

Masking the Truth

A One-Round D&D 3rd Edition Living Greyhawk
Adventure

by Kevin Freeman

Evidence has been uncovered of a ruined ancient tomb in the outer reaches of the Hool Marshes. A Yeoman Dustdigger has asked you to assist her in entering the swamp, discovering the tomb, and bringing back a magical mask. An adventure for characters levels 1-6.

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

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

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

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

When using Voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities.

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

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

LIVING GREYHAWK Tier Structure

To determine the tier, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any henchmen or animals according to the values on their certificates. Compare the total to the chart below to find the tier.

	<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>Lvl Cap</u>
T1:	4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15	4 nd
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28	6 th
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8 th

The level cap indicated the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

Lifestyle

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

Destitute	You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.
Poor	You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.
Common	You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.
High	You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.
Luxury	You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

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

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

Lifestyle Cost	Skill Modifier	
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor 43 sp	-1	
Common 3 gp	0	
High	250 gp	+1

Adventure Summary and Background

The Dustdigger College

A Dustdigger is a scientist, archaeologist, and treasure hunter in the most classic sense. The region of Oerth occupied by the present-day Yeomanry was one of the earliest lands settled by ancient Suel travelers (among others), and remnants of their ancient civilizations litter the Yeoman landscape. Dustdiggers wish to collect, record, and preserve the artifacts of these lost cultures in an effort to learn about their history. They also wish to keep such treasures out of the hands of those who would exploit them. As such, they require intelligence, cunning, and fighting prowess to complete their tasks.

The Hool Marshes

The Hool Marshes is a dreary, foreboding marshlands filled with quaking mires and bottomless pools. It serves as a natural boundary between the Yeomanry and the Hold of the Sea Princes to the southeast. It is a wild land that is claimed by neither. Travelers through its murky waters are a rarity. The Hool is home to countless humanoids and monsters, including a number of renegade cults.

Adventure Background

Cyndiria Longshadow, an aspiring Dustdigger from Loftwick, was given portions of an ancient journal discovered during a recent excavation. If a PC shows particular interest in the Dustdiggers, she directs him to their guild and headquarters in Loftwick. The journal was discovered about a month ago, although Cyndiria has never seen the original. She was given a copy of a portion of the journal, instructed to find the tomb, and immediately dispatched to Kearne, where she arrived a few days ago. The rain has kept her from continuing onward.

The journal gives a detailed description of a village of reptilian humanoids that lived centuries ago at the edge of the Hool Marshes. Of particular interest to Cyndiria was a description of a tiered ziggurat that held the remains of Tchelopotok, a powerful priest who ruled that village with an iron fist. The journal tells of a vast fortune that was buried with the priest, including an allegedly magical treasure—the Mask of Ktopec.

According to the journal, the Mask of Ktopec possesses mystical powers beyond the comprehension of men. A priest supposedly wore the Mask of Ktopec during sacrificial ceremonies. It soothed and calmed the victim so that death was embraced by the sacrifice, not to fear. A cryptic passage in the journal gives the location of the Mask of Ktopec, but Cyndiria is uncertain of its exact whereabouts

Excited about the find, the archaeologists reported the discovery of the ancient text to their superiors at the Dustdigger Academy in Loftwick. There, Cyndiria was given instructions to go south, follow the clues to the whereabouts to the tomb, and discover and bring back the Mask of Ktopec so it can be properly researched.

After days of traveling, her journey has taken her to the village of Kearne, a small farming and fishing community and the last real bastion of civilization before the bogs of the Hool Marshes begin. There, she has made her final preparations to enter the swamp. Much to her disappointment, Cyndiria recently has been given another task by her superiors and thus cannot finish her current mission. Therefore, she hopes to hire a group of trustworthy adventurers to discover the Mask of Ktopec and return it to her. While she has no money to offer, she teases the PCs with rumors of gold and gems located in the various ruins that are said to litter the Marshes. She also tells the PCs that the dangers are relatively minimal—snakes, crocodiles, and other mundane creatures are the worst threats that the PCs have to fear. If the PCs agree, she presents them with a copy of the vague description of the tomb's location. If the PCs refuse her offer, she carries on to other adventurers, as they are quite common in the Southeastern Yeomanry.

While Cyndiria is correct about some things, she is wrong about others. The journal is legitimate; it is approximately 400 years old and relatively accurate, considering its age. Furthermore, the clues for the location of the tomb are still accurate; assuming it can be deciphered correctly. Furthermore, the lizardfolk priest Tchelopotok did indeed exist, and he did wear a mask during his ceremonies. However, that mask was not magical; it is merely an ancient piece of rather mundane jewelry.

Unbeknownst to Cyndiria, however, a fanatical Wastrian priest and his bullywug minions recently have discovered the ruined tomb and declared it a favorable omen of the Hopping Prophet himself. In their initial search of the tomb a bullywug was killed while examining a statue. As such, the priest has declared the ziggurat sacred and off-limits to all living beings. They have set camp nearby and use the pyramid as a backdrop for their bizarre religious ceremonies. They do not take kindly to adventurers plundering their sacred grounds.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs begin this adventure in the small farming community of Kearne. It is a town of some 400 hardy souls who make their living from growing rice and cotton in the moist earth. An old, rustic inn, The Woodsman's Axe, sits near the center of town, next to a small temple dedicated to Phytton. The layout of the town is unimportant for the purposes of this adventure. It merely serves as a backdrop for the adventure's beginning.

