Exotic Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type
Great Falchion	100gp	1d8	1d12	18-20/x2	--	12	Slashing

This heavy executioner's sword has the same basic profile as a falchion, albeit with a much greater blade surface. Because it is an executioner's weapon, it is often crafted as a masterwork weapon, marked with a royal seal, and created with one or more gems in the hilt.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1 – KNIGHTS OF THE WATCH

The following message is delivered to you overnight.

Loyal One-

Our agents within the Royal Standards have alerted us to the mission the arcane ones have set before you. Above all, use caution, for we believe the schools of magic to have a traitor amongst them. When in the area of Kilm, be on the lookout for a member of our order who was in the area at the time of the attacks. Most Contrite Ironclad Mauler Milo Astra can be easily identified by unusual markings on his neck that you shall recognize if you see. Treat him as your lost brother and ensure that he is returned safely at all costs.

PLAYER HANDOUT #2 – KNIGHTS OF THE MALAGARI (DARKWATCH)

The following message is delivered to you overnight.

Loyal One-

Our agents within the Royal Standards have alerted us to the mission the arcane ones have set before you. Above all, use caution, for we believe the schools of magic to have a traitor amongst them. When in the area of Kilm, be on the lookout for anything that could be considered banned materials. In particular we have heard reports of the Marru using some sort of elixirs brewed from mysterious substances. Obtain a sample if you can.

PLAYER HANDOUT #3 – SILENT ONES

This message is delivered to you overnight.

Loyal One-

We know where the Wyrd sends you, and we fear for his expanding powers. Remember that your loyalty is to the order, not to a single man. When in the area of Kilm, be on the lookout for any esoteric lore regarding the Marru and return it to us. Such secrets are not meant for the commoners.

PLAYER HANDOUT #4 – ZYME NOTES

The pages of this tome are yellowed with age and brittle to the touch. The following page is open.

4 Sunsebb

...when combined in the proper doses and heated alchemically, a variety of effects are possible. The keystone to these efforts is always a strong sample. Failure rates increased as the quality of the original sample was reduced or replicated. For this end I judge that the best base possible is a captive human of pure bloodtype who is kept healthy with magic and repeatedly siphoned...

PLAYER HANDOUT #5 – NOTES ON THE CREATION OF MARRU

The following text is new, its pages are crisp and white.

...lost secrets of the creation of this powerful race are now open to me like the doors of Nidle Dra.

Originally when the Marru were created they were self-reproducing like any race. This is a curious trait to add to a creation since most slave races tend to desire freedom and an uncontrolled population is a dangerous population. Indeed, the earliest legends I could pry from these Marru indicate a great leader of theirs creating a revolt and freeing the Marru from some shadowy master race.

Their histories are mundane until a point several hundred years ago where a great tragedy apparently took place. From what I can deduce, several powerful Marru attempted to add their blood to that of a divine being, and were met with rather disastrous results. The created creature broke free of all bonds and single-handedly destroyed the Marru civilization.

As unlikely as that is to believe, I have spoken to several Marru here who claim to have seen the creature with their own eyes. Great Marru cities were laid to waste and their people were scattered.

After a time, Marru started to re-gather, only to find a horrible problem: they could no longer procreate naturally. Every child was born stillborn and the secrets of their original creation were lost. The Marru as a people were doomed to a withering death.

Indeed, when I first found the crèche in the mountains, they were numbering less than a hundred, every one a survivor from the days of the great Marru civilization. Apparently their lifespan rivals that of the elves!

I saw in the Marru an opportunity. Who else has access to the most powerful and forbidden of lore other than me? With the aid of my students it was almost trivial to unlock the secrets to reinvigorating the Marru race.

Since then there have been many trials. Many races simply lack the fortitude necessary to survive the transformation into a Marru, or survive only for a period of months afterwards. Kobolds and goblins were particularly unsuccessful, Orcs were fairly successful and humans...well...can I say I am surprised that humans meld so easily into this new mask?

Now that I have created a bond with some of the giants of the region I have been given leave to attempt the transformation on some of their outcasts.

I eagerly await the trolls. Their regenerative capabilities will be amazing if I can harvest them properly. Until then, there is more than enough fodder in Flen and Cryllon.

CRITICAL EVENT SUMMARY: KEO7-07 THE STALKYARD

1. Were any of the heroes part of an organization that had additional instructions? If so, did they complete the instructions and what did they do with the information/goods/person they found?

Yes No

2. How many optional encounters did the heroes face in the Stalkyard?

3. How did the heroes deal with Gustavren?

4. Did any heroes accept The Returned's offer and receive the AR item Extarasi? If so, Who?

Yes No

5. How did the heroes deal with Lord Garsin Elgarin?

6. Isn't that a cute cat?

Yes No

Notes: (Add anything that happened that might be considered out of the ordinary – Strange occurrences, results that may not fit the above, etc):