In Kearne the PCs are approached by Cyndiria Longshadow, a dark-skinned woman dressed in brown leathers. She offers pleasant conversation for a few moments to determine whether or not the PCs are trustworthy. Once she is satisfied with their worth, she

tells them about her search to find a lost tomb filled with gold, riches, and mystery that is located somewhere within the swamp. Included in this tomb is the Mask of Ktopec. She follows this by saying that she cannot accomplish the mission herself, as she has been sent on another quest. Instead, she asks that the PCs recover the mask for her.

As an incentive, she tells the PCs that they can have whatever other treasure is found in or near the tomb, save the Mask of Ktopec. Upon completion of the mission the PCs are to meet her back in Kearne. To assist the PCs in their quest, Cyndiria offers a passage copied directly from the ancient journal. It is a cryptic passage that is supposed to pinpoint the location of Tchelopotok's tomb. With this information in hand, they set off to the southeast towards the Hool Marshes.

The ground becomes increasingly damp as the PCs head towards the Hool Marshes. After a day of uneventful travel, they enter the outskirts of the tiny hamlet of Bogspur. The people of Bogspur make their living by fishing and frog spearing in the swamp. There is no inn in town. However, the town is full of fishermen and hunters who know the swamp very well, and one in particular, an old codger who goes by the name Turnipseed, can offer the PCs considerable assistance if they share the information in their scroll with him. If PCs ask around the village for use of a boat and/or guide, most of the citizens recommend Turnipseed for the job.

When the PCs talk to Turnipseed he will claim to have seen a "large, black monolith" sticking out of the muck, and is more than willing to take the PCs there, should they desire his assistance and be willing to pay his rather high "guide fee." Use of his skiff is included with his fee.

Using the directions provided by the journal passage, the PCs set out to the southeast in search of the marker to which it refers. After half a day of plodding through the difficult muck, the PCs stumble across the remnants of a stone object. Unfortunately, it has been broken since Turnipseed last saw it, and the only telltale sign of its presence is a jagged end that protrudes some eighteen inches out of the water. The obelisk is covered with runes and hieroglyphs, but they are difficult to see unless the PCs scrape the moss and muck from it.

The PCs must exit the boat and search in the water in order to find the top of the obelisk. The water is about three feet deep. After some searching through the muddy bottom of the bog the PCs discover the missing piece of the marker. The PCs are then attacked by two hungry crocodiles, looking for an afternoon snack.

After the crocodiles are dispatched, the task is to lift the top of the obelisk from the water and place it upon the broken bottom. When this is accomplished, one side reveals a number of symbols that look like the profiles of lizard heads. They all face in the same direction. With the journal passage in hand, the PCs should realize that they must head in the direction in which the lizard heads face to find the tomb of Tchelopotok.

After four hours of miserable travel in the direction indicated by the obelisk, the PCs come across a small, foliage-covered island that rises from the water. Sitting at

the center of the island is a crumbling, three-tiered ziggurat with a grand staircase heading to the top on the north side. A thick mist obscures part of the tomb, and the wildlife is strangely quiet. Turnipseed volunteers to wait with the boat while the PCs explore the tomb.

The PCs must find the entrance to the tomb, avoid the traps that wait within, and discover the burial chamber of Tchelopotok. Besides the tricks and traps of the tomb, two things should take the PCs somewhat by surprise. First, upon examining the skeleton remains of Tchelopotok, the PCs discover that he could not have been either human or lizardfolk. Instead, it appears to be a large snake with human arms (he was, in fact, a Yuan ti). Second, the Mask of Ktopec is not an elegant, bejeweled magical construct. Instead, it is made of beaten copper and adorned merely with crushed shells, most of which have fallen off. Furthermore, the mask is not magical, and as a piece of jewelry, it carries little actual value. This may place some doubt in the minds of the PCs as to whether or not this is the actual item they are searching for.

Upon exiting the tomb, the PCs are met by the Wastrian priest, his bullywug followers, and a leashed giant toad. The javelin-riddled body of Turnipseed can be seen in the background. The bullywugs have javelins pointed at the PCs should they try to run. The priest claims that the PCs have trespassed upon sacred lands overseen by Wastri, and, as such, they should surrender everything that they have taken from the tomb, as well as any weapons that they may be carrying. In return, he promises to let the PCs go. Of course, he has no intention of letting the PCs escape, and he sets his bullywugs upon them regardless of what the PCs decide to do. If the PCs give up their weapons, they will just be that much easier to kill!

Assuming that the PCs defeat the priest and his minions, they have to find their way out of the swamp without the assistance of their guide. If one of the PCs has recorded the directions they headed to get to the ziggurat they should be able to find their way out. To further assist the PCs, Turnipseed leaves obvious markers to allow him to return. This significantly should reduce the chance of PCs becoming lost on the return trip.

When the PCs make their way out of the swamp, they rendezvous with Cyndiria in Kearne and give her the mask. She is very interested about the discoveries that the PCs may have made, and she asks many questions about their expedition. She eyes the mask suspiciously at first, but after some convincing by the PCs, she thanks them and sets off to Loftwick to present it to her superiors.

PLAYER INTRODUCTION

The last few days have been incredibly boring. Instead of enjoying the glory of adventure, you sit in a damp, drafty tavern in the small Yeoman village of Kearne hoping that the dreadful weather will end soon. The rain has continued for days. Fortunately, the rain and boredom have allowed you to become acquainted with one another, and you have discovered that each of you is an aspiring adventurer. Besides you, the Woodsman's Axe is virtually deserted, with only the halfling

tavern keeper, Pip Purpleberry, and his staff keeping you company. The townsfolk apparently have found more solace in the comfort of their own homes.

Allow the PCs to introduce themselves to one another at this point. When a few minutes have passed, continue onward.

The tavern door opens, and in steps a thin, hooded figure, soaking wet and covered in mud. As this person reaches to push back their hood, she is revealed as pretty, dark-skinned woman. She looks at you, smiles warmly, and approaches your group, sitting in an empty chair nearby.

"Hail friends! My name is Cyndiria Longshadow, a Dustdigger from Loftwick." She motions to the chubby halfling for an ale. "The only thing to do in such weather is to drink and hope to forget, eh, friends?" She laughs and drinks deeply from her the mug that was just set beside her.

At this point, Cyndiria begins to make small talk and ask the PCs a few questions about themselves. She is attempting to ascertain whether or not the PCs are trustworthy. When the DM is satisfied with the PCs, Cyndiria continues.

"Would you care to hear a tale to pass the time?" Without waiting for you to respond, she begins to speak.

"A thousand years ago, the lands to the south and east of here were populated by a great civilization—but not a civilization of men. They were a race of lizards, strong and fierce, and they built great cities and temples to their gods. Over time they grew wealthy and powerful, yet they were bloodthirsty and ruled the swamps with a cruel, iron fist. They conquered the denizens of the swamp and slew anyone who would defy their rule. They made a ritual of sacrifice, and it is said that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of innocents met their end through the curved blade of a sacrificial dagger. They took great interest in the movements of the sun and the stars, and they built great temples dedicated solely to those purposes. Strangely, this civilization disappeared virtually overnight, and their cities and temples were quickly reclaimed by the swamp."

(The DM may further embellish this story as he sees fit.)

"As you undoubtedly have surmised by now, I am quite interested in this civilization. The Dustdiggers have found little evidence of this civilization, and thus we know very little about how they lived and died, and the prospect of learning more about these lizards tantalizes both myself and the academy." She pauses for a moment and takes another drink.

"To the point, then, friends. I have been sent to this region by my superiors in Loftwick due to a recent archaeological found at a site not far from here, one that dates to some three hundred years past. Among the pottery shards and coins common to such digs was found a book—a journal, in fact, written by an explorer by the name of Hiictor. In the journal was a reference to a tomb, witnessed by Hiictor, of a lizard priest from this early civilization. He went by the name of Tchelopotok. Hiictor makes few references to the tomb, other than that he was told by his guide that Tchelopotok possessed a

jeweled magical mask, called the Mask of Ktopec, that he used to charm followers into becoming willing sacrifices for his gods. Legend has it that Tchelopotok was buried in his tomb with this Mask. I hope that this means that the tomb is intact and has yet to be submerged by the fetid waters of the Hool Marshes. If it does still stand, the information, not to mention the treasures, that could be garnered from such a discovery could further our knowledge of this civilization manyfold!"

"Unfortunately for me, I have been given new orders—orders that take me away from this place. As such, I am looking for a group of trustworthy adventurers to follow the directions given in the journal and recover the mask for me. I can offer no payment, but it is said that the lizard folk were quite wealthy, and undoubtedly the tomb is stocked with ancient treasures. I offer such discoveries to you, so long as you hand the Mask to me and record your discoveries for the Academy so that it may further study the region. What say you, friends?"

Cyndiria is more than willing to answer questions that the PCs may have about her, the journal, the Dustdiggers, or whatever else the PCs may wonder about, to the best of her knowledge.

Cyndiria knows little about the area. Her only directions to the tomb come from a cryptic passage written by Hiictor in his journal. If the PCs agree to help Cyndiria, she offers them Handout #1, a copy of the journal page referring to the location of the tomb. She can add that her first step would have been to head east, towards the tiny hamlet of Bogspur, because it is the closest town to the Hool Marshes.

Encounter One: The Hamlet of Bogspur

The first few hours of your journey have been rather unpleasant. While the rain has let up somewhat, you are still soaked from a constantly falling light mist. The ground, damp already from the weather, becomes increasingly soft as you make your way eastward. The smell of rotting vegetation permeates the air, filling your nostrils with the awful reek of decay. Finally, you see the first signs of civilization—a small village, its structures faded by time and weather, appears around a swampy bend. Beyond the extent of the city, only a hundred yards or so away, the marshy land gives way to open water. To continue further, you undoubtedly are going to have to commandeer a boat of some sort.

Bogspur is a small thorp of about 80 hardy souls. They make their living by fishing, hunting frogs, and catching and skinning the occasional alligator or crocodile. There is one tiny and leaky tavern, the Frog Bog, a small, poorly-stocked mercantile, and little else. In Bogspur, the primary goal of the PCs is to find a suitable boat. PCs also may decide that venturing into the swamp without a suitable guide may be dangerous, and securing the services of an experienced guide would be a good idea. With a little luck, they can find both at the same time.

Allow time for the PCs to roleplay a bit, should they desire to do so.

PCs asking around town for the use or purchase of a boat are lead to Turnipseed, an old, weather-beaten fisherman who lives on the outskirts of town. He has spent a considerable portion of his life catching frogs in the swamp, and he knows his way around it better than anyone in town. He also builds rafts, canoes, and small rowboats to supplement his income. When the PCs approach him, he is curious about why the PCs would want to enter the swamp. Should a PC mention the monolith mentioned in the journal entry, he raises his eyebrows and speaks.

"Monolith, you say, eh? Well, I seen somethin' like that a few years back. It kind of gave me the creeps. It didn't feel right. Tricky to find, though, it is, although I reckon that I could find it again, if I tried...."

Turnipseed pauses to wait for the PCs response. He will agree to take the PCs to the monolith for five gold, which includes the use of enough boats to carry him, the PCs, and their gear. He can be talked down to three gold, but in this instance he complains the entire trip about being "swindled." PCs with horses or other mounts will have to leave them in town. DMs are encouraged to role-play Turnipseed as "country" as possible. He has a nasty habit of chewing tobacco and spitting it wherever he wants. He constantly complains, regardless of how well things are going.

Turnipseed, male human Com2 (fisherman): CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (6 ft. tall); HD 2d6; hp 8; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atks +1 melee (1d4 [crit 19-20/x2], dagger); AL N; SV Fort 0, Ref +1, Will 0.

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Fishing +3, Hunting +3, Survival +1; **Feats:** Alertness, Endurance

Equipment: fishing pole, dagger, bait, rowboat, oar.

Turnipseed is the only person in town who has ever seen the monolith. PCs heading into the swamp without assistance of some sort face the chance of getting lost in the swamp unless they take measures to avoid such problems. Furthermore, the chance that the PCs actually stumble upon the monolith could be quite small unless Turnipseed is with them. The DM should use his own discretion when faced with this situation, but shouldn't attempt to talk them out of it. If they want to venture into the swamp by themselves, so be it!

Encounter Two The Monolith

Travel on Turnipseed's boat is slow and uncomfortable. Clouds of gnats swarm around your face, and the occasional stinging insect has left your exposed flesh covered in itchy welts. Your guide continues to bombard you with stories and tales about the swamp, frog hunting, and other boring topics. However, he

assures you that he is heading in the right direction and the thing you are looking for is "not far now."

A few hours into your journey, Turnipseed tells you that your goal lies just ahead. You paddle around a small island and there, before you, stands the jagged end of a large, black pillar, covered in muck. It rises some 18 inches above the surface of the water. It appears that at some point in the past the top of the pillar has been broken off.

Further inspection of the pillar indeed does confirm that it has been broken. Scratching off the moss and dirt reveals that the pillar is covered with strange glyphs and runes, none of which can be deciphered by the PCs. Turnipseed says that when he last observed the pillar, some 10 years ago, it was intact. The top of the pillar in fact is located at the bottom of the bog, some 3 feet under the water. PCs will have to get out of the boat, enter the water, and dig through the mud to find it. As the PCs search, they are attacked by hungry crocodiles.

Tier 1

Crocodile (2): Medium animal; HD 3d8+9; hp 22 (each); Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atks Bite, +6 melee, 1d8+6; or tail slap, +6 melee, 1d12+6; SA improved grab; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Hide +7, Listen +5, Spot +5;

Special Abilities: improved grab—if bite hits, crocodile may attempt to grapple without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Tier 2

Crocodile (4): statistics as above.

Tier 3

Crocodile (6): statistics as above.

PCs fighting from the boat will have considerable difficulty hitting the crocodiles. The PCs will have a –2 circumstance penalty to hit when attacking the crocodiles from the boat. Furthermore, PCs standing and attacking in the boat must make a successful Dexterity check (DC 10) each time their attack misses. Failure results in the character falling into the water. Similarly, short PCs (dwarves, gnomes, and halflings) lose all dexterity bonuses to their AC and make all attacks at –3 "to hit" if they are in the water. Once the crocodiles are defeated, the PCs can continue their search. Assuming he is not killed, Turnipseed expresses an interest in acquiring the crocodile skins from the PCs. Allow the PCs to negotiate a price with him, should they so desire; the highest price he offers is a refund of the money necessary to hire him as a guard.

The top of the obelisk is heavy and requires a combined Strength check (DC 25) to be pulled out of the water and placed on top of the broken end. It is covered with mud and slime that must be removed in order to read the glyphs on its surface. When put in place, it fits quite nicely, and the runes split by the break come together to form complete pictures. The runes on the top

are equally unreadable and undecipherable, even to the most skilled rogue (i.e., Decipher Script check DC 35). However, one of the sides of the obelisk has a row of lizard-head carvings, all of which are staring in the same direction. These are the lizards mentioned in the journal passage. Assuming that the top of the obelisk has been properly placed, the PCs will reach their destination if they head in the direction in which the lizards are staring.

Encounter Three

The Tomb of Tchelopotok

A few more hours into their journey (DMs may embellish the description of the journey further as they see fit) the PCs come across the remains of the Tomb of Tchelopotok.

Before you the water parts to give way to a large, grassy island. Dominating the island is a crumbling three-tiered pyramid with a grand staircase that leads towards the top. At the top of the staircase is the bottom half of a large, broken statue of some sort. A thick fog surrounds the base of the ziggurat, and heavy vegetation and foliage make it difficult to make out any further details without a closer inspection. Surely this is the tomb of which Cyndiria had spoken.

Each of the tiers of the ziggurat is approximately twelve feet in height. Upon closer inspection, the entire pyramid is made of stone common to the region, and it is covered with pictures and glyphs similar to the ones seen on the ancient obelisk. The stairway, although in disrepair, is sturdy enough to climb without incident. If the statue atop the pyramid is examined, it appears to depict a reptilian creature of some sort, but it is so damaged the exact details of the creature cannot be made out. The entrance to the pyramid, a stone trap door, is located under the base of the statue, which still remains in place. It drops 10 feet into Room #1. Room descriptions below assume that the PC's have access to a light source of some sort, and all doors are unlocked unless otherwise indicated.

1. Entry Chamber

You drop down from the trap door into a large, square room that smells of dust and rotten vegetation. The dust on the floor has been stirred about, although no discernable trail can be identified. The walls are of smooth stone, but otherwise unadorned. A large, round stone cylinder, covered with strange runes, glyphs, and carvings depicting lizard-like creatures, stretches from ceiling to floor at one end of the room. A spattering of what looks like dried blood covers the floor in front of the pillar.

This room contains two traps, one of which already has been triggered. The pillar hides a secret door (Search DC 15) that reveals a shaft that leads down to the next tier of the ziggurat. Opening the door would have triggered a dart trap from inside of the pillar, but it had been

triggered by a bullywug two weeks earlier (thus the blood spatter). The inside of the pillar contains another trap. PCs using the shaft to scuttle down (there are no ropes or ladders) will trigger a pressure plate that opens a trap door above them. Any PC that is in the shaft is pelted by rocks that will do 1d4 points of damage. Furthermore, said PCs must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) in order to keep from falling to the floor below for an additional 1d6 points of damage. Nothing else of interest is in this room.

Tier 1

Shaft trap: falling rocks (1d4), plus 10 ft. fall (1d6). Reflex save to avoid falling (DC 15); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

Tier 2

Shaft trap: falling rocks (3d4), plus 10 ft. fall (1d6). Reflex save to avoid falling (DC 15); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 22).

Tier 3

Shaft trap: falling rocks (5d4), plus 10 ft. fall (1d6). Reflex save to avoid falling (DC 15); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25).

2. Statue Room

This room is identical in size to the one you have just exited. However, dominating the center of the room is a water-stained stone statue depicting a large snake with human arms. One arm clutches a huge trident, while the other points as if giving a command. The pedestal upon which the statue rests is carved with strange runes. One wood-and-metal door, swollen with humidity, sits at the center of the south wall.

Unlike the other glyphs found within the pyramid, a PC with Decipher Script has a chance to read these (DC 16). They read "Tchelopotok." This room also contains a rather dangerous trap. The door at the south end of the room is false. Any attempt to open it, be it via force or magic, fails. The actual exit to this room is a secret door on the west wall (Search, DC 15), in the exact direction that the statue is pointing. Upon examining the statue, PCs notice that it rests on a swivel and can be turned rather easily. Clever PCs may decide that turning the statue so that it points to the door will allow it to be opened. To further enhance the trap, if the statue is moved to point towards the south door, an audible click can be heard from it. However, instead of unlocking the door, the PCs have armed the trap.

The south door opens easily once the statue points towards it, but as this happens a cone of flame 15 ft. long and 10 ft. wide shoots from the outstretched finger of the statue, causing terrible damage to anyone within the cone. A successful Reflex saving throw (DC 14) will halve this damage. Behind the door is a blank, stone wall.

The secret door on the west wall will open only if the statue is pointing at it. If the statue has been turned at all, in any direction, opening the secret door without disarming the trap sets it off once again, with effects

similar to those above. The only way to escape this room without triggering the trap (besides exiting the pyramid) is to open the secret door without turning the statue at all. Besides the statue and doors, nothing else of interest is in this room.

Tier 1

Statue Trap: 15 ft. long, 10 ft. wide cone of fire (2d6). Reflex save for half damage (DC 14); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 20).

Tier 2

Statue Trap: 15 ft. long, 10 ft. wide cone of fire (4d6). Reflex save for half damage (DC 14); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 22).

Tier 3

Statue Trap: 15 ft. long, 10 ft. wide cone of fire (6d6). Reflex save for half damage (DC 14); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

2a. Pit Trap

At the junction of this intersection is a 5 ft. x 5 ft. pit that is triggered when 50 or more pounds are placed upon it. Those who fall into the pit suffer damage. However, triggering the pit also triggers a trap door in the ceiling directly above the pit. From this trap door pour hundreds of stones onto those in the pit. PCs within the pit suffer additional damage.

Tier 1

Pit Trap: 10 ft. deep (1d6), plus rock shower (1d8). Reflex save for half damage from rocks (DC 15); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). Both parts of this trap are detected and/or disabled with one successful Search or Disable Device check.

Tier 2

Pit Trap: 10 ft. deep (1d6), plus rock shower (2d8). Reflex save for half damage from rocks (DC 15); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 22). Both parts of this trap are detected and/or disabled with a successful Search or Disable Device check.

Tier 3

Pit Trap: 10 ft. deep (1d6), plus rock shower (3d8). Reflex save for half damage from rocks (DC 15); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25). Both parts of this trap are detected and/or disabled with a successful Search or Disable Device check.

3. Slaves Burial Room

This small chamber is covered with bones. From the look of it, there could be dozens of skeletons, both complete and broken, strewn throughout the room. The walls of this room are unadorned.

This room serves as the final resting-place for various slaves and servants that Tchelopotok possessed in life.

Their bones cover the floor so thickly that it is impossible to walk through without stepping on bones. The skeletons are not undead—they are merely bones. Searching through the rubble will reveal a small aquamarine, worth 50gp (Search, DC 15).

4. Storage Room

The walls of this small room are lined with scores of tall, thin pottery jars.

The jars are approximately four feet tall each. Most of them contain sand, crushed shells, or are empty (they once contained wine, beer, or water). None of them hold anything of interest or threat to the PCs.

5. Preparation Room

A number of tables of various sizes line the walls of this room. A particularly large table dominates the center of the chamber. The tables along the walls hold a number of jars, vials, casks and boxes, most of which appear to be broken, while the center table is unadorned. The air smells slightly of cinnamon and ginger.

This room was used by priests to prepare Tchelopotok for his journey into the afterlife. The jars and vials are filled with various spices and oils used in embalming; however, they are spoiled and now worthless. The boxes contain rotting, worthless linens. However, under one of the linens is a terra cotta container with a light blue liquid with metallic flecks therein. It is a *potion of cure light wounds*.

6. False Tomb

The room appears to be a tomb of some sort. The walls of the chamber are painted to depict a snake-creature leading an army of lizards into battle against humans of some sort. A large, carved sarcophagus rests in the center of the room. It is covered with the same runes, glyphs, and pictures that you have encountered throughout the pyramid.

The door to this chamber is locked (Open Locks, DC 12). This room is made to look like a tomb, but it is actually a ruse to fool thieves. The room contains a number of tricks and traps. Removing the lid of the sarcophagus (which requires a Strength check DC 30) springs a gas trap that fills the entire chamber. PCs must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15) to avoid the effects of the gas. Failure results in the PC suffering the effects of a *fear* spell. The effect lasts for ten rounds.

Inside the sarcophagus is the skeleton of a lizardfolk warrior. He clutches a bronze short sword and wears a necklace adorned with glass "jewels" (and thus worthless). He wears a beautiful, elaborate mask that is similarly worthless, but adorned enough that PCs will think it is the Mask of Ktopec. At his feet is a small, stone chest. The chest is locked (DC 15) and trapped (DC 15 to detect and remove) with a poison needle trap. However, the poison has long evaporated and has no effect. Inside the chest is 1000 lead pieces painted to look like silver. A successful

Appraise check (DC 16) will uncover the ruse of the mask, the necklace, and the coins, although checks should be made separately for each.

Gas Trap: 15 ft. radius; effect: *Fear*; Fortitude save to avoid (DC 15); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

Chest Trap: 1 point of damage. Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 18).

Under the sarcophagus is a secret trap door. In order for it to be detected, both the sarcophagus will have to be moved (requiring a combined strength of 40, assuming that the lid is still off) AND a successful Search (DC 15) must be completed. Opening the door (actually a stone slab) requires the insertion of a long, flat object (like a sword) to wedge the slab upwards. The hole in the floor descends into the real tomb.

7. Burial Chamber

You squeeze through the narrow opening and drop down into a small, square chamber. This room is much less ornate than the room above. No carvings adorn the walls. A square, featureless sarcophagus rests adjacent to one of the walls. The only signs of opulence in this room are four tall, bone candelabras, one in each corner of the room. Each contains unlit candles.

This is the actual burial room of Tchelopotok, a yuan-ti shaman who lived in this region about 900 years ago. Each of the bone candelabras is finely decorated, and would fetch 40 gp each from an interested buyer. They are rather large and cumbersome, however. Opening the sarcophagus (which is untrapped and requires a combined strength of 25) reveals the skeletal remains of a large snake with human arms. It clutches a silver trident at its chest. This trident is a minor magical item that bestows the wielder the ability to *breathe water*, as per the spell, once per day for one hour. Tchelopotok also wears a number of ornamental rings and amulets on his person with a total value of approximately 150 gp.

The skeleton also wears the Mask of Ktopec over its face. It is made of beaten copper and adorned with shells, but is otherwise unimpressive. It is not magical, and perhaps could fetch 10 gp on the open market. Based on the rumors given to the PCs by Cyndiria, they may have trouble believing that this is the true Mask of Ktopec.

Encounter Four The Ambush

The PCs should have little trouble making their way back through the tomb and exiting through the trap door at the top. However, once all the PCs have exited Brother Cornelius and his bullywug minions spring upon them.

As the last one of you ascends through the trap door and into the daylight, a nearby voice breaks the normal swamp sounds.

"Defilers! Pathetic defilers! How dare you intrude upon our sanctuary!"

A short, squat man, almost toad-like in his appearance steps out of the shadows. He wears a chainmail shirt covered by a tunic, which is emblazoned with the likeness of some sort of frog. He wields a long, spiked chain in a threatening manner and he drags a huge, leashed toad with him. Simultaneously, a number of small frog-like humanoids leap from the trees to the human's side. They point javelins at you and croak loudly.

"I suggest that you surrender any sacred items that you have stolen from the temple," spits the human. "In fact, why not lay down your weapons altogether. If you do so, I will let you go. Otherwise death awaits! Choose!"

Brother Cornelius has no intention of letting the PCs escape. If the PCs surrender their weapons, Cornelius lets them go just long enough for them to see the javelin-riddled body of Turnipseed lying near the boats. He then sets the bullywugs upon them and they attack furiously. Should the PCs resist, a battle immediately ensues.

Tier 1

Brother Cornelius, male human Clr2 of Wastri: Medium Humanoid (5ft. 6 in. tall); HD 2d8+4; hp 15; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30; AC 16 (+4 chainmail shirt, +2 dex); Atks +3 melee (2d4, x2, Spiked Chain); SA spells; SQ: Animal and War domains AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +5.

Str 11 Dex 14 Con 13 Int 10 Wis 15 Cha 10

Skills: Concentration +4, Spellcraft +2, Jump +2, Swim +2; Feats: Weapon Finesse (spiked chain), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)

Special Qualities: *Animal domain*—cast *animal friendship* once per day, *Knowledge (nature)* is a class skill; *War domain*—*Martial Weapon Proficiency* and *Weapon Focus in glaive*.

Equipment: chain shirt, spiked chain, pouch containing 15 gp and 20 sp, holy symbol.

Spells (4/3+1): 0-lvl—*detect magic*, *light*, *resistance* (x2), 1st-lvl—*bless*, *cure light wounds* *magic weapon**, *protection from good*. (* indicates domain spells which cannot be altered)

Toad, Giant: Medium animal; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 9 (-1 Dex); Atks Bite, +2 melee, 1d4, or tongue, +2 melee, no damage; SA sticky tongue; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 11, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 14, Cha 4

Skills: Hide +10, Listen +5, Spot +5, Jump +3;

Special Attacks: sticky tongue—an enemy struck by a giant toad's sticky tongue loses all dexterity bonuses to AC so long as the tongue is attached. Furthermore, the tongue attack is a touch attack that ignores any armor. The tongue has a range of 10 ft.. The tongue A giant toad may retract its tongue at any time.

Bullywug (5): Medium humanoid; HD 1d8, hp 5 (each); Init +3; Spd 30 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Dex, +1 shield, +1 natural); Atks +1 melee (1d8 (crit x3) shortspear), or +4

missile, (1d6 (crit x3) javelin); AL; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1.

Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 9

Skills: Jump +5, Swim +5, Hide +6; Feats: Dodge

Special Abilities: Hop—A bullywug can jump up to 30 feet forward or 15 feet upwards. A bullywug can jump into combat. This counts as its normal movement.

Equipment: shortspear, small wooden shield, 5 javelins

Tier 2

Brother Cornelius, male human Clr4 of Wastri: CR 4; Medium Humanoid (5ft. 6 in. tall); HD 4d8+8; hp 31; Init +6 (Dex, improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+4 chainmail shirt, +2 Dex); Atks +5 melee (2d4 (crit x2) Spiked Chain); SA spells, SQ: Animal and War domains; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +6.

Str 11 Dex 14 Con 13 Int 10 Wis 16 Cha 10

Skills: Concentration +5, Spellcraft +3, Jump +3, Swim +3; Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (spiked chain), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)

Special Qualities: Animal domain—cast animal friendship once per day, Knowledge (nature) is a class skill; War domain—Martial Weapon Proficiency and Weapon Focus in glaive.

Equipment: chain shirt, spiked chain, pouch containing 15 gp and 20 sp, holy symbol.

Spells (5/4+1/3+1): 0—detect magic, guidance, light, resistance (X2), 1st—bless, cure light wounds (x2) magic weapon*, protection from good; 2nd—cure moderate wounds, bull's strength, silence, spiritual weapon*. (A * indicates domain spells which cannot be altered)

Giant Toads (2): statistics as above.

Bullywugs (8): statistics as above

Tier 3

Brother Cornelius, male human Clr6 of Wastri: Medium Humanoid (5ft. 6 in. tall); HD 6d8+12; hp 42; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30; AC 16 (+4 chainmail shirt, +2 Dex); Atks +6 melee (2d4, spiked chain); SA spells; SQ Animal and War Domains AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +7.

Str 11 Dex 14 Con 13 Int 10 Wis 16 Cha 10

Skills: Concentration +6, Spellcraft +4, Jump +4, Swim +4; Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (spiked chain), Exotic Weapon (spiked chain)

Equipment: chain shirt, spiked chain, pouch containing 15 gp and 20 sp, holy symbol.

Special Qualities: Animal domain—cast animal friendship once per day, Knowledge (nature) is a class skill; War domain—Martial Weapon Proficiency and Weapon Focus in glaive.

Spells (5/4+1/4+1/+3+1): 0—detect magic, guidance (x2), light, resistance (x2), 1st—bless, cure light wounds, doom, magic weapon*, protection from good; 2nd—bull's strength, cure moderate wounds (x2), silence, spiritual weapon*; 3rd—invisibility purge, dispel magic, magic vestment*, summon

monster II. (A * indicates domain spells which cannot be altered)

Giant Toads (3): statistics similar to those above.

Bullywugs (12): statistics similar to those above.

In all cases, Brother Cornelius and his minions will have 3 rounds to prepare for the arrival of the PCs.

Assuming the PCs defeat Brother Cornelius and his minions, they are free to return to Kearne. With Turnipseed dead, they may have difficulty, although the guide did mark their path rather clearly. PCs with the Tracking skill may attempt to trace the PCs path back to Bogspur should they lose Turnipseed's trail. The PCs also may have to explain the death of Turnipseed to the townsfolk of Bogspur. Upon reaching Bogspur, the PCs head to Kearne for their rendezvous with Cyndiria.

Concluding the Adventure

The PCs return to Kearne and meet Cyndiria at the Woodsman's Axe. There, she requests that the PCs give her a detailed description of the tomb, and asks for the mask. When the PCs give it to her, she looks at it with considerable skepticism. She anticipated that it would be much more elaborate (and magical) than what she has been presented with. If the PCs convince her that it is, in fact, legitimate, she jokes that every legend isn't necessarily true and she proceeds to buy a round of drinks for everyone.

She promises to tell the Dustdigger Academy about the assistance that the PCs gave her, and perhaps they may be able to return the favor at some point. With Mask in hand, she bids the PCs farewell and returns to Loftwick with her find.

The End

Experience Point Summary

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

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

Encounter Two

Defeating the crocodiles	75 xp
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Encounter Three

Defeating shaft trap without injury	25 xp
Defeating statue trap without injury	75 xp

Defeating pit trap without injury	50 xp
Defeating gas trap without injury	50 xp
Defeating chest trap without injury	25 xp

Encounter Four

Defeating Cornelius and his minions	100 xp
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Conclusion

Retrieving the Mask	50 xp
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Total experience for objectives	450 xp
Discretionary roleplaying award	50 xp

Total possible experience	500 xp
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Treasure Summary

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

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 100 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief, such as Infamy. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

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

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

Encounter Three

- amethyst (50gp),

- *potion of cure light wounds* (Value 50 gp): This is a blue, opaque liquid flecked with small, metallic granules. It is contained in a terra cotta container and stoppered with wax. Drinking the potion heals 1d8+1 hit points for the imbiber.
- 4 carved bone candelabras (40gp each),
- Gill, *silver trident* (Value 1,115 gp, Weight 5 lb., Unusual): This finely crafted trident has tines that are dipped in silver and carved with mysterious glyphs. Most of the glyphs depict profiles of lizardmen and other reptilian creatures. The craftsmanship is quite intricate. While the trident confers no combat bonuses, with a mental command the wielder is conferred with *water breathing* for one hour. This ability can be used once per day, and the trident must be grasped in order for the ability to work. If the trident is dropped during the duration of the effect, the effect ends and cannot be used again until the next day. Lastly, this effect only affects one person holding the trident, the owner. This item was taken from the Tomb of Tchelopotok in the Hool Marshes.
- various trinkets (75gp).

Encounter Four

- chainmail shirt (50gp),
- spiked chain (12gp), 15 gp, 20 sp,
- javelins (5sp each),
- shortspears (1gp each),
- small wooden shields (15sp each).

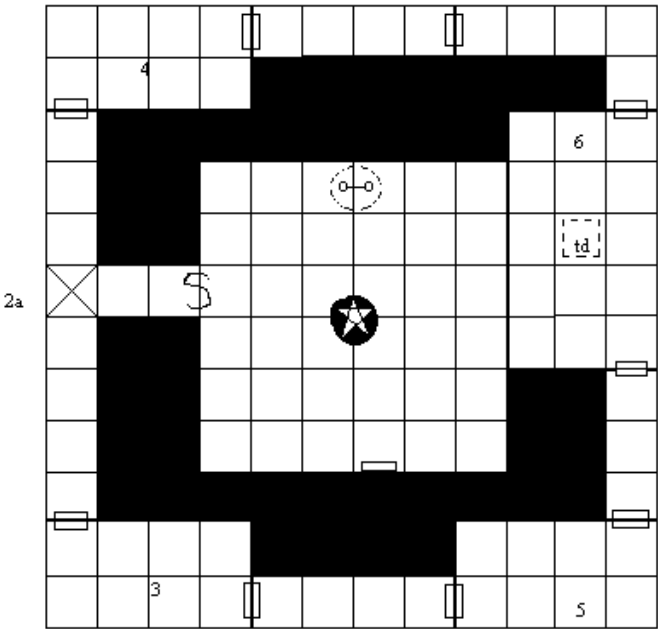
Each PC also should be given 1 **Influence point** applicable to the Dustdigger Academy in Loftwick. This not only will make the PCs more recognizable by Dustdiggers, but also it can help the PCs should one or more of them eventually decide to become one.

Player Handout #1

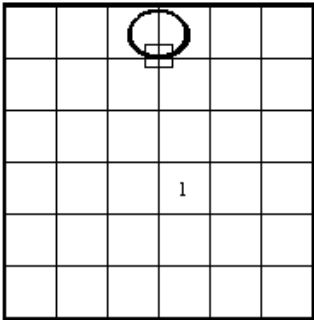
At the point where the land turned into water, we headed at first light, sun at our backs, into the murky wasteland before us. Our slow, prodding skiff took us past ominous trees that seemed to reach towards us with their prickly branches. Just as the light of day disappeared beneath the canopy we saw it--a jagged, black finger that pointed toward the sky. It was covered with both filth and life, but scraping said debris away we found that it was covered with strange glyphs, the likes of which I had never seen. Fortunately for our small band, Jervis could decipher traces of the ancient script, and we followed the staring lizards to our final destination.

Map: The Tomb of Tchelopotok

1 square=5 feet



L2



L1



L